

**Dream Chasers: An Exploration of How Role Identity is related to Career Development
Attitudes among African American Male Collegiate Athletes**

by

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ABSTRACT

Dream Chasers: An Exploration of How Role Identity is related to Career Development Attitudes among African American Male Collegiate Athletes

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In order to develop an identity, individuals undergo the process of role-taking. During this process, they slowly develop an identity as they gain greater comprehension of social meanings in the culture. The individual is able to assume the group culture or perspective as they interact with others and better understand their role in those interactions (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). In particular for collegiate student-athletes, sport may play a tremendous role in shaping identity. For African American males, there may be a unique relationship between identity and participation in basketball. In 2010, sixty percent of male student-athletes participating in Division I basketball were African American (Zgonc, 2010).

Since there are a high percentage of African Americans participating in college basketball, it is vital for college administrators to explore their experiences and attitudes to create appropriate career programming. Studies have demonstrated that people who have achieved a stable identity tend to use rational and systematic career decision strategies. In contrast, those with foreclosed identity status tend to rely on dependent strategies (Schultheiss, 2000). Donald Super's original developmental approach to career choice and attitudes focuses on the life span-life space approach to careers. This perspective characterizes career development as an attempt to implement a person's self-concept in educational and occupational decisions (Hartung & Niles, 2000).

Researching role identity can help college administrators identify possible strengths of African American male college student-athletes, which may promote empowerment. This study was designed to explore how role identity is related to career development attitudes among African American male collegiate student-athletes. I implemented a mixed methods case study design to gather data. The underlying worldview driving this study is a constructivist theoretical approach. Data was collected from African American males who were student-athletes on a NCAA Division I basketball team. Qualitative interviews were dominant, while scales such as the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS), Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI), and the Career Development Inventory (CDI) were used as descriptive data. The qualitative and quantitative data collection occurred in a parallel form.

The findings of study indicate that there are a range of influences that shape the role identity of the participants in the study. The student-athletes were introduced and had access to sport at an early age. They were influenced by recognition from family and community members. Direct and indirect role models helped shape their worldview. Many of the student-athletes completed tasks associated with the growth and exploration stages of career development, while others exhibited career immaturity. Some of the student-athletes exhibited foreclosed athletic identities, which hindered their career aspirations for professions outside of playing basketball.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In order to develop an identity, individuals undergo the process of role-taking. During this process, they slowly develop an identity as they gain greater comprehension of social meanings in the culture. The individual is able to assume the group culture or perspective as one interacts with others and better understand that individual's role in those interactions (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). Studies have demonstrated that people who have achieved a stable identity tend to use rational and systematic career decision strategies. In contrast, those with foreclosed identity status tend to rely on dependent strategies (Schultheiss, 2000). Donald Super's original developmental approach to career choice and development focuses on the life span-life space approach to careers. This perspective characterizes career development as an attempt to implement a person's self-concept in educational and occupational decisions (Hartung & Niles, 2000).

In particular for collegiate student-athletes, sport may have played a tremendous role in shaping identity. Universities across the country have committed resources and personnel to assisting student-athletes in life skills development, including career development. Understanding the process of how student-athletes develop their self-concept provides an opportunity to create impactful career development programming. For African American males, there may be a unique relationship between identity and participation in basketball. In 2010, sixty percent of male student-athletes participating in Division I basketball were African

American (Zgonc, 2010). Since there are a high percentage of African Americans participating in college basketball, it is vital for college administrators to explore their experiences and attitudes to create appropriate career programming.

The dissertation is entitled *Dream Chasers*. James, one of the student-athletes in the study, described how he enjoyed listening to a rap album entitled “Dream Chasing.” James compared the stories in the songs to his personal life. He was chasing his dreams of playing basketball professionally in the National Basketball Association (NBA). Songs within the album describe how the artist is focused on “staying on his grind” to become successful. James could relate to the lyrics of the songs that describe resiliency, persistence, pain and overcoming obstacles to be successful and accomplish his dreams. Many African American student-athletes have used basketball as a way to pursue their dreams related to career. Throughout their lives basketball has influenced experiences, relationships and helped to shape their role identity and worldview. All of the student-athletes in the study were chasing their dreams and basketball was seen as a major aspect in shaping their identity.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Practitioners have criticized Super’s theory for neglecting women and racial/ethnic minorities (Savickas, 2002). Additionally, there is limited research in applying racial identity in vocational psychology. There is a need to conduct research related to African Americans from a variety of backgrounds and social economic statuses (Brown & Pinterits, 2001). Racial identity can be considered a reference group orientation. Along with the development of the personal identity variables, reference group orientation provides the foundation for addressing certain adult

challenges. These challenges include professional situations, marriage and family interactions, as well as engagement politically and within the community (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Researching role identity can help college administrators identify possible strengths of African American male college student-athletes, which may promote empowerment.

1.2 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this study was to explore how role identity is related to career development attitudes among African American male collegiate student-athletes.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were explored:

1. What experiences have influenced identity development among African American male collegiate student-athletes at a NCAA Division I basketball program?
 - What experiences have influenced racial identity development among African American male collegiate athletes?
 - What experiences have influenced athletic identity development among African American male collegiate student-athletes?
2. What experiences have influenced career development attitudes among African American male collegiate student-athletes at a NCAA Division I basketball program?
 - What types of career developmental tasks have been accomplished?
 - How do African American athletes develop vocational self-concepts?

- How do African American athletes construct their career in a particular social environment?

1.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The underlying worldview driving this study is a constructivist theoretical approach. The constructivist paradigm views reality as being socially constructed, in which multiple realities can exist. Knowledge is also viewed as being socially constructed by people active in the research process (Mertens, 2010). As a result, researchers who prescribe to this perspective attempt to understand the lived experiences from the point of view of those who live it. Through this perspective, it is also understood that research is a product of the values of the researcher (Mertens, 2010). While there is an attempt to feature the voices of the sample under investigation, the researcher's values and worldview are naturally intertwined in the conceptualization and presentation of the findings. There is an assumption that the researcher is constructing reality on the basis of their interpretations of the data (Mertens, 2010). I intentionally implemented principles related to the constructivist theoretical paradigm to design this study.

This study offers a description of experiences of African American male collegiate student-athletes. In particular, I am interested in the experiences that have shaped their identity and career development attitudes. Life experiences in early childhood and adolescence led me to a path that involved participation in collegiate athletics as a student-athlete. Additionally, my professional career as an academic counselor for student-athletes and life skills administrator laid the foundation that spurred a budding interest in the life experiences of African American male collegiate athletes. As a result, I have a variety of underlying assumptions about African

American male student-athletes' attitudes and the experiences that have helped shape these attitudes. These assumptions have been developed from relevant literature and from my life experiences. Undoubtedly, these experiences influenced the design of the study and the interpretation of the data.

Specifically, the selection of athletic and racial identity was intentional when exploring career development attitudes. While people have multiple reference group orientations (i.e. based on spirituality, gender, or sexuality) that can be salient during various situations, the focus of this study is designed to explore athletic and racial identity as it relates to career attitudes. This study was intended to provide a description that can be used as a building block for future research, as well as provide information to design future studies and create programs for African American male student-athletes. As a result, the study was designed as an exploration. Entering the study, I expected to offer confirmation to some of the major themes in the literature. Specifically, a theme in the literature is how relationships with significant others help shape social roles.

Additionally, I anticipated a common theme to surface that was related to how expectations of society help shape social role identity, which may influence career development attitudes. It was expected that environmental influences will combine with personal traits to determine these individuals' worldviews and vocational decisions. These assumptions were very general because I attempted to genuinely allow the participants' voice to reign throughout the study. As a result, other themes surfaced during the study that were not presented in the literature. I also understand that a researcher's assumptions cannot be completely removed from constructing this study, making this elaboration necessary.

1.5 LAYOUT OF STUDY

The conceptual framework of this study is presented in Chapter Two and seeks to describe the relationship between role identity development and career attitudes. There is specific emphasis on the importance of understanding life experiences that have helped shape individual and collective worldviews and the identity of African American male collegiate athletes. I define concepts such as self-concept, racial identity and athletic identity. Particularly, the impact of identity development, in relationship to life experiences, was explored through the literature. I highlighted major theories related to racial and athletic identities. Subsequently, the dynamics of the socialization process in forming identity and social stereotypes were explored to further help paint a picture of life experiences of African American male collegiate athletes. Lastly, the focus of the conceptual framework was directed toward career development theory with particular attention to life span experiences of African Americans and college athletes.

In Chapter Three I describe the methodology selected to collect the data. It describes the methodological design and the specific procedures used in conducting the study. I implemented a mixed methods case study design, utilizing in-depth interviews and quantitative scales to help describe the sample. This data was collected from African American males who are student-athletes on a NCAA Division I basketball program. Results from measures such as the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS), Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI), and the Career Development Inventory (CDI) were utilized as descriptive data. The qualitative and quantitative data collection occurred in a parallel form. In this study, the qualitative approach was dominant during data collection, while the quantitative approaches were supportive.

Chapter Four narrative features analysis of interviews. In this chapter I highlight four student-athlete narratives. All thirteen narratives are presented in Appendix A. Chapter Five includes a table summarizing the results from the AIMS, MIBI and CDI scales. Chapter Five also describes major themes that surfaced throughout the study. Chapter Six briefly summarizes relevant literature that surfaced throughout the study and offered implications for practice. Utilizing a similar framework as the participants in the study, in Appendix B I reflect on my life experiences that have influenced identity and attitudes towards career. This section is intended to offer insight into my worldviews to offer the reader context around my interpretation of the phenomena being explored.

2.0 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of role identity is complex and elusive. It is shaped by a multitude of factors including individual characteristics, family dynamics, historical factors and socio-political forces (Tatum, 1997). Specifically, African Americans have a unique relationship between role identity and sport. Harrison et al. (2002) elaborate on this connection:

Being African American presupposes a myriad of connotations in the minds of both African Americans and non-African Americans alike. Consider all the adjectives that come to mind when this racial designation is considered. Whenever engaging in this psychological exercise with others, the terms athlete or sport often surface. While these general terms are employed, most acknowledge that a specific and narrow range of sports are alluded to which tend to have an over-representation of African American participants (e.g. basketball, football, track & field). The implication is that, in most cases, being African American denotes an identification, either directly or indirectly, with specific sport activities; consequently, in many cases development of an identification with particular sports. (p. 122)

Understanding the connection between identity development and sports is paramount when working with African American collegiate student-athletes. Researching role identity, such as racial and athletic identity development, can help college administrators identify possible strengths of African American male college student-athletes, potentially promoting empowerment. Appreciating these constructs may also help college administrators understand African American male student-athletes' vulnerability to psychological stressors. Placing African American male collegiate student-athletes in a position to win socially involves having a strategy

for promoting psychosocial development. This chapter is designed to explore culturally appropriate psychosocial variables relevant to African American male student-athletes, such as racial and athletic identity development, in an effort to better understand factors influencing this population. Specifically, I explore the relationship between identity development and career development attitudes. This chapter describes constructs such as self-concept, racial identity, athletic identity, experiences of African American collegiate student-athletes and career development attitudes.

2.2 SELF CONCEPT

Self-concept is related to how individuals view themselves. It includes all of a person's thoughts and feelings about the self. Self-concept allows people to trigger different dimensions at different times. As a result, behavior and how messages are processed will vary depending upon the dimension of self that is active (Horton & Mack, 2000). Self-concept is composed of an individual's personal identity and reference group orientation (Cross, 1991). Personal identity research is concerned with the measurement of psychological functioning. A few examples of personal identity variables include self-esteem, self-worth, self-confidence, personality traits and level of anxiety. Reference group orientation research seeks to discover differences in values, perspectives, group identities, lifestyles and worldviews (Cross, 1991). Reference group orientation researchers try to discover events or symbols within each culture or subgroup that stimulates anxiety, fear and other personal identity variables (Cross, 1991). Examples of reference group orientation variables include racial identity, group identity and athletic identity.

Based on the social categorization framework, people group themselves and others in various categories. Group membership can be based on demographics, attitudes, religion or a combination of these factors. People similar to oneself are considered to be in-group members, while people different from oneself are considered to be out-group members (Cunningham, 2009). Identity salience is the probability that a given identity will be triggered in a given situation. The extent to which people identify with race or athletics as being an important part of their self-concept will determine how likely they are to have thoughts and behaviors that align with those roles in a given situation (Horton & Mack, 2000). In order to develop an identity, individuals undergo the process of role-taking. During this process, they slowly develop an identity as they gain greater comprehension of social meanings in the culture. The individual is able to assume the group culture or perspective as they interact with others and better understand their role in those interactions. In addition, the individual becomes distinctly connected to reference groups that have greater impact on the self. The individual models his or her self after the ideals of the reference groups (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009).

2.3 RACIAL IDENTITY

Racial identity is a form of reference group orientation. Exploring theory related to racial identity of African Americans can provide further insight into how they view themselves and perceive their experiences. Racial identity development can be characterized as the process of identifying one's own racial group as a viable reference group. This process is active and fluid (Abrams & Trusty, 2004). In particular for African Americans, nigrescence theory is a resocializing experience that seeks to transform a preexisting non-Afrocentric identity to one that is

Afrocentric (Cross, 1991). The stages of nigrescence are 1) pre-encounter 2) encounter 3) immersion-emersion and 4) internalization. Psychologist William Cross (1991) writes, “It is a model that explains how assimilated black adults, as well as deracinated, deculturalized or miseducated black adults are transformed by a series of circumstances and events into persons who are more black or afrocentrically aligned” (p. 190). In later stages, the model also emphasizes transition into multicultural attitudes (Cross, 1991). The names of the stages represent the overarching themes, not identities (Vandiver et al., 2002).

Within the pre-encounter stage people hold attitudes toward race that range from low salience to neutrality to anti-black. People who have low salience views do not deny being black, but it is thought of as only being a physical attribute and viewed as playing an insignificant role in their everyday lives. Those at the pre-encounter stage place more value in other things than blackness such as their religion, their lifestyle, their social status or their profession (Cross, 1991). The pre-encounter stage is characterized by two identities: assimilation and anti-black attitudes. Sub-identities within the anti-black identity are miseducation and black self-hatred (Vandiver et al., 2002). Harrison et al. (2002) describe the relationship between African Americans in the pre-encounter stage and sport:

They often exaggerate and romanticize the talents and capacities of whites while showing skepticism and apprehension about the abilities of African Americans in the same position. Their preferred sport and physical activity, if there be any, would likely focus on traditionally European American activities as they strive to shun any identification with African Americans. In the pre-encounter stage the individual would probably not embrace traditionally African American activities such as basketball. In this stage the individual is socialized to favor a Eurocentric cultural perspective. This participation in activities that encourage greater contact with European Americans tend to be preferred. This stage may be extended for some African American males who enjoy success because of athletic talent. Our culture embraces African American athletes; thus young African Americans gifted with athletic ability may be shielded for some time from the experiences that potentially trigger the encounter stage. (p. 123)

A person's ongoing identity will defend against identity change. Sometimes the person has an experience that has the effect of catching an individual off guard in order to shift their racial identity. The encounter must work around or shatter the relevance of the person's current worldview. (Cross, 1991). The encounter stage in Cross' revised model represents an experience or series of experiences that motivate an individual to reexamine his/her reference group orientation. This stage does not describe an identity cluster. It refers to the process of reexamining reference group orientation (Vandiver et al., 2002). Although blatant racist attitudes may not be common today, systematic racism still exists, which may produce encounters for African Americans. Harrison et al. (2002) provide two examples of possible encounter-producing experiences that may affect African American athletes. They describe how dating European American females may serve as an encounter because of the unspoken taboo against interracial dating in certain areas of the US. Another example is encounters with law enforcement officers who may be unaware of the African American athlete's social status.

Two identity clusters within the immersion-emersion stage are characterized by intense black involvement and anti-white identities (Vandiver et al., 2002). The immersion-emersion stage represents the period of transition when a person begins to demolish the old perspective and simultaneously tries to construct what will become his or her new frame of reference. During the first phase of the immersion-emersion stage, the person immerses himself or herself in the world of blackness. The second part of the stage is emersion. This is an emergence from the emotionality and dead end, racist and oversimplified ideologies of the immersion experience. The person regains control of his or her emotions and intellect. The transition results in the person's ability to discover that their first impressions of blackness were romantic and symbolic (Cross, 1991). Harrison et al (2002) describe how African Americans in the immersion-

emersion stage may avoid physical activities that are identified as “white” even if the individual shows potential for outstanding performance in the sport.

Lastly, the internalization stage is characterized by black nationalist, biculturalist and multiculturalist identities (Vandiver et al., 2002). In working through the challenges and problems of the transitional period, the new identity is internalized, giving way to the internalization stage. The new identity gives high salience to blackness. Nationalist is at one extreme. Nationalist concern for race leaves little room for consideration of other reference group identities. For others, blackness becomes one of several salencies, which are termed as biculturalism and multiculturalism (Cross, 1991). Harrison et al. (2002) describe the relationship between African Americans in the internalization stage and sport:

Sports and physical activity are then viewed as a mode of exercise or recreation rather than a source of identity. Participation in a traditionally European American sport or activity may no longer elicit dissonance in the individual. Internalization accompanies a soothing of internal psychological stress and the re-construction of one’s blackness with other role identities (e.g. spiritual, occupational)...This commitment may include activities or actions that are not considered Afrocentric. For example, the individual may commit to remaining physically fit via any mode that is attractive and available rather than being overly concerned with the Afrocentricity of the mode. This can be observed in the increasing numbers of African Americans becoming involved in activities once considered “white sports”. (p. 125)

Similar to Cross’ model, in 1992 Phinney’s publication of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) gave similar momentum to the conceptualization of ethnicity (Worrell & Gardner-Kitt, 2006). This framework focused on the exploration of one’s ethnic group membership. Phinney (1989) combined Cross’ original scale of measuring nigrescence and Marcia’s (1966) concept of identity status to develop her ethnic identity status model. A chief concept of Phinney and Cross’ models is moving through developmental stages. Both scales also consider attitudes towards other groups (Worrell & Gardner-Kitt, 2006). Phinney builds from Erik Erikson’s concepts related to identity development. Phinney’s Ethnic Identity Model

assumes that the identity development experiences of different ethnic and racial groups run parallel to the stages of Erikson's Model (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Phinney's model demonstrates how racial-ethnic identity is part of children of color's overall ego development. From this perspective, ethnic and racial identity development runs parallel to all other key components of ego identity development (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). The concepts of ethnicity and race are similar, but the operations of these terms have distinct differences (Worrell & Gardner-Kitt, 2006).

In 1995, Cross developed the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) to measure the revised nigrescence model. Cross' nigrescence theory is designed to describe adult identity development (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). The CRIS is designed to measure adult identity development. In Beverly Tatum's book *Why Are All of the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* (1997) she uses nigrescence theory to describe the identity development of African Americans from childhood to adulthood using a life span development approach (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Tatum attempts to explain how black identity is developed during African Americans' formative years. Since the original nigrescence theory was designed to describe adult identity, Cross emphasizes that Tatum's use of the encounter stage should be replaced with a terminology such as pre-consciousness or pre-awareness during the formative years. This terminology should be utilized because Tatum describes how the significance of one's racial group membership has not been realized during the formative years (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Nonetheless, Tatum added a different dynamic to the nigrescence theory by reconstructing the pre-encounter stage to include developmental trends that cover childhood to adolescence. Tatum also uses the encounter stage to describe critical experiences that bring awareness to young blacks that they are influenced by systemic racism (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). The works of

Tatum and Phinney were combined by Cross and Fhagen-Smith to map black identity development from infancy through early adulthood from a life span development perspective. This model is divided into six sectors (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Sector one describes the developmental process from infancy and childhood. At the micro level, genetic features, parental influences, the family's social economic status and kinship interactions impact the child. As the infant moves to childhood other factors at the mezzo and macro levels impact their vision of their self and their worldview. At the mezzo level these factors include the neighborhood, community institutions, schools and the viability of the economy. At the macro level local and national politics, changing social policies and historical trends affect their worldview and their vision of the self. During this phase, racism has not taken its toll and African American children's aspirations and self-trajectories are likely to be as diverse as those among any group of American children (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Sector two describes the developmental process of preadolescence. Although African American children can have various patterns of hobbies, interests and talents, African American parents can be categorized into different patterns when it comes to the racial and cultural socialization of their children. Some African American parents avoid racial discussions, while others are neutral. Other parents have racially conscious discussions with their children (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). These parents present racial and cultural messages and activities in their child's everyday life. To the extent that a child is influenced by experiences outside of the home, at preadolescence the child may show signs that replicate parental socialization aims (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

African American children in preadolescence are socialized to have low or high views about race. They can also display internalized racism. Some children are raised in homes where they

are exposed to experiences that emphasize something other than black culture. These children are likely to show signs of their self-concept involving race as only being significant in a nominal sense. They may identify more with religious beliefs, social status or around a unique talent or competence in subjects learned in school. In other instances, the entire group identity notion is rejected (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Children are also raised in home environments that weave race and black culture into the children's interactions with immediate relatives. These children's self-concept may align more with high race salience patterns. The parents or primary caregivers who use these child-rearing practices may have a self-concept that features race as a central role or gives equal salience to multiple identities. Lastly, the child may show signs of a damaged self-concept that reflects internalized racism (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Sector three describes the developmental process during adolescence. This sector highlights a range of issues associated with African American adolescences. Many African American youth enter this stage with a foreclosed identity (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). The identity is considered foreclosed because it is unexplored. They have not critically explored the values and worldviews that have been passed down from their parents and significant others. Subsequently, they transition into adolescence where they seek to take ownership of their self-concept. This stage differs from the preadolescence wherein youth's worldview is predominately aligned with one's parents or significant others. Taking ownership of their self-concept during adolescence is also synonymous with Erikson's process of identity exploration and moratorium phase. This process describes how adolescents undergo intense examination and testing of their identity. During this process, many African American youth examine and analyze ideas about black culture (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

High race salience, low race salience and internalized racism are three identity categories described in the cluster associated with sector three. Black youth who identify with high race salience are black-focused, their struggle during adolescence is to decide which black ideas, values and beliefs should be authenticated as a part of their self-concept (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Black youth who identify with low race salience may enter with an assimilated or color-blind emergent identity. These youth may have been socialized to view a range of other identities that may take the place of black culture. They may identify with being black nominally, but one's spirituality, humanist philosophy, or their sexuality may be of more importance than one's race (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Someone with a low race salience identity may also be built upon assimilationist-American ideals of individualism and a class-oriented consciousness. They may not demonstrate behaviors that are self-hating and can have healthy identities (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Black youth with low race salience may also identify with internalized racism patterns. This occurs when exposure to historical and cultural distortions about black people is not contested, subsequently influencing the person's overall impression of black people as a group. Throughout this sector the identity cluster represented in preadolescence is subject to exploration and assessment (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Sectors four and five describe the development process of early adulthood and adulthood. The wide ranges of reference group orientations, which are the developmental outcomes, are exhibited in this stage. The range of reference group orientations is a result of the processes experienced during infancy, preadolescence and adolescence. Along with the development of the personal identity variables such as anger and general emotional management and interpersonal competencies, reference group orientation provides the foundation for addressing certain adult

challenges. These challenges include situations professionally, marriage and family interactions, as well as engagement politically and within the community (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). The scope of this discussion is focused on two aspects for African American male athletes' reference group orientation, the development of racial and athletic identity.

Sector four describes three clusters of Black identity type, including low race salience, internalized racism and high race salience. By the time they reach early adulthood, the majority of African Americans have constructed a reference group orientation in which race plays a modest to significant role (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). If the adult has acquired a sense of blackness as a result of their formative experiences from infancy through adolescence they will not experience nigrescence conversion because they are already black-focused. In contrast, they may experience modification in their black identity by experiencing the process of nigrescence recycling, which is described in sector six of the model (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). If the African American adult aligns with a low race salience cluster, their formative experiences have shaped their worldview that conceptualizes race as playing a nonessential role in their experiences. They may lead fulfilling and healthy psychological lives, but they are prime targets for nigrescence because they may experience a racial incident that exhausts their explanatory powers (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

If such experience occurs, and they are able to find an ecological niche that supports and sustains their identities, nigrescence will not be triggered. However, if other reference group orientations do not provide an explanation or support, the encounter forces them to come to terms with their pre-encounter identity. As a result, they may experience the stages of Cross' nigrescence model (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). The last cluster in Sector four are people who align with internalized racism. These people are vulnerable to the threats of systemic racism that

may be perpetuated in schools, the media and other facets of society. Young African Americans may feel uncomfortable about their physical features, such as skin complexion or have internalized negative stereotypes about African Americans. They may reach adulthood with a damaged self-concept at both the reference group and personality group orientations. They are also prime targets for nigrescence conversion experiences (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

As mentioned previously, if an African American aligns with a high race salience cluster, they may experience the process of nigrescence recycling. They seek to address how to achieve additional growth and refinement of their black identity across the remainder of their life span (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Recycling is typically triggered when a negative or positive racial experience challenges one's preexisting black identity. As the person engages and resolves an issue, they obtain new insight into their preexisting identity. The outcome is a modified version of the existing black identity (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). An exception exists for people who align with high race salience as adults. If a person does not seriously examine their emergent identity during the adolescence stage, they will move into adulthood with an unexamined reference group orientation. These adults may accept their black identity solely based on the socialization of their parents or a significant other. As a result, an adult experience may take the place of the moratorium cycle typically experienced during adolescence. These adults may go through the stages of Cross' nigrescence model in order to take ownership of their self-concept (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Sellers et al. (1998) define racial identity in African Americans as "the significance and qualitative meaning that individuals attribute to their membership within the black racial group within their self-concepts" (p. 23). As a result, they created the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI). This model emphasizes the significance and meaning that African

Americans place on race in defining themselves. Sellers et al. conceptualization of racial identity development explores two questions: 1) How important is race in the individual's perception of self? 2) What does it mean to be a member of this racial group? (Sellers et al., 1998). Four assumptions are at the model's foundation. The first assumption is that identities are situationally influenced, but are also stable properties of the person. The second assumption is that individuals have a number of different identities, which are hierarchically ordered. Assumption number three is that individuals' perception of their racial identity is the most valid indicator of their racial identity. Lastly, the multidimensional model of racial identity is primarily concerned with the current status of an individual's racial identity. It was not designed to address the development of racial identity throughout the life span. Instead it focuses on racial identity at a given point in time and does not place an individual in a particular sequential stage (Sellers et al., 1998).

The multidimensional model of racial identity is used to assess the content and meaning ascribed to African American racial identity (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). There are three domains associated with the multidimensional model for racial identity, which include centrality, regard and ideology. Centrality is related to whether race is a core aspect of an individual's self-concept. The public regard is associated with one's perception of how other groups positively or negatively view African Americans. The private regard refers to the extent to which an individual personally associates with his or her own racial group. There are four ideologies associated with the model. One ideology is humanist, which describes the degree an individual emphasizes the commonalities among all people. People who associate with the humanist ideology do not distinguish differences in race, gender and class. A second ideology is nationalist. A person who aligns with the nationalist ideology emphasizes the uniqueness of being African American. They also emphasize being in control of their own destiny without

input of other groups. Thirdly, the assimilationist highlights the mutuality between African Americans and the remainder of society. They endorse the strategy of working within established systems. Lastly, individuals who align with the minority ideology focus on the common denominators that all minorities are faced. They endorse the position that all minorities, people marginalized by classism, racism, heterosexualism or ableism should come together to bring societal change (Steinfeldt et al., 2010).

An individual's level of racial identity is related to his or her social network, choice of friends, selection of activities and the way in which the individual reciprocally interacts with their environment. African Americans have a number of hierarchically ordered identities, in which race is merely one identity. This creates space for the inclusion of other identities such as athletic identity (Steinfeldt et al., 2010).

2.4 ATHLETIC IDENTITY

Athletic identity is considered the degree to which a person identifies with his/her athletic role. It can be viewed as the combination of cognitive, affective, behavioral and social aspects relating to the role of being an athlete. Using self-concept theory, *athlete* is viewed as a psychological identity. When the athlete role is viewed as part of a person's self-concept, it has potential to influence social relationships, activities one seeks and the way an individual processes experiences. These dynamics can lead to the creation of athletic subcultures (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). There are certain psychological, social and behavioral ramifications if athletic identity is salient within an individual. In particular, if athletic identity is salient, then successful performance in the athletic role can enhance self-esteem, while poor performance can reduce

self-esteem. Athletes with exclusive athletic identity may have emotional difficulty adjusting to non-sport participation (Martin et al., 1997).

Athletic identity can be regarded as both a cognitive and social structure. As a cognitive structure, athletic identity provides a structure for interpreting information. It determines how athletes cope with career-threatening situations and inspires behaviors. As a social structure, athletic identity may be determined by the perceptions of those close to the athlete. If social systems in an individual's immediate environment emphasize the athletic dimension, the individual will internalize perceptions of these important people. They will also define the self as others define him or her (Horton & Mack, 2000).

The strength of athletic identity in a person's self-concept varies with past and current athletic experience and relative success within the athletic domain. While there are benefits of having a strong athletic identity, there are also potential drawbacks. Over commitment to the athletic role may lead to dysfunctional practices such as over training, anxiety when not training or the use of performance enhancing drugs. In addition, over commitment to the athletic role can restrict the development of a multidimensional self-concept. The importance placed on the athletic role may conflict with other roles and activities. Potentially, over commitment to the athletic identity can lead to poor physical and emotional health, social isolation and career immaturity (Horton & Mack, 2000).

2.5 EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ATHLETES

While black male collegiate student-athletes have similar experiences as black students who are not varsity athletes, their experience can also be quite unique. Each individual has multiple

identities influencing interactions and their behavior. These interactions are placed on a hierarchy, which influences the salience of identities. Location in the hierarchy is largely determined by the reaction and acceptance of the identity by others (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). African American athletes' conceptualizations of these experiences and interactions are influenced by the racial identity and athletic identity, which also influences their perception of the college environment (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). In order to recognize how racial and athletic identities of African American male athletes influence their perception of the college environment, it is beneficial to explore factors that influence the socialization process of this group.

2.5.1 Socialization Process

Johnson & Migliaccio (2009) describe four components that work in conjunction with each other to establish the athletic identity as a primary identity in African American boys' self-understanding. The first component is introduction and access to sport at an early age. Secondly, the boy begins to relate to a reference group, particularly professional athletes who serve as role models for attaining the American Dream, which helps to further develop and solidify a boy's athletic identity. Thirdly, social recognition of the identity leads the boy to immerse himself in the identity. The recognition can be developed through the community, his peer groups or the media. Lastly as the child's athletic identity develops other aspects of the self become limited through identity specialization. This process may lead the child to rejecting other activities and identities; fully immersing themselves in an athletic identity.

The connection between wanting to play professional sport and young African American boys is more pronounced than other racial groups in the United States because sport is

commonly identified as an avenue out of poverty for African American males. Although the chances of making it into professional sports is 4 in 100,000 for a white male and 2 in 100,000 for African American males, young African American boys continue to be socialized into viewing sport as an attainable career choice (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). One of the primary agents of socialization is the family. Family pressure plays an important role in the early socialization of boys. Often, boys are encouraged to participate in sport because a father, older brother or uncle had success in sport (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). Social learning theory can help conceptualize how athletes develop identities and learn sport roles. A key concept related to social learning theory is the significance of role models (Buford May, 2009).

Role models can be considered people who influence an individual's behaviors, attitudes and aspirations. Family members, peers and others who have sustained contact can be considered direct role models (Buford May, 2009). The African American community relies heavily on family for social support, so introduction to sport has greater impact on the child when it comes from the family. In addition, African American families often believe that there are fewer options for achieving success for African American boys. Limited options in conjunction with high expectation of success through sport can result in parents pressuring African American boys to pursue sport (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009).

Harrison, Jr. et al. (2002) notes, "For males, especially African American males, involvement in sport and athletic ability are powerful determinants of social acceptability and group membership" (p. 127). African American communities also place pressure on boys to play sport. This tendency may partially stem from economic need by African American families. While there is diversity across the African American community regarding economic status, African Americans represent a higher percentage of working class and poor as well as those

living in inner cities. Adults in the upper and middle class are able to sponsor, organize and administer programs for children that extend beyond sports. Inner city communities generally are only able to direct kids into activities that are readily accessible and affordable within the community. Beyond economic situations of inner city communities, African Americans have cultural interest in sport. Throughout history, many African Americans have viewed sport and entertainment as one of the few ways to gain success in a racist society. As a result, African Americans receive indirect and direct pressure from the community to participate in sport (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009).

In addition to economic influences, media portrayals of professional athletes tend to be limited, focusing on icons as positive role models for the African American community. In contrast to direct role models, indirect role models, such as professional athletes influence behaviors and attitudes through the media (Buford May, 2009). The media often presents African American professional athletes as having escaped poor inner cities to be successful. They are portrayed in this fashion regardless of their families' past economic background. They also portray them as heroes without offering other alternatives to sport figures as role models. African American boys view these dominant representations as the group in which they should pattern their identities (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). The process of individuals selecting role models to influence their behavior and attitudes depends on that individual's belief that the role model's success is attainable (Buford May, 2009).

While there are numerous factors impacting identity, athletic identity is pushed onto African American boys, which limits their identity choices in the future. The expectations and acceptance of an identity by others influences the development of the self. Positive responses by others increase the continued development of an identity. When relying heavily on an identity

that receives positive accolades, other aspects of an individual's life become less noteworthy as they appear less connected to the development of the self (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). In addition, level of influence a role model may have on youth is dependent on whether the youth have multiple role models. Therefore professional athletes influence as role models is reliant on other role models in the youths' lives (Buford May, 2009). For the few African Americans who have the opportunity to participate in Division I college athletics, these factors are relevant when exploring how they form their role identity and their worldview about their college experience.

2.5.2 Social Stereotypes

Social stereotypes are positive or negative shared beliefs about a particular social category. People form social stereotypes based on their past experiences, accumulated knowledge and shared representations (Sartore & Cunningham, 2006). Harrison Jr. et al. (2002) note:

The process of self-stereotyping and producing psychological groups are meshed in the development of social identity. Social identity deals with the inclination to maintain an optimistic view of the self through identifying with or establishing favorable comparisons between one's own group and other groups. This social identity derives from knowledge of group membership and development of collective self-esteem. This is evident in the self-segregation of young African Americans, particularly in the immersion stage. In African American culture, the overwhelming success of African American athletes in particular sports would conceivably prompt the development of elevated collective self-esteem and perpetuate positive self-stereotypes in the realm of sports...Because of the abundance of negative stereotypes imposed on African Americans, the influence of perceived positive racial stereotypes may have a refreshing influence on the development of the adolescent's racial identity. It may provide a comfortable place to "immerse" one's self during identity development. As stated earlier, self-stereotyping has a self-protective facet that embraces positive traits and rejects the negative. Of the few positive stereotypes of African Americans, sport performance is probably the most salient. Thus other than entertainment, African American adolescents have few positive images on which to anchor their racial identity. (p. 127)

Research shows that a major determinant of stereotypes towards African Americans are formed around assumptions of African American temperaments, physical abilities and intelligence.

Many stereotypes have been associated with African Americans being viewed as being physically superior and intellectually inferior (Sartore & Cunningham, 2006).

There are situations where black male student-athletes who play basketball and football use sport to gain access to higher education. These situations may include when a deficit in financial resources plays a role in their lack of access to higher education. In addition, there are circumstances where a university admits the student-athlete after receiving permission from a university committee because the student-athlete's academic profile would not traditionally allow for admission. As a result, certain stigmas are attached to them, such as "dumb jocks," and open them to other systemic exploitation within society (Edwards, 2000). In addition surveys show that the majority of whites "still believe that most African American are less intelligent, and are more inclined to be violent against women" (Lapchick, 2000, p. 14). According to the National Opinion Research Center Survey, whites share the following attitudes: "56 percent of whites think African Americans are more violent; 62 percent think African Americans are not as hard working as whites; 77 percent of whites think most African Americans live on welfare and 53 percent think African Americans are less intelligent" (Lapchick, 2000, p. 15).

Particularly, there are social stereotypes about student-athletes' academic performance in college, which are not necessarily a reflection of reality. Lapchick (2000) uses relevant statistics to explain how these problems are more aligned with higher education in general. However, discrepancies are still apparent when comparing white to African American athletes:

There is a common belief that student-athletes, especially those in the revenue sports, have lower graduation rates than students who are not athletes. Yet it is difficult to get accurate reporting.

- Irrespective of color or gender, student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than non-athletes

- White male Division I student-athletes graduate at a rate of 58 percent vs. 57 percent for white male non-athletes. African American male Division I student-athletes graduate at a rate of 42 percent vs. 34 percent for African American male non-athletes.

The disparities, however, remain when we compare white to African American student-athletes:

- White male Division I basketball student-athletes graduate at a rate of 52 percent versus a 38 percent graduation rate for African American male Division I basketball student-athletes, still higher than the 34 percent graduation rate for African American male non-athletes. (Lapchick, 2000, p. 16)

Once African American athletes enter college, they can become conscious of negative stereotypes that the public holds. In a study conducted by Steinfeldt et al. (2010), which utilized the multidimensional model for racial identity, the African American levels of public regard were significantly lower when compared to younger teammates. The researchers believe that this finding indicates their acknowledgement of how poorly society values African Americans. In particular, the athletes who have exhausted their athletic eligibility may have these feelings. Since negative perceptions of athletes in revenue making sports exist, it creates a paradoxical relationship because they also receive accolades and fame for being a high profile student-athlete. As a result, a highly salient athletic identity may indicate that African American football players subscribe to and/or internalize negative societal perceptions of African American athletes (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). While social stereotypes are one factor that influences experiences of collegiate student-athletes, faculty interactions can also play a role in their collegiate experience.

2.5.3 Faculty Interactions

The college environment encompasses all that happens to student-athletes during the course of their educational programs. The environment can influence a person's desire to matriculate (Comeaux & Harrison, 2007). One facet of the environmental experience involves student-athletes' interaction with faculty members. While evidence concerning the positive impact of male student-athlete/faculty interaction is clear, we are not certain whether the benefit accruing from particular types of interaction vary across racial groups. According to Astin's student involvement theory, the individual plays a central role in determining the extent and nature of growth according to the quality of involvement with resources provided by the institution. Research indicates that the more time and energy a student devotes to learning and the more intensely they engage in their own education, the greater their potential outcomes for achievement, satisfaction with their educational experience and persistence in college. In particular, student-faculty interaction is an important indicator of success (Comeaux & Harrison, 2007).

Although this relationship is an indicator of academic success, in a study conducted by Comeaux & Harrison (2007) white student-athletes on predominately white campuses were more likely to receive assistance with study skills from faculty. African American students may not initially engage in campus life. As a result, they may feel discomfort from their lack of knowledge and experience interacting with students and faculty different from themselves. The college experience of black student-athletes at predominately white institutions may be hindered as a result of feelings of social isolation, racial discrimination, limited support and lack of integration. Black student-athletes may choose to spend as little time as possible with white faculty, who comprise the majority of faculty on predominately white campuses. Instead they

may choose to interact and bond with mentors and other support systems off campus where they emphasize feelings of encouragement, acceptance and connection (p. 208).

Understanding the development of African American racial and athletic identities can be an invaluable tool for college administrators. It is imperative that college administrators strive towards cultural competence to implement programming and create nurturing environments that empower African American college student-athletes. Cross' (1991) racial identity model, Cross and Fhagen-Smith's (2001) life span model of black identity development and Sellers et al. (1998) multidimensional model of racial identity provide a theoretical framework for understanding reference group orientation for African Americans, while concepts related to athletic identity are also very relevant. Nurturing college environments can be created for African American male collegiate student-athletes when these constructs are used to encourage rational decision making academically, socially and through career development. In addition, these dynamics may promote a multidimensional self-concept. As a result, researchers need to further explore the relationship between African American racial identity development and the development of other identities and roles.

2.6 CAREER DEVELOPMENT ATTITUDES

2.6.1 Career Development Attitudes and Identity Formation

Research suggests that individual differences in identity formation during late adolescent years are related to patterns of vocational behavior. Studies have demonstrated that people who have achieved a stable identity tend to use rational and systematic decision strategies. In contrast,

those with foreclosed identity status tend to rely on dependent strategies (Schultheiss, 2000). Self-concept and identity variables have also been related to career certainty, career planning and career indecision. These studies have shown that people who have progressed further in identity formation are likely to be more decided on career choices and more purposeful in career planning (Schultheiss, 2000). Two of the more prominent career development theories most directly related to college students are the 1) theory of vocational personalities and work environments, which was originated by John Holland and 2) the life span-life space approach developed by Donald Super (Hartung & Niles, 2000). In the early twentieth century, the focus of career assessment and research was on matching individuals with job characteristics. In the 1940s some of the focus began to shift to the development of self-understanding (Ward & Bingham, 2001).

John Holland's theory of vocational personalities and work environments is based on four basic assumptions. The first assumption is that people can be categorized into six categories, which include: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising or conventional. Each personality type has unique characteristics (Hartung & Niles, 2000). People who are described as *realistic* prefer activities that involve the manipulation of objects, tools, machines or animals. They prefer college majors such as physical education, engineering or technology. People who align with the *investigative* type prefer activities where they can systematically explore and develop knowledge of the world. Their preference of a college major is chemistry, biology or sociology. They prefer to work alone with data and ideas rather than collaborating in group settings (Hartung & Niles, 2000).

Artistic types prefer activities that encourage creativity in art or products. They typically select college majors such as music, art, English or theatre. People who enjoy activities that

involve training, developing or informing are considered *social* types. They prefer to work with people rather than things. People who fit into this cluster favor social work, education and nursing as college majors (Hartung & Niles, 2000). If someone is interested in activities that manipulate people to attain organizational, personal and economic gains, they are considered *enterprising* types. They prefer business-oriented, economic activities that also offer an opportunity to lead other people. They favor business administration, marketing or law as college majors. Lastly, there are the *conventional* types, who value accuracy, stability and efficiency. They have a preference for college majors such as economics or accounting (Hartung & Niles, 2000).

The other assumptions of Holland's theory are that 1) environments can be categorized among the same six types (realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, or conventional). A particular type of person dominates each environment. 2) People seek environments that allow them to use their skills and abilities. In addition, they seek environments that allow them to express their values and take on roles that fit them. 3) If the environment resembles the person's personality type, it will reinforce and satisfy the person (Hartung & Niles, 2000).

In contrast to Holland's theory of vocational personalities and work environments, Super's developmental approach to career choice and development focuses on the life span-life space approach to careers. The theory describes how career choice is a fluid process that evolves throughout the life course, which entails decisions, adjustment and adaptation (Hartung & Niles, 2000). Specifically, this perspective characterizes career development as an attempt to implement a person's self-concept in educational and occupational decisions. In addition to self-concept, life span and life space represent the other main constructs of the theory (Hartung & Niles, 2000).

Life span is characterized by five stages, which include *growth*, *exploration*, *establishment*, *maintenance*, and *disengagement* (Hartung & Niles, 2000). Each stage is associated with developmental tasks that a person must complete. The *growth* stage describes children from age 4 to 14. This stage is associated with children forming an initial and realistic self-concept. They form an initial impression of their values, abilities, strengths and limitations. During this stage, children learn about their self-concept by identifying with significant others. The child begins to learn about their specific interests and capacities related to the world of work. The developmental tasks that are associated with this stage include cultivating a concern for the future, establishing direction in their lives, developing a sense of purpose in school, and attaining appropriate work-related attitudes and competencies. Career growth also involves developing an outlook for the future, which involves envisioning oneself in different roles and understanding the salience of those roles (Hartung & Niles, 2000).

The *exploration* stage describes adolescents and young adults in the age range of 15 to 24. Three tasks are associated with this stage including crystalizing a career preference, specifying an occupational choice, and implementing that choice (Hartung & Niles, 2000). Crystalizing involves the person developing a clear self-concept and vocational identity that are aligned with a preferred occupational field. The career preference should also be aligned with the person's educational ability level. During the exploration stage people develop readiness to make educational and vocational decisions by making plans for career development. Cultivating curiosity and willingness to explore the world of work develops career maturity. Activities such as part-time work, discussions with family members and significant others, and clarifying one's values, skills and interests help clarify knowledge about opportunities in the environment (Hartung & Niles, 2000). The concept of *embeddedness* describes how people in the exploration

stage enhance their understanding of self and identity as it relates career development attitudes when taking cultural and relational influences into consideration (Schultheiss, 2000).

The *establishment* stage is associated with adults ages 25 to 44. People in this stage are concerned with achieving permanence in their chosen fields of work. This is a period of stabilizing the self-concept and developing a secure place in their career field. The *maintenance* stage is associated with adults ages 45 to 65. They confront the choice of deciding whether to stay in their current position or establish a new one. Recently, theorists have replaced the maintenance stage in Super's vocational development theory with the management stage. Dissimilar from past eras, many people are not maintaining the same position over long periods of time during the ages of 45 to 65. Instead the economic climate has called for individuals to recycle through the exploration and establishment stages (Savickas, 2002). Since this study is concerned with individuals traditionally in the exploration stage, detailed description about changes in the maintenance stage are not offered in this chapter. Lastly, the *disengagement* stage is associated with people nearing the age of 60. During this stage people start to seriously contemplate retirement. They anticipate how they will adjust to life after work (Hartung & Niles, 2000).

The theory of vocational development was updated and expanded by Savickas (2002), who developed career construction theory. An important update to this theory is the switch to a contextualist worldview. This view is driven predominately by conceptualizing development as it relates to the social environment. The theory highlights how individuals develop based on adaptation to the social environment to help construct careers. Context includes variables such as the physical environment, culture, racial and ethnic groups, family, school, community and

historical era. Social institutions such as family, school and religious institutions and the media send messages to children within in a certain culture about how life should be lived. In addition to introducing the contextualism variable, which interacts with the self to produce careers, there was theoretical shift to constructivism (Savickas, 2002). Career construction theory focuses on the individual, the development of self and the dynamics of societal expectations. The individual and environment are reciprocally influenced.

Contextualism highlights societal factors that influence development. In the model of developmental contextualism, an individual's own organization and reasoning interact with contextual opportunities and restraints which produce development (Savickas, 2002). A key dimension of the context in which careers are developed is social roles. Social roles can be considered the duties and rewards a culture assigns to its members based on categories, such as sex and race. People identify with multiple social roles. The arrangement of these roles is considered *life structure*, while the collection of these roles is considered *life space*. Life space and structure organizes the person's engagement in society. Usually two or three core roles are more significant than peripheral roles. Individuals make decisions about occupational choice and organizational commitment within the circumstances imposed by their social roles (Savickas, 2002).

Where contextualism describes societal factors, vocational self-concepts describe factors that are related to the development of self. The self-concept described in career construction theory is an image of the self in some role, situation, performing a set of functions or in a web of relationships. This theory describes people as having multiple self-concepts. The totality of self-concepts is considered the self-concept system. Parents, primary care givers and role models are

significant in shaping an individual's self-concept system. The distinct self-concepts are activated in different roles and remain stable in particular situations. In particular career construction theory focuses on the development of a vocational self-concept. Vocational self-concepts are self-perceived characteristics that a person considers relevant to work. As a part of the socialization process of children, social networks prescribe messages about gender, race, ethnicity, and class that condition the development vocational self-concepts (Savickas, 2002).

2.6.2 Career Development for African Americans

Research in applying racial identity in vocational psychology is limited. Although there is skepticism over the direct relationship between racial identity and career behaviors, more research is needed. Possible implications for racial identity and career development attitudes are related to the nigrescence theory. Authors have suggested that individuals with pre-encounter attitudes may not be aware of racial discrimination that may affect career aspirations and work satisfaction. People in the immersion-emersion stage may limit their career options to only working with African Americans. Also, people with internalization attitudes may have broader career paths and a realistic sense of barriers (Pope-Davis & Hargrove, 2001).

Career paths and social roles in society have changed since Super's original theory was formulated during the 1950s. Practitioners have criticized the theory for neglecting women and racial-ethnic minorities in its formation. Additions to the original theory, including perspectives such as developmental contextualism and constructs such as role salience, increase the theory's usefulness for multicultural research and counseling (Savickas, 2002). Additionally, there has been little systematic study of career development counseling and assessment with African Americans. Most of the research related to career counseling and African Americans has been

conducted with college-aged students from relatively high socio-economic status. Consequently, there is a need to conduct research related to African Americans from a variety of backgrounds and social economic statuses (Brown & Pinterits, 2001).

Researchers believe that social and economic experiences embedded in a history of systemic and/or blatant racial injustice may have restricted the career development of many African Americans. However, further understanding of these restrictions is needed to create the appropriate interventions. Recent data indicates that African Americans appear to be oriented towards low paying occupations, but there is a lack of understanding as to why these trends exist. Social and economic statuses have been suggested as likely factors, but their process on the influence of career choice is not understood (Brown & Pinterits, 2001).

Issues related to participation in traditional and nontraditional career fields affect African Americans. Hargrow and Hendricks (2001) describe nontraditional career fields as “one in which there is an underrepresentation of individuals on the basis of race and/or gender” (p.139). In contrast, a traditional career field is when the percentage of individuals represented in that “occupational field is at or above their percentage level in the general population” (p. 139). Researchers have also suggested that many African Americans believe that only certain occupations are realistically attainable. This belief and self-selection of careers are often based on racial stereotypes (Hargrow & Hendricks, 2001). There is not one particular factor that is responsible for individual’s selection of nontraditional career choice. Four factors that may influence how African Americans operate and choose a career field are reaction to racial-sexual oppression, influence of African American culture, influence of majority culture and personal experiences and endowments. In particular, influence of African American culture includes

racial identity, role modeling, and exposure to nontraditional careers (Hargrow & Hendricks, 2001).

2.6.3 Career Development for Student-Athletes

Collegiate student-athletes at NCAA Division I programs often find that they must function in an environment dissimilar from college students in the general population. Over 30 hours per week are dedicated to sport related activities (Martinelli, 2000). The dedication to practice, travel, studying film in preparation for the next opponent and travel often take precedence over career preparation. This may leave student-athletes unprepared for life after sports. This dedication also may leave student-athletes at higher risk for identity foreclosure. Student-athletes, who experience identity foreclosure with the athletic role, may be more susceptible to dependency regarding career decision-making. Researchers have found that failure to explore roles outside of “athlete” have been associated with lower self-efficacy for career decision making skills (Shurts & Shoffner, 2004).

Role duality affects management of time among student-athletes. Career maturity can be defined as one’s completion of appropriate vocational developmental tasks. Researchers have indicated that the career maturity levels of student-athletes have been lower than non-athletes. Researchers have suggested that those who work with student-athletes should be aware of the perceived obstacles that they face. Specifically, researchers have noted obstacles experienced by minority student-athletes and multicultural issues. These barriers may include expectations, racism and discrimination, peer pressure and family and public expectations (Martinelli, 2000).

2.7 CONCLUSION

Understanding the connection between identity development and sports is paramount when working with African American collegiate student-athletes. Researching role identity, such as racial and athletic identity development, can help college administrators identify possible strengths of African American male college student-athletes, potentially promoting empowerment. Appreciating these constructs may also help college administrators understand African American male student-athletes' vulnerability to psychological stressors. In particular, universities allocate financial resources and staff to create career development programming. College administrators can benefit from exploration studies that analyze experiences of African American male collegiate student-athletes who play basketball.

As noted previously, studies have demonstrated that there may be a relationship between career decision making strategies and people with stable identities. People who have achieved a stable identity tend to use rational and systematic decision strategies. In contrast, those with foreclosed identity status tend to rely on dependent strategies (Schultheiss, 2000). Based on relevant literature, I expected to see common themes related to student-athletes who have developed a stable identity also having a clear conception of their role in the college environment. My assumption was that for many of the student-athletes in the study athletic identity would be salient, which could place importance on their athletic role in the college environment. I was interested in exploring how the athletic and racial identities influence their perceived student role in the college environment. I sought to measure indicators of significance and meaning of race, utilizing concepts from the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (Sellers, 1998). In addition to racial identity, I explored the process that influences the socialization of certain African American males to having a strong athletic identity described by

Johnson & Migliaccio (2009). Another theme that was examined included the impact of social stereotypes.

When exploring the student-athletes' perception of the student role and career aspirations, I used career construction theory created by Savickas (2002), which evolved from Donald Super's model. Utilizing this framework emphasizes how career development is an attempt to implement a person's self-concept in educational and occupational decisions. The developmental approach focuses on how career choice is a fluid process that evolves throughout the life course (Hartung & Niles, 2000). The student-athletes in this study were between the ages of 18 and 24, so I focused on concepts and developmental tasks related to the growth and exploration stages. The social environment is considered in the career construction model by emphasizing that an individual's own organization and reasoning interact with contextual opportunities and restraints which produce development. Perception of the duties and rewards a culture assigns based on categories such as race, gender and athlete are considered social roles. Career construction theory also highlights that the self-concept is influenced by primary caregivers and role models (Savickas, 2002).

Before conducting the study, my basic assumption was that a student-athletes' identity is related to how they perceive the college environment and their social roles within the environment. Their perception of their social roles (specifically the student role), including the arrangement of these roles will influence their attitudes toward career decisions. This study was focused on reference group orientation. Although an individual is composed of multiple identities that can be rank hierarchically, this study was concerned with athletic identity and racial identity. I assumed that these identities and contextual factors would impact the

participants' perception of the student role, which could influence their behavior and attitudes towards career.

3.0 METHODS

3.1 CONTEXT

In order to develop an identity, individuals undergo the process of role-taking. During this process, they slowly develop an identity as they gain greater comprehension of social meanings in the culture. The individual is able to assume the group culture or perspective as they interact with others and better understand their role in those interactions (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). College administrators work with students who have a plethora of attitudes towards career. These students have been influenced by an assortment of experiences and relationships throughout their lifetime. In particular for collegiate student-athletes, sport may have played a tremendous role in shaping identity. For African American males, there may be a unique relationship between identity and participation in basketball. In 2010, 60 percent of male student-athletes participating in Division I basketball were African American (Zgonc, 2010).

Since there is a high percentage of African Americans participating in college basketball, it is vital for college administrators to explore their experiences and attitudes to create appropriate career programming. College administrators can help promote career development attitudes among African American student-athletes if research that aims to conceptualize experiences across a life span is conducted. Studies have demonstrated that people who achieved

a stable identity tend to use rational and systematic career decision strategies. In contrast, those with foreclosed identity status tend to rely on dependent strategies (Schultheiss, 2000).

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Super's original developmental approach to career choice and development focuses on the life span-life space approach to careers. This perspective characterizes career development as an attempt to implement a person's self-concept in educational and occupational decisions (Hartung & Niles, 2000). Since the original theory's formation in the 1950s, practitioners have criticized the theory for neglecting women and racial-ethnic minorities. Additions to the original theory, including developmental contextualism perspective and role salience, increase the theory's usefulness for multicultural research and counseling (Savickas, 2002). In addition, there is limited research in applying racial identity in vocational psychology. There is a need to conduct research related to African Americans from a variety of backgrounds and social economic statuses (Brown & Pinterits, 2001).

3.3 RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Researching role identity can help college administrators identify possible strengths of African American male college student-athletes, which may promote empowerment. Appreciating these constructs may also help college administrators understand African American male student-athletes' vulnerability to psychological stressors. This study was designed to explore how role

identity influences career development attitudes among African American male collegiate student-athletes. This chapter describes the participants of the study and the procedures used to gather data from the participants. This chapter also provides information about the instruments used to collect data from the participants. As a result, a case study design was implemented to gain an understanding of the constructions held by African American male collegiate student-athletes at a NCAA Division I basketball program. The following research questions were explored:

1. What experiences have influenced identity development among African American male collegiate student-athletes at a NCAA Division I basketball program?
 - What experiences have influenced racial identity development among African American male collegiate athletes?
 - What experiences have influenced athletic identity development among African American collegiate student-athletes?
2. What experiences have influenced career development attitudes among African American male collegiate student-athletes at a NCAA Division I basketball program?
 - What types of career developmental tasks have been accomplished?
 - How do African American athletes develop vocational self-concepts?
 - How do African American athletes construct their career in a particular social environment?

3.4 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

A mixed methods design was implemented to gather data. Mixed methods designs utilize both qualitative and quantitative methods. Also, the underlying worldview driving this study was a constructivist theoretical approach. This approach acknowledges the ontology that reality is not absolute and is socially constructed and that multiple realities exist. These realities are dependent

on time and context (Mertens, 2010). A case study is an approach that involves a comprehensive exploration of a single case of the subject under study. Mertens (2010) notes that the following type of information can be collected:

- The nature of the case
- Its historical background
- The physical setting
- Cultural, social and economic contexts
- Other cases through which this case is recognized
- Perspective of the informants involved in the case

This data was collected from African American males who were student-athletes at a NCAA Division I basketball program located in the northeast United States. Additionally, implementation of a quantitative approach using scales such as the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS), Multidimensional Identity of Black Identity (MIBI) and Career Development Inventory (CDI) were utilized as descriptive data. In coordination with open-ended interviews, these scales provided description and context that offered me the opportunity to tell the stories of this population in an in-depth manner. The qualitative and quantitative data collection occurred in a parallel form. Parallel form refers to concurrent mixed methods designs in which two types of data are collected and analyzed in proximity with each other (Mertens, 2010).

In this study, the qualitative approach was dominant during data collection, while the quantitative approaches were supportive. After the data was collected, inferences were made at the end of the study. Although the data collection occurred in proximity, the quantitative scales were administered prior to the open-ended interviews, so questions from the open-ended interviews would not distort responses on the quantitative scales. The described approach was intended to understand the stories of African American male student-athletes who were members

of NCAA Division I men's basketball programs in the eastern region of the United States. I intended to understand their perception of key experiences in their life that influenced their current career development attitudes. Utilizing case study strategies and responses from quantitative scales allowed me to describe their stories while being guided by relevant literature.

3.5 INSTRUMENTS

3.5.1 Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)

The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) was developed to gather data related to the Multidimensional Model for Racial Identity (MMRI). The MIBI was developed by adapting items from previous identity scales in addition to items developed by its creators (Sellers et al., 1998). The MIBI is a 56-item self-report instrument. The MIBI is comprised of three scales that measure Centrality, Ideology and Regard dimensions. The Centrality scale is comprised of eight items and is designed to measure the extent to which race is a core aspect of an individual's self-concept (Steinfeldt et al., 2010; Steinfeldt, 2007). The Ideology scale consists of four subscales including Nationalist, Assimilationist, Minority, and Humanist (Sellers et al., 1998).

The Nationalist, Assimilationist, Minority and Humanist subscales are all comprised of nine items (Steinfeldt, 2007). The Nationalist scale is designed to measure the extent that someone emphasizes the uniqueness of being African American. The Assimilationist subscale is designed to measure the extent that people believe in the mutuality between African Americans and the remainder of society. Items in the Minority subscale are designed to measure the extent

that an individual focuses on the common denominators that all minorities are faced. Lastly, the Humanist subscale is designed to measure the degree an individual emphasizes the commonalities among all people (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). The Regard dimension consists of two scales including Private and Public Regard. Regard scales are composed of 12 items. The Public Regard subscale is associated with one's perception of how other groups positively or negatively view African Americans. The Private Regard subscale refers to the extent to which an individual personally regards his or her own racial group (Steinfeldt et al., 2010; Steinfeldt, 2007).

Preliminary analyses suggest that the MIBI is valid and reliable. Based on a sample of 474 African American college students from two universities, reliability and validity of the MIBI was measured. In addition, Centrality and Ideology scales yielded acceptable alpha coefficients for predictive and construct validation. The evidence of internal validity of the Private and Public Regard were revised that resulted in the two scales being both internally consistent (Private Regard $\alpha=.78$; Public Regard $\alpha=.78$) (Sellers et al., 1998).

3.5.2 Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)

The AIMS contains seven questions regarding the respondent's identification with the athlete's role. It is designed to assess the degree to which a participant identifies him or herself as an athlete (Horton & Mack, 2000). Respondents are asked to rank how much they agree or disagree with a statement based on a seven point Likert scale. The overall score is calculated by adding each response of each question. A higher score on the AIMS is associated with greater athletic identity, while lower scores are associated with weaker athletic recognition. The internal consistency ($\alpha =.93$) of the AIMS was obtained by Brewer and colleagues in 1993 (Horton & Mack, 1993). In this study, the Likert scale was formatted where a lower score represented

greater athletic identity. This decision was made to align the Likert scale with the MIBI where a response of “1” represented “highly agree”. I was concerned about confusing the respondent with inconsistent scale formatting.

3.5.3 Career Development Inventory (CDI)

The Career Development Inventory (CDI) is a 120-item multiple-choice instrument that assesses readiness to make educational and vocational decisions. There is a format available for high school students and a format for college students (Robitschek, 2003). Researchers use the CDI to measure students’ readiness to cope with the developmental tasks of crystallizing, specifying and implementing a career choice. The inventory has two main categories including 1) career orientation and 2) knowledge of preferred occupation (Savickas, 2000). There are eight scales including career planning, career exploration, decision making, world of work, knowledge of preferred occupation group, career development attitudes and career orientation (Robitschek, 2003). The CDI must be machine scored. The computing services provide three composite scores including 1) career development attitudes, 2) career development knowledge and skills and 3) career orientation (Savickas, 2000).

The first category begins with career planning. Section A in the first category measures extent of planning. It contains questions about involvement in thinking about the future and in planning post-high school activities. Section B is related to measuring career exploration. This section measures willingness to find and utilize good resources for career planning. Section C is designed to measure career decision making, which is the ability to apply decision-making principles and methods to solve problems involving educational and occupational choices. Lastly, Section D measures variables related to the world of work. This section measures

knowledge of types of occupations and ways to obtain and succeed in jobs (Savickas, 2000). The second category measures familiarity with type of work that is of interest to the student at that time. Participants select a preferred occupational group. There are 20 groups listed in the survey packet. The participants answer 40 questions related to the field selected about their abilities, interests, values and personal characteristics (Savickas, 2000).

Two independent studies have contributed to the establishment of reliability of the CDI College Form I. In 1975 Savickas obtained coefficient alphas of .91 and .83 for the affective scale in a dissertation. In addition, coefficient alphas of .61 were obtained for the cognitive scales. Tilden found test-retest coefficients ranging from .73 to .97. Construct validity was obtained by examining the relationship between CDI Form I scores and socioeconomic status, intelligence, reading ability and school achievement, reported in a multiple studies (Thompson & Lindeman, 1981).

3.6 PROCEDURE

I contacted coaches as well as athletic administrators from a NCAA Division I basketball program seeking permission to solicit their student-athletes to participate in the study. Permission was sought by scheduling an in-person meeting to describe the framework of the study. Once permission was granted, I spoke to the student-athletes individually in person while they were in the academic center or team practice area to describe the purpose and framework of the study. Once the student-athletes committed to participate in the study, I discussed and had the participants sign informed consent forms approved by the university's institutional review board.

I scheduled individual meetings for the student-athletes to complete survey packets and respond to interview questions. The survey packets included the AIMS and MIBI.

Each participant was assigned a code and asked to place the code at the top of his packet. I encouraged the participants to answer all of the questions in the survey packet. Since all of the participants in the study identified as African American, I did not need to have any of the participants bypass the MIBI survey. The participants began by completing the CDI online. The computers were logged onto the weblink <http://www.vocopher.com/register.cfm>.

The participants were instructed to enter the registration code assigned to me by the nonprofit organization Vocopher. The participants were instructed to complete the registration process on the website. The participants were be prompted to include 1) first and last name, 2) gender 3) state/providence, 4) zip code, 5) email address and 6) to create a personal username and passcode. Lastly, they accepted the terms and conditions of the Vocopher website. The terms of the website include agreeing to allow Vocopher to use the results for research purposes only. It indicated that the participant understood that Vocopher will keep his information confidential and that all research will be conducted under anonymous conditions. They received a confirmation email for their records. Next they entered their username and passcode. Subsequently, they selected the “Career Tests” tab. Then they selected the “CDI Part I (College Form)” tab. Lastly, they were prompted to select their college level and begin to answer the questions on the inventory.

After completing the CDI, the participants were instructed to complete the AIMS and MIBI. They were instructed to read the instructions at the beginning of each section before completing the AIMS and MIBI. Afterwards, I scheduled an individual interview with the student-athletes. The interview lasted approximately 45 m inutes, which was recorded and transcribed. I

compensated a doctoral student to transcribe the interviews. The number of participants who responded to the interview questions was 13. Twelve student-athletes responded to interview questions and completed the AIMS and MIBI surveys. During the individual interview, participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

Socialization process of developing an athletic identity and function of sport

Interview questions for this section were derived from the Johnson & Migliaccio (2009) article, which is described in section 2.5.1 of the literature review in this dissertation.

1. Tell me the story about how your family arrived in your hometown.
2. Tell me the story about how you were introduced to basketball.
3. Tell me the story about how your role models influenced your life when you were younger.
4. When you were younger, how had being recognized for your athletic accomplishments influence your life?
 - How had being recognized for other accomplishments influence your life?
5. How has hip hop music and culture influenced you?
6. How has the media influenced your perception of athletes?
7. Community can be defined based on location (neighborhoods) or similarities people share in regards to culture. Describe the importance of sports in your community?
8. Tell me the story about how basketball influenced major decisions made in your life.

Racial identity

Interview questions for this section were derived from the Emerging Leaders Facilitator Guide utilized by the University of Pittsburgh Student Affairs department.

1. Describe your earliest memory of race differences.
 - What information did you learn about race differences at the time?
 - How did you get the information? (i.e. from adults, books, media, other children, etc.)
2. Tell me the story of how being a Black male athlete has affected your life?
 - How have people helped to shape your view on the meaning of being a Black male living in the United States?
3. Describe what makes you proud of your racial/ethnic background.

- Discuss your racial/ethnic background regarding something that is painful or difficult (past or present).
4. What stereotypes are associated with being a Black male collegiate athlete?
 - How have these stereotypes affected you?
 5. Describe a situation in which you spoke out or fought against injustice to yourself or someone else?
 - What was going on?
 - What did you do?

Career development attitudes

Interview questions for this section were derived from the Savickas (2002) reference, which is described in section 2.6.1 of the literature review in this dissertation.

1. Describe your career aspirations when you were in elementary school.
 - Did you have discussions about these aspirations with people who were significant to you? If so, describe those conversations
2. Currently, who do you depend on to help you make decisions about a professional career outside of playing basketball professionally?
 - What advice have they given you?
3. Describe how the jobs you had growing up helped you to develop.
4. What life lessons and skills have you learned from sports?
 - How has participating in sports throughout your life helped you as a college student?
5. How will your experiences with sports help once your basketball career has concluded?
6. Currently, what is more important to you at this point in your life basketball or school?
 - Explain why?
7. Rank your top three priorities or roles in life and explain why?

Career adaptability

Interview questions for this section were derived from the Savickas (2002) reference, which is described in section 2.6.1 of the literature review in this dissertation.

1. Describe the factors that come into play when making an important decision?
2. Tell a story about how you have dealt with transition in life?
3. Describe the strategies you have considered for accomplishing your career goals outside of playing basketball?
4. If someone wrote a book about you, how would the story conclude?

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Interpreting the Career Development Inventory (CDI)

The CDI is designed for machine scoring. The publisher provides an online scoring service. The publishers of the CDI consider scores above the 75th percentile as strengths to build on and scores below the 25th percentile as limitations, which need to be strengthened (Savickas, 2000). Scores on the career planning scale assess the participant's inclination to plan for future career aspirations and goals, take a systematic approach and involve themselves in career planning activities. A low score indicates that the participant does not foresee themselves in the world of work. Often these participants display low work-role salience either because they look forward to other life roles or because they do not look forward at all (Savickas, 2000).

Participants who only look forward to other life roles need to learn that they will probably work in the future. Scores on the exploration scale assess attitudes toward information sources and willingness to use and evaluate these sources. Low scores suggest that clients are not concerned with using good sources of data about fields and levels of work (Savickas, 2000). These participants should learn to distinguish between good and bad information sources and to appreciate how competent sources can facilitate their information gathering. Scores on the world of work scale assess knowledge about work, occupation and career. Low scores indicate that clients need to learn about types of occupations, the mores of work, and career development tasks. High scores suggest that participants are sufficiently knowledgeable to apply occupational information to self and to begin crystallizing field and level preferences (Savickas, 2000).

Interpreting the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)

The overall score of the AIMS was calculated by adding each response of each question and dividing the total by the total number of survey questions. Traditionally, a higher score on

the AIMS is associated with greater athletic identity, while lower scores are associated with weaker athletic recognition. In this study, the Likert scale was formatted where a lower score represented greater athletic identity while higher scores were associated with weaker athletic recognition. This decision was made to align the Likert scale with the MIBI where a response of “1” represented “highly agree” and a response of “7” represented “highly disagree”. I was concerned about confusing the respondent with inconsistent scale formatting, so I made the decision to have the same Likert scale formatting.

Interpreting the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)

The scores on the MIBI are tallied by first reverse scoring all of the questions that have a (R) next to them by subtracting 8 from each individual’s score on the item. Second, the scores for each of the items within a particular subscale are averaged. A composite score for the entire scale is inappropriate because MIBI is based on a multidimensional conceptualization of racial identity.

Integrating Data and Interpreting Narrative

In-depth interviews were summarized as narratives seeking to provide interpretations of the participants’ “own stories.” The Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS), Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) and Career Development Inventory (CDI) will be utilized as descriptive data. The results from these surveys are summarized and included in the narrative of each participant. I will also described trends within the data. Common themes associated with 1) socialization and function of sport, 2) racial identity, 3) athletic identity and 4) career development attitudes are summarized in the final analysis.

Narratives can be considered as discussions organized around consequential order. Riessman (1993) describes the teller recapitulating the past for the listener to make a point. To the socially conscious investigator narratives are advantageous for what they reveal about how reality is constructed. Riessman (1993) describes five levels of representation in the research process, which include 1) attending, 2) telling, 3) transcribing, 4) analyzing and 5) reading.

Level 1 is characterized by the interviewer paying attention to nonverbal cues of the interviewee. Skills related to active listening are implemented during this stage (Riessman, 1993). Level 2 is characterized by the interviewer facilitating context in the research interview. The researcher encourages participants to reflect on and discuss important experiences in their lives. Open-ended questions that promote responses that allow respondent to collaborate with the researcher to construct meaningful responses are preferable in the narrative process. Developing an interview guide of five to seven questions about the topic of inquiry can be supplemented by probe questions. Level 3 involves taping and transcribing interviews. This process includes composing a rough transcription, which is a first draft of the entire interview. The rough transcription seeks to get the words and other striking features of the conversation on paper (Riessman, 1993).

Subsequently, the researcher can retranscribe selected portions for detailed analysis. Texts created in retranscriptions can allow for analysis of interruptions, pauses and other spoken features of the discourse. Determining the beginning and conclusion of a narrative is an analytical issue. As a result, the researcher should be conscious of phrases that signify entrance and exit of a narrative. After the boundaries of the narrative have been identified, the researcher can retranscribe the narrative into numbered lines. In addition, the following symbols can be used to identify essential elements in the narrative: (A) abstract for what follows, (O) orient the

listener, (E) evaluate its meaning, (p) short pauses and (I:) utterances from interviewer (Riessman, 1993).

Level 4 is very similar to Level 3. The retranscriptions can be rearranged based on listening to a replay of the interview closely and multiples times, which may lead to insights that shape how the researcher chooses how to represent an interview narrative. During level 4 data reduction and interpretation are featured by using poetic structures. The researcher listens for changes in pitch to signify line breaks. Riessman (1993) describes stanzas as, “series of lines on a single topic that have parallel structure and sound if they go together by tending to be said at the same rate and with little hesitation between lines” (p. 45). Stanzas can be used to identify various themes constructed by the interviewee and also help to distinguish the beginning of one narrative from the next. As themes emerge during retranscriptions, I convert stanzas based on these themes. In addition to identifying themes, the researcher can also use stanzas to identify and document summary statements of the interviewee. Lastly, a schematic display can be created to display the structure and relationship between the overarching themes (Riessman, 1993).

Level 5 describes the process of avoiding reading the narrative simply for content or solely as evidence for a prior theory (Riessman, 1993). While reading the narrative, consideration should be made about how the narrative is organized and why the informant develops his/her story in this manner in conversation with this listener. The researcher can begin by examining the meanings encoded in the form of discussion and work outward by identifying the underlying propositions that make talk sensible. The researcher should be conscious about social, cultural and institutional dynamics, which must be interpreted. In addition, issues of power should be considered, including questions of whose voice is represented in the final

product, how open the text to other readers and how the researcher is situated in the personal narratives (Riessman, 1993).

Although I could not completely remove myself from influencing the responses of the participants in the study, I made a concerted effort to predominately highlight the voices of the participants. I attempted to focus on their stories instead of mine. As a result, I decided to reflect on my experiences as a student-athlete before conducting the interviews with the participants. I wrote my personal narrative addressing the interview questions that I planned to pose to the student-athletes. This gave me the opportunity to focus on the participants' stories instead of mine during the investigation. In addition, it gives readers of the study an opportunity to better understand my worldview and assess possible bias when interpreting the results. I did not use my current results from the AIMS, MIBI and CDI survey as descriptive data in my personal narrative because my perspectives have changed since undergraduate studies. Nevertheless, reflections about my career development attitudes, athletic and racial identities during my undergraduate experience were implemented into my personal reflection.

4.0 STUDENT-ATHLETE NARRATIVES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Riessman (1993) describes how narratives involve the teller making a point for the listener by recapitulating the past. Utilizing narratives is advantageous because they help to reveal how reality is constructed by the teller. Although I could not completely remove myself from influencing the responses of the participants in the study, I made a concerted effort to predominately highlight the voices of the participants. As a result, I decided to feature narratives of the student-athletes as the main source of data within this study. The narratives offer insight on the uniqueness of each of the student-athlete's experiences, which have helped to shape their worldview. Each narrative has integrity as an individual passage.

The narratives are comprised of four sections including 1) background information, 2) developmental contextual factors, 3) identity development and 4) career development attitudes. These were the major themes used when drafting the interview questions for the study. Subsequent chapters feature analysis of the common themes across the narratives. After transcribing the interviews, the transcriptions were coded to include line and stanza numbers. The line numbers are represented in the narratives so the reader can refer to original transcriptions, if interested. The beginning and ending of each line was decided based on changes

in pitch of the interviewee to determine the line breaks. Organizing the interview based on lines and stanzas creates a poetic structure and the stanzas within each narrative should read as such.

Overall, this chapter is designed to describe factors that have influenced selected student-athletes' worldview and attitude toward career. Although all 13 narratives are featured in Appendix A, only four narratives are featured in this chapter. These narratives were selected to provide examples of major overarching themes that are presented in Chapter 5. The narratives in this chapter are ordered based on my perception of their career maturity. The student-athletes' narratives are ordered from greatest career maturity to least. Specifically, I arranged the student-athlete narratives from having the greatest interest and preparation in planning for a career other than playing basketball professionally to least preparation and interest in a career outside of playing basketball professionally. The four narratives selected for this chapter offer a range of experiences, which influence their worldview and expectations of the college experience. I invite the reader to also read the other nine narratives, which are featured in Appendix A. Every student-athlete in the study presented a unique set of experiences that contributed to their outlook in life.

4.2 MARCUS' NARRATIVE

4.2.1 Background Information

Marcus' parents were born in a city on the west coast of the United States. They attended a large public university. Marcus' father was a member of the university's varsity men's basketball team. Towards the end of their college career, his parents gave birth to Marcus. After graduating

from college, Marcus' father began working for a soft drink company, and after earning a promotion with the company, the family moved to a different city in the western part of the United States. While in this city, Marcus' mother began a master's degree related to health care administration. Marcus' mother is currently a high school English teacher. She also teaches courses at a junior college. Marcus' father has been working with the same company for more than 20 years.

Marcus played basketball on the varsity high school basketball team. He earned a partial academic scholarship to University X. When arriving on campus, he volunteered with the varsity men's basketball team as a student manager. He eventually earned a roster position on the team as a player. During his career at University X, Marcus earned a bachelor degree in economics and went on to pursue a master's degree in the School of Business while playing basketball for his final year of competition. The subsequent narrative describes the contextual and identity development factors that have shaped behaviors and decisions made by Marcus.

4.2.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Marcus' parents' socioeconomic level and educational background seem to have created educational standards and expectations for Marcus. Both parents graduated with an undergraduate degree, while his mother earned a master's degree. Marcus mentioned that his grandparents on his mother side of the family also emphasized the importance of education. After noting that his main role models were family members including his parents and grandparents, Marcus was asked about the lessons learned from these individuals. His response is as follows:

Marcus: 169 Well they said do as best,

170 always be the best in the classroom.
171 Always,
172 well my grandpa, he would always say like
173 because he was real athletic when he was younger too,
174 so he was like training,
175 he was real into training and preparation
176 kind of, that's on the sports side,
177 and on the education side, my mom's side,
178 my great grandparents just the education.
179 Always striving to be the best, always push yourself,
180 always have a goal in mind. Have a clear goal in mind.
181 And in working, do what you have to do to get there.
182 It was clear.
183 There was never no grey area.

People who were significant in Marcus' life emphasized the importance of education. This encouragement helped to motivate Marcus to excel academically at an early age. In particular, Marcus highlighted how his mother's side of the family was particularly instrumental in stressing the importance of education. Other developmental contextual factors that affected Marcus include participation in sport as being a staple in his family. His father had an extraordinary basketball career in college, which included being inducted into the university's hall of fame. Marcus was introduced to basketball by his father at very young age. The following narrative describes how Marcus watched his father play pick-up basketball games and referee basketball games.

Marcus: 121 I was introduced at a young age.
122 My dad played
123 my dad played so.
124 My dad played all sports
125 but he did basketball that was his best
126 and I can remember ever since I was young just always going with him
127 and he would go play pick up
128 and he would referee games.
129 I was always surrounded by
130 always thinking I was great
131 I was going to be the next you know NBA star.
132 I love basketball but he put me at a young age
133 so I was always playing

Marcus' grandfather on his father's side of the family was very athletic when he was younger. Marcus described how his grandfather would emphasize the importance of training and preparation. As a result, Marcus seemed to be able to develop a balance between academic and athletic development at an early age. Growing up in a suburban area near a large city in the western part of the United States, Marcus mentioned that sports were very important in his community. He also mentioned that sports are important in the African American community.

Marcus: 400 Um growing up
401 since most of my childhood was in a state in the western part of the
country and my adulthood here
402 I would say sports are huge.
403 They are pretty big.
404 But only like the great athletes
405 like the great high school athletes are recognized.
407 They're not going to follow.
408 Baseball was a big sport in my state.
409 I would say in the African American community
410 sports is huge.
411 Basketball, football.
412 It's the way people express themselves.
413 The way people escape from wherever they're doing.
414 They do it to have fun.
415 Everybody.
416 It's a culture kind of thing I would say.

In subsequent sections, I expand on the connection between the significance of sports on Marcus' identity development, but the importance of sports in his geographical community also can be considered a contextual developmental factor that influenced his values, worldviews, and interests in sports.

4.2.3 Identity Development

Marcus' development of a strong athletic identity has been influenced by multiple factors. As mentioned in the previous section, Marcus was exposed to multiple sports at a very young age. Equally as important is the influence of his role models. His most influential role models were his parents and grandparents. Although Marcus mentioned that public figures served as role models, his family served as the chief role models. He spent time bonding with his father through sports. In addition, his grandfather used sports to teach life lessons such as knowing the importance of training and preparation. Since Marcus viewed his father and grandfather as role models, he imitated desirable qualities that they displayed. One of the desirable qualities exhibited by his father was a commitment to athletics.

While Marcus was encouraged by his family to participate in sports, recognition for his performance by community members also influenced Marcus to value sports. As Marcus received recognition from his peers for his talents related to playing basketball, he was inspired to continue to play organized sports. It inspired him to want to continuously improve and be the best. It seemed to have reinforced the message that sports were important.

Marcus: 264 It drove me to want to keep playing.
 265 I would definitely say that.
 266 I would definitely say
 267 um wanting to be a star
 268 to be the best player like I could be
 269 and being recognized for that, it kind of keeps you wanting to play.
 270 You got to get that thirst for the fame
 271 and the people liking you.
 272 A lot of my friendships are based on the fact that
 273 I was good at basketball
 274 and I was on the team.
 275 It definitely makes you want to strive
 276 to keep working being good.
 277 It's one thing to keep playing
 278 and to be that guy.

279 It drives you.

Marcus seemed to be very conscious about how race has impacted his life. As discussed previously, Marcus viewed sports as being important to the African American community. He described sports as serving various functions in the African American community including being a way to be expressive, utilizing sport as an escape and having fun. He also emphasized that there is an expectation for African Americans to have an association with sports, particularly basketball, football and baseball. His racial identity has also been influenced by his role models, who are family members. When asked how his role models influenced him, Marcus replied with the following segment of a narrative:

Marcus: 141 When I was younger most of my role models were
 142 like my grandparents,
 143 like my grandpa my dad's side.
 144 Because I would always be over there
 145 just hearing the stories.
 146 Hearing his lessons that he was teaching me
 147 and my great-great-grandparents on my mom's side.
 148 I would always go over there
 149 and he was.
 150 They just passed away last year,
 151 but he just taught me about just like all the Civil Rights
 152 all the great black men that go unheard of.
 153 Told me stories just about everything
 154 he was so knowledgeable about everything.

Marcus emphasized “great” black men in his response. Marcus also seemed to be proud of the idea that his grandfather was one of the first African American police officers in their community. Marcus grew up in suburban neighborhoods and attended predominately White schools. As a result, he connected hip hop culture with being a representation of something different from the norms within his suburban community. Marcus viewed hip hop culture as a way to express his identity. He connected hip hop culture with being affiliated with African

American culture. Particularly, Marcus viewed hip hop culture as giving him a sense of racial identity.

Marcus: 285 Um well I know growing up
286 that's the that's kind of
287 that's the only genre I was listening to.
288 I don't really know how it influenced me.
289 Maybe what I saw on TV that's how I would dress
290 or that's how I would want to present myself to my friends kind of
291 and like actually I rap a little bit.
292 Like freestyle.
293 I've also made friends out of the whole music and rapping and doing all
294 that stuff so
Charles: 295 So it's like a social thing
Marcus: 296 yeah
297 it's like a social thing.
298 Kind of
299 helps you identify yourself as a black man
300 really cause I grew up most of my life been around mostly white people.
301 Growing up in the suburbs so
302 it kind of gives yourself a sense of identity and like pride yeah
303 the rapping.
304 I can rap all the words
305 I know what they're talking about
306 and like you guys don't really.
307 That kind of sets me apart you know.
308 Yeah some I just used to keep my sense of like black,
309 being black.

In another stanza of the narrative, he associated “real” hip hop with African American culture.

Marcus: 343 The real.
344 Cause I feel like there's a real hip hop culture
345 and then there's the type that white people see,
346 ya know.
347 I had a good sense of the real hip hop culture
348 because ya know I had family
349 I could talk about it with.
350 I had my Black friends,
351 I could talk about it with them.
352 And everybody else, they accepted it.

Marcus viewed hip hop as a safe place to relate to other African Americans in high school, but he also viewed knowing the lyrics of the songs as a means for gaining social capital. Additionally, Marcus used basketball as an avenue to gain social status among his peers in a predominately white school and living in a suburban neighborhood. This was a tool to transcend race and also connect with a social group.

Marcus: 320 every black kid has their time where they're
321 like a Bill Cosby episode.
322 Someone says a racist comment or something
323 but they don't know what they're saying.
324 They don't mean it
325 but it was great.
326 I've always been embraced,
327 because I was playing basketball, I was talented, I was outgoing.
328 I've always been accepted everywhere I've been at.
329 Like I've never really been pushed away
330 or excluded from anything
331 or um never felt different.
332 I mean I felt different in the sense of me having something that nobody
333 else has not necessarily me being different and not accepted.
334 Like I've always been accepted wherever I'm at.
335 I've always be accepted. Had a bunch of white friends.
336 Had friends of all types.
337 It's never really held me back.
338 It's only pushed me forward.
339 I've used it to push me forward.
340 Instead of holding me back.

Marcus was not only able to use sport to make friends and build relationships, but also, he was able to stand out in a positive manner. The combination of having an outgoing personality and excelling athletically helped Marcus create friendships in high school.

Marcus: 493 um it's made me
494 stand out from my peers in a good way.
495 Made me stand out
496 you know being an athlete,
497 being a black male athlete at an all-white school being the best player
498 being a good guy that makes you
499 I'm not trying to toot my own horn
500 but I'm a good guy being respectful being outgoing accepting other people

501 for who they are
502 being funny and everything like yeah

Marcus' responses to questions about stereotypes associated with African American male athletes highlight that he was aware of possible negative perception of this group. But he emphasized that he was determined to disprove those perceptions.

Charles: 514 What stereotypes are associated with being a black male collegiate athlete?
515 athlete?
Marcus: 515 uh
516 I would say arrogant.
517 Uh lazy in the classroom.
518 Womanizer.
519 Um.
520 Dumb.
Charles: 521 How do these stereotypes make you feel?
Marcus: 522 Uh.
523 They make me want to work to change that.
524 Kind of inspired me to
525 show people that there is another side.
526 There's another spectrum of students.
527 Like some, a lot of them are true.
528 I'm not going to lie.
529 In some cases that is true
530 but uh makes me want to work to change that perception so when people
531 meet me I'm not just somebody in that stereotype.
532 There are people out there who do take their education seriously. They're
533 here not just to play sport they're here mainly for education furthering
534 their career goals

Towards the latter portion of the interview when asked about his top roles, Marcus mentioned that one his roles was being a "positive male black role model." Marcus' athletic and racial identity development has been influenced by multiple factors. These factors have led Marcus to strive for "greatness." He mentioned the desire to be recognized for greatness through athletics. He noted that his role models informed him about "all the great black men that go unheard of." When asked how he wants his life story to conclude, he responded that he wanted be remembered as a "great man." Marcus' desire to be great is also reflected in his vocational

identity. Marcus eventually attempted to acquire information about the self and about occupations to construct a career.

4.2.4 Career Development Tasks

According to career construction theory, the developmental tasks associated with the growth stage include 1) developing concern for one's future as a worker, 2) increasing control over vocational activities, 3) forming conception about making educational choices, and 4) acquiring confidence to implement these choices (Savickas, 2002). Marcus seemed to sufficiently accomplish these tasks between the ages of 4 to 14. It seemed as if Marcus was able to develop secure attachment relationships with his parents and grandparents. As a result, he seemed secure to explore the world. He has demonstrated a sense of optimism about his vocational future.

During elementary and middle school, Marcus wanted to be a professional basketball player. He was exposed to basketball at an early age, and his role models had success in the sport. He developed skills that were as good if not better than the peers in his neighborhood.

Marcus' professional aspirations are described in the following discussion.

Marcus: 548 When I was in elementary school, I wanted to be NBA.
549 I wanted to be a professional athlete in NFL
550 or something.
551 I wanted to be a professional athlete.
552 There were no if, ands, or buts what I was doing.
553 Definitely what I'm doing.
Charles: 554 How did that come about?
Marcus: 555 just from playing basketball, being the best out there
556 when I'm younger.
557 Watching NBA being obsessed with it.
558 I wanted to be great.
559 I wanted to be the next Jordan.
Charles: 560 what about middle school?
Marcus: 561 Um middle school I still was professional athlete.
562 Professional basketball

- 563 I would say.
564 I knew like in my head, like when you're young you think you can do everything.
565 I want to be a doctor, astronaut, but like I was main my main thing was sports, basketball.

Optimism to accomplish the lofty task of playing professional basketball was nurtured by the secure attachment relationships developed with his parents and grandparents. During elementary and middle school he knew that he wanted to be great. He also expressed interest in being a doctor or astronaut.

During adolescence, Marcus had job experiences that helped to address the career tasks of career control. As an umpire he learned problem solving skills. Just as importantly, Marcus learned to stand by the decisions that he made. It also helped Marcus to develop confidence in making judgments and decisions. His experience working for the warehouse of the soft drink company in which his father worked exposed Marcus to additional experiences in the work world. It helped him to learn the chain of command in an organization.

- Marcus: 603 My first job um I was a referee.
604 I was an umpire.
605 Baseball umpire.
606 And that did you say what skills it gave me?
607 It gives you, what does that give you?
608 That gives you problem solving skills
609 cause real time problem solving.
610 Something happens you don't know what to do you have to use what you
learned studied to make and call and stand by the decisions you make.
611 Like make a decision, stand by it.
612 Um defend it for people who want to scrutinize it
613 and they're just being assholes about it you know.
614 Helps you kind of be confident.
615 It helps with your confidence.
616 Standing by what you call what you say helps you because you're in
control of the game so it just helps you like strong, firm
617 because you have to be because they're gonna rip you apart.
618 Rip you apart.
619 Exactly it's crazy.

620 It was crazy when you first start and they know it too so they try and get you.

As a result, Marcus was able to accomplish the career task of career conception. He conceptualized how life should be led. Subsequently, he developed career confidence. Marcus expected to be successful in encountering challenges in the future.

As Marcus graduated from high school and entered college, he began to address the tasks associated with the exploration stage. Through crystallization, Marcus broadly explored ideas around his preference in a career. During the crystallization stage, people focus on the more attractive selves for exploration (Savickas, 2002). Although Marcus' athletic identity was salient, his role as a college student seemed to be more important. He didn't earn an athletic scholarship, but received funding from an academic scholarship. As a result, he used knowledge about the self and occupational information to test the reality and likelihood of playing basketball professionally.

While staying connected to basketball as a student manager and eventually becoming a member of the team as a player, Marcus explored a career related to his academic major in economics. This process is related to the developmental task of specification of an occupational choice. Marcus made the decision to return to the basketball team after graduating from undergraduate school and simultaneously pursue a master's degree in business. This decision was an important step in addressing the specification task. Marcus chose to pursue a master's degree and expand his professional network. Marcus was interested in expanding his educational background to be more marketable in a business field that relates to sports. In addition to his parents, Marcus built a support network to help him make career related decisions. When asked who he depends on to make career related decisions, Marcus responded in the following manner.

Marcus: 584 um I would say right now I depend on my mentors in the basketball,

585 athletic department here.
587 um my coach, the life skills coordinator, and former players
588 just the mentors I met here
589 who I look up to and I want to follow the same path they did.
590 I definitely
591 go straight to them.

4.3 KELLY'S NARRATIVE

4.3.1 Background Information

Kelly's parents were born in a nonwestern country. His father was born in the northern area of the country, while his mother was born in the eastern part of the country. Similarly, Kelly's grandparents (on his father's side of the family) were also from different parts of the country. His grandfather was born in the northern part of the country, while his grandmother was born in the southern part of the country. Kelly mentioned that it is uncommon for people in his native country to marry people from different areas within the country. He grew up in the northern area of the country where his father was elected a king of his community. Their family owned a petroleum gas company. Kelly has five siblings; he was the fourth child to be born. Kelly interacted with people from different geographic communities and learned to speak five different languages.

Before the age of nine, Kelly was interested in playing soccer. His father loved soccer, while his mother wanted Kelly to run track. When Kelly was nine years old, he was invited by his oldest brother to watch his basketball club practice. His brother was 20 years old at the time. One of the coaches encouraged Kelly's brother to have Kelly continue to go to the basketball club. Kelly became interested in playing basketball and began going to the basketball club on a

regular basis. When Kelly was 12 years old, he was invited to a basketball camp where coaches from the United States attended to offer suggestions on improving skills to the participants. The coaches would come back in two years to evaluate the participants.

Kelly's native country does not have middle school teams, so Kelly played for a team based in his geographical community. He referred to this team as a "street team." When Kelly was 16 years old, he was invited to play on his country's national team. This team traveled to compete against teams representing other countries across the continent. During this time Kelly also participated in a national basketball camp. As a result, he was invited to play basketball at a high school in the United States.

While living in the United States, Kelly was assigned a host family. His adoptive parents were very supportive and emphasized the importance of valuing education. Kelly's father died during his senior year of high school. Kelly did not see his father for three years prior to his father passing. Eventually, Kelly earned an athletic scholarship to University X. Kelly is majoring in economics and wants to work in the marketing field. He was influenced to select a career in business because his father owned a petroleum gas company and other members of his family owned other companies, such as clothing stores and glass companies.

4.3.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Kelly was influenced by his geographic community. He was raised in a nonwestern country. Kelly described how many youth seek sport as a way for upward mobility. Kelly noted that many children in his native country play soccer at an early age and migrate to other countries to have an opportunity to develop their skills. They make this decision with the hopes of playing soccer professionally. Many children in his native country cannot afford to pay for a quality education.

As a result, sports are considered to be very important in various geographic communities as a way for social mobility.

Charles: 0430 So kind of talk about
0431 like your communities
0432 that you grew up in
0433 and talk about whether or not
0434 sports was in important to your community.

Kelly: 0435 Yeah
0436 I think sport
0437 I think is the most important thing in my community
0438 because that's the only opportunity for the kids in my community
0439 use to be successful
0440 because one they can't afford-
0441 their parents can't afford schools
0442 and you know
0443 some people don't even know what school is.
0444 All they do is just /get up/
0445 and try to look for jobs
0446 and just business
0447 so they can have some money in their pocket.
0448 But sport is really big in my country
0449 because especially soccer
0450 that's the number one sport
0451 so a lot of kids growing up playing soccer
0452 you know every kid want to play soccer,
0453 want to be a soccer player.
0454 And then I think for me,
0455 being a basketball player in my community
0456 and coming over here,
0457 is like I think inspires a lot of kids right now
0458 just because they saw me here
0459 and they want to
0460 /just say/
0461 they want to be like me so

Charles: 0462 And you said that's kind of the only way for them
0463 to be successful?

Kelly: 0464 Yeah because that's the only opportunity
0465 we have right now
0466 because they don't go to school
0467 or their parents can't afford school

0468 so it's just

Kelly decided to play basketball because it would offer an opportunity to live in the United States. Kelly noted that there were limited opportunities to be successful in his native country due to corruption.

Charles: 0180 And why did you decide to go,
0181 why did you decide to leave your native country
0182 to play basketball in the United States?

Kelly: 0183 It's just because I have so much love for the game
0184 and I wanted-
0185 I just wanted- It's a lot of opportunity here in the States
0186 and so it's like not a lot going on back home
0187 in my country
0188 it's just-
0189 you to be successful there your parents have to be kind of
0190 wealthy and have money
0191 because it's corrupt
0192 and it's just so much corruption over there
0193 and I just chose to come here
0194 just because there's a lot of opportunity for me to be successful in life
0195 so that's why I'm here.

Although Kelly decided to migrate to the United States for better opportunities, he noted that his father was respected in the community. His father seemed to have high social status within the northern part of their country. He was elected a king in his community, and he owned a petroleum gas company. As a result, Kelly was able to focus on playing basketball as a youth. He did not feel that he needed to have a traditional job during middle school or high school. His socioeconomic status allowed Kelly to make this decision.

Charles: 0839 Did you have any jobs
0840 when you were growing up?

Kelly: 0841 I never had no jobs.

Charles: 0842 So you kind of just focused on
0843 playing basketball?

Kelly: 0844 Yeah because
0845 I never needed one
0846 because my dad,
0847 my dad was-
0848 I mean he was-
0849 he was kind of wealthy
0850 then he fell off and then he-
0851 they gave him a loyalty,
0852 he was a king
0853 and he came back up.
0854 I mean
0855 I came here when
0856 he was a king
0857 and when I left back home,
0858 I never seen him
0859 before he passed away.

4.3.3 Identity Development

Kelly's athletic identity seemed to be salient. He was exposed to sports at an early age. Sports were deemed as being important to members of his geographic community. Many of the youth in his native country played soccer and decided to migrate to other countries to develop their skills. Kelly's primary role models are Kevin Garnett and his parents. Garnett is a professional basketball player in the NBA, who Kelly respects for his passion for the game. Kelly's parents encouraged him to play sports. His mother wanted Kelly to run track, while his father wanted to Kelly to play soccer. Kelly was encouraged by his oldest brother to play basketball. Kelly's oldest brother played basketball professionally in Spain.

Charles: 0217 Okay so tell me a story about how
0218 role models influenced your life.

Kelly: 0219 you mean like any role model?

Charles: 0220 yeah any role models
0221 that you may have had in your life.

Kelly: 0222 I'm going to say like Kevin Garnett.
0223 He just shows so-
0224 when he plays-
0225 he shows passion and dedication
0226 and just the love he has for the game.
0227 Just the feelings every time
0228 he steps on the court like
0229 he shows how much he cares.
0230 He wants to win.
0231 How much,
0232 how much he really like,
0233 when he puts so much effort-
0234 he wants it,
0235 he want-
0236 he always be like successful
0237 and I just love the way he played
0238 and you know
0239 and how he represent himself,
0240 where he come from.

Charles: 0241 Okay.
0242 So Kevin Garnett.
0243 Any other role models?
0244 Or people that you look up to?

Kelly: 0245 I'm going to say probably-
0246 I don't think I have (?)

Charles: 0247 That's fine.
0248 And then how did Kevin Garnett
0249 being a role model,
0250 how did that influence your life?

Kelly: 0251 I mean it really influenced my life
0252 in that a lot of,
0253 especially in the basketball part
0254 just you know you got to keep working hard,
0255 pushing and

Charles: 0256 And did you have role models
0257 when you were younger?

Kelly: 0258 I mean I would say
0259 yeah.
0260 I mean my dad and my mom
0261 are my number one role models

0262 just because if it wasn't for them,
0263 I would never be here.
0264 They're my number one role models
0265 and I really look up to them and

Charles: 0266 When you were younger,
0267 how had being recognized
0268 for your athletic accomplishments,
0269 how did that influence your life?

Kelly: 0270 I mean
0271 when I was younger-
0272 mean my mom used to run track
0273 when she was in high school
0274 and then when I was in school
0275 she always trying to make me run track
0276 but I never liked running track
0277 because it was just too much,
0278 just too much stuff
0279 and then my dad loves soccer.
0280 And he wanted me to play soccer
0281 so that's how I started playing soccer
0282 and so one I just came home
0283 and I told my dad
0284 and then my brother wanted me to play basketball
0285 so it's three,
0286 I had three stuff going on,
0287 so one day I told my dad
0288 you know I have love for basketball
0289 and I want to be a basketball player
0290 and he was like just go for it.
0291 Whatever you want to do
0292 in life just go after it
0293 so I was like alright
0294 and that's why I stick to basketball and

Kelly is also proud of his nationality and ethnicity. Kelly was connected with a variety of cultures within his community. He is able to speak five different languages due to his exposure to various ethnic groups within his native country.

Kelly: 0199 I speak four languages, plus English.

Charles: 0200 Five including English?

Kelly: 0201 Including English

Charles: 0202 And when you were in your native country,
0203 is that common for people to speak multiple languages?

Kelly: 0204 Yeah I mean it's common
0205 because you stay around people who are from different ethnic groups
0206 so you just pick some dialects from you know
0207 like French or maybe
0208 (?) or business people.

Charles: 0209 What languages do you speak?

Kelly: 0210 I speak Hausa, /Kanuri/,
0211 I speak French
0212 but it's /not like good not fluent/,
0213 and I speak /Edo/

Charles: 0214 And then English

Kelly: 0215 Yeah English

Kelly believed that he is viewed as a role model for youth in his country. Since Kelly plays basketball in the United States, he inspires youth from his community. Some of the youth watch Kelly on television. Other kids, who do not have access to television, hear stories about Kelly through discussions with community members. He is dedicated to returning to his country to help people in his community. Kelly wants to encourage the youth of his community.

Kelly: 0306 Yeah like people really look up to me
0307 right now
0308 just because I'm here playing basketball
0309 representing my country
0310 and my family,
0311 my community,
0312 and just because
0313 /I help/ a lot of people back home.
0314 I'm just trying to be successful
0315 so I can go back home
0316 and just give back to my community
0317 and then try to encourage the younger ones coming up

0318 whatever you do in life,
0319 make sure you're real positive
0320 and don't-
0321 don't try to /shortcut/
0322 or do something different.

Charles: 0323 Now are they able to see your games on TV?

Kelly: 0324 Some of them watch my games on TV,
0325 some of them I think they don't have a TV
0326 so they just hear stories and stuff.

Kelly appreciated traditions from his native country. In particular, he was fond of cultural music from his home country. He did not listen to a lot of American music until he arrived in the United States in high school. His older brother exposed Kelly to hip hop music because his older brother traveled to play basketball internationally, but his exposure was not consistent. Kelly began listening to hip hop music once he arrived in the United States. However, he continues to listen to cultural music from his native country when he wants to be reminded of home.

Charles: 0327 How has hip-hop music and culture
0328 influenced your life?

Kelly: 0329 Not that much.
0330 I mean
0331 I know when
0332 I was back when I was younger,
0333 when I was growing up,
0334 I never experienced hip-hop music,
0335 whatever,
0336 but I know I listened to a couple
0337 because my brother he was kind of traveled,
0338 because of basketball
0339 he traveled so every time he'd come home,
0340 he kind of had like the American lifestyle
0341 so that's how I started picking up some stuff
0342 and then when I came here,
0343 I mean it /ain't/ changed nothing
0344 I mean, it just,
0345 I just listening to it,
0346 hip-hop, rap music.

Charles: 0347 So you listen to hip hop now?

Kelly: 0348 Yeah I mean I do.
0349 That's all I listen

Charles: 0350 And what did you listen to growing up,
0351 type of music?

Kelly: 0352 I just like culture music,
0353 it's nothing special about it.
0354 It's just drums and dance.

Charles: 0355 So did you all
0356 when you had celebrations
0357 was there music
0358 and you listened to it
0359 or did you listen to it just because.
0360 When did you listen to the cultural music?

Kelly: 0361 I just listen to cultural music
0362 when like I miss home
0363 and maybe I just have feelings for
0364 and I'm listening just because I miss the songs and the culture
0365 and whatever so that's when I always listen to my culture songs.

In addition to Kelly being conscious and proud of his nationality and ethnicity, he is also cognizant of perceptions based on race. Kelly believed that there were various stereotypes associated with black athletes in the United States. He believed that stereotypes included black collegiate athletes being viewed as unintelligent, disrespectful, and arrogant. Kelly was motivated by the stereotypes. He wanted to disprove these misconceptions. He began to recognize the stereotypes when he arrived in the United States. Kelly was assigned a paper related to researching how athletes are perceived. His research helped to highlight some of the stereotypes associated with the athletes in the United States.

Charles: 0643 What stereotypes are associated with being a black male
0644 college athlete.

Kelly: 0645 There's a lot of stereotypes.
0646 Like college athlete,
0647 they're not smart.
0648 They dumb.
0649 They don't listen.
0650 They're too cocky.
0651 They're not respectful.
0652 They don't know how to read or write.

Charles: 0653 How does that make you feel?

Kelly: 0654 It makes me feel really bad.
0655 It makes me want to do more
0656 so I can prove people wrong
0657 and show people
0658 that's not how you judge people and

Charles: 0659 So it kind of motivates you?

Kelly: 0660 yeah motivates

Charles: 0661 When did you first notice
0662 these stereotypes?

Kelly: 0663 It was some class I took here
0664 and yeah was it freshman year?
0665 And then when the teacher was explaining,
0666 she said write a paper about
0667 black athletes
0668 and then she told me the stereotype
0669 what they say and stuff
0700 and then when I like
0701 start notice what's going on
0702 I really like picture some stuff
0703 it wasn't right it
0704 just people just want to talk
0705 or whatever
0706 just want to talk.

In addition to being exposed to racial stereotypes associated with black male athletes, Kelly's initial exposure to the concept of racial discrimination was in the United States. While in high school, Kelly took a history class which featured videos on the Civil Rights Movement. Before this class, Kelly heard stories about slavery from his father. Also, while participating in a

basketball camp in another country, he was told stories about how institutional racial discrimination was infused into the laws. In contrast, Kelly believed that race is not really emphasized in his native country. Kelly was surprised when he saw the films in his high school history class. The films helped Kelly to conceptualize the extent of social injustice.

Charles: 0535 So describe your earliest memory of race differences.

Kelly: 0536 I going say-
0537 I mean
0538 I know
0539 I went to a good school back home
0540 because my dad really is a /good educator/.
0541 He went to school in England.
0542 I know in school
0543 they tell us about all the stories,
0544 what was going on,
0545 how slavery started or whatever but
0546 we-
0547 I think back home we don't see that.
0548 We don't even look
0549 at that aspect of races and stuff
0550 but when I started experiencing race was when I came here.
0551 Now actually when I was in the southern part of a nonwestern country for
like basketball camp
0552 and then they tell us the story
0553 when how black people got to stay
0554 and the white people staying in this place
0555 and then for the black-
0556 in order for the black people to go
0557 where the white people were
0558 you have to have like a card
0559 or something,
0560 a pass something,
0561 it's a different story
0562 so that's when I experienced my /race/.
0563 But when I came here
0564 that's when I see like the picture
0565 and the whole thing
0566 and so I mean I don't really-
0567 it don't really bother me like that
0568 but it's just I think
0569 when I came here
0570 that's when I started experiencing the racism

0571 and I see the real picture and stuff

Charles: 0572 And that's when you came to high school,
0573 when you were

Kelly: 0574 Yeah when I came to high school in the United States.
0575 Taking history classes
0576 and watching films and stuff
0577 and I saw all that was going on
0578 and you know some students didn't even get along
0579 because they different races so

Charles: 0580 Did you get treated any differently?

Kelly: 0581 I didn't get treated-
0582 I mean I was /treated equal/.
0583 I know some people talk
0584 but that don't even get to me.
0585 I don't really-
0586 I just let people do their talking
0587 and whatever you want to say,
0588 it's not going to get to me.

Charles: 0589 Now were you caught off guard
0590 when you saw differences in race
0591 or experienced racism?

Kelly: 0592 /Did you say did I see the difference

Charles: 0593 Or did it
0594 surprise you?

Kelly: 0595 Yeah
0596 I was kind of shocked
0597 just because you know I saw-
0598 when I saw the real-
0599 because I never know about the
0600 I know about his story but I didn't,
0601 I never seen the film,
0602 but when I watch it in class,
0603 my history teacher,
0604 oh that's really touching
0605 and I saw like couple,
0606 some couple films
0607 and I saw that racism
0608 that's really big here.

0609 It really happened so

4.3.4 Career Development Tasks

Kelly seemed to develop secure attachment relationships with his biological mother and father. He viewed his father and mother as being role models in his life. He lived with his biological parents until he moved to the United States during his freshman year of high school. As a result, Kelly felt safe in surviving his social environment. Kelly also developed a concern about his future as a worker. Kelly's parents and older brother encouraged Kelly to participate in sports at the age of nine. His father pushed for soccer, while his mother preferred track. However, Kelly decided to play basketball. He was intrigued by the game once he saw his older brother practice with a basketball club team. Kelly's decision to play basketball demonstrated his ability to increasingly gain control over his vocational activities. His parents were supportive of his decision.

Kelly: 0270 I mean
0271 when I was younger-
0272 mean my mom used to run track
0273 when she was in high school
0274 and then when I was in school
0275 she always trying to make me run track
0276 but I never liked running track
0277 because it was just too much,
0278 just too much stuff
0279 and then my dad loves soccer.
0280 And he wanted me to play soccer
0281 so that's how I started playing soccer
0282 and so one I just came home
0283 and I told my dad
0284 and then my brother wanted me to play basketball
0285 so it's three,
0286 I had three stuff going on,
0287 so one day I told my dad
0288 you know I have love for basketball

0289 and I want to be a basketball player
0290 and he was like just go for it.
0291 Whatever you want to do
0292 in life just go after it
0293 so I was like alright
0294 and that's why I stick to basketball and

Kelly's perception of limited opportunities in his native country also influenced his decision to participate in basketball leagues. Kelly believed that there were limited opportunities for youth in his country to be successful. He emphasized that many youth could not afford to pay for a quality education. As a result, sport is viewed as an avenue to become successful.

Kelly: 0435 Yeah
0436 I think sport
0437 I think is the most important thing in my community
0438 because that's the only opportunity for the kids in my community
0439 use to be successful
0440 because one they can't afford-
0441 their parents can't afford schools
0442 and you know
0443 some people don't even know what school is.
0444 All they do is just /get up/
0445 and try to look for jobs
0446 and just business
0447 so they can have some money in their pocket.
0448 But sport is really big in my country
0449 because especially soccer
0450 that's the number one sport
0451 so a lot of kids growing up playing soccer
0452 you know every kid want to play soccer,
0453 want to be a soccer player.
0454 And then I think for me,
0455 being a basketball player in my community
0456 and coming over here,
0457 is like I think inspires a lot of kids right now
0458 just because they saw me here
0459 and they want to
0460 /just say/
0461 they want to be like me so

Charles: 0462 And you said that's kind of the only way for them

0463 to be successful?

Kelly: 0464 Yeah because that's the only opportunity
0465 we have right now
0466 because they don't go to school
0467 or their parents can't afford school
0468 so it's just

Although, Kelly used sport to access college, it is important to note that Kelly's family seemed to have a wealthy socioeconomic background, because his father was elected a king of their community and owned a petroleum gas company. As a result, Kelly felt comfortable focusing on developing his basketball skills as a child and teenager and did not worry about finding a job for money.

Charles: 0839 Did you have any jobs
0840 when you were growing up?

Kelly: 0841 I never had no jobs.

Charles: 0842 So you kind of just focused on
0843 playing basketball?

Kelly: 0844 Yeah because
0845 I never needed /one/
0846 because my dad,
0847 my dad was-
0848 I mean he was-
0849 he was kind of wealthy
0850 then he fell off and then he-
0851 they gave him a /loyalty/,
0852 he was a /king/
0853 and he came back up.
0854 I mean
0855 I came here when
0856 he was a /king/
0857 and when I left back home,
0858 I never seen him
0859 before he passed away.

When Kelly lived in the United States, his host parents emphasized the importance of having a “Plan B” and not solely depending on basketball to become successful. They encouraged Kelly to use education as a way to create professional opportunities. Kelly became interested in the business field, particularly because of his biological family’s business ventures. Specifically, he wanted to be a “successful business man” like his father. Other relatives owned clothing companies and glass companies. As a result, Kelly decided to pursue a marketing degree at University X. Kelly’s host parents were really involved with following up about his academic progress to ensure that Kelly was maximizing his academic experience in college.

Kelly: 0739 When I was young back home
 0740 I wanted to be a soccer player
 0741 just be a successful soccer player.
 0742 It just came to a point where when you grew-
 0743 the more you grow,
 0744 it’s like things changes
 0745 and it’s just different things just come to you
 0746 sometimes you’re confused
 0747 and you don’t know what to do
 0748 and I decided I wanted to be a business man,
 0749 a successful business man like my dad,
 0750 and then when I started playing basketball,
 0751 I wanted to be a basketball player
 0752 and it’s just changing.
 0753 I came to the States
 0754 and I was like I don’t know what to do now,
 0755 but I was like what am I going to do after my basketball career
 0756 so I /need figure out what to do/,
 0757 I need a plan B,
 0758 and I came here and you know it was different story
 0759 and you got to have a major
 0760 and you have to use that after your basketball career
 0761 so it was just different.
 0762 The more you grew
 0763 the more you use stuff coming into your life.
 0764 You just have to be smart and make a good decision.

Charles: 0765 So what would be your plan B now?

Kelly: 0766 My plan B would probably be
0767 try my major economics so

Charles: 0768 So plan b is still to be a business man
0769 like your father?

Kelly: 0770 Yeah

Charles: 0771 Okay.
0772 Have you thought about what type of business
0773 you'd want to go into?

Kelly: 0774 Probably marketing

Charles: 0775 Was that influenced
0776 by the fact that your dad was in business?

Kelly: 0777 Yeah. and my family
0778 /owned a lot/ of business stuff so

Charles: 0779 What type of businesses
0780 does your family own?

Kelly: 0781 They do like gas stuff,
0782 clothing place,
0783 like glass place and stuff

Charles: 0784 And that's on your dad's side
0785 or your mom's side?

Kelly: 0786 That's my dad's side?

Charles: 0787 So the business stuff
0788 is all kind of on your dad's side?

Kelly: 0789 Yeah.

4.4 LARRY'S NARRATIVE

4.4.1 Background Information

Larry's family lived in an urban city in the northeastern region of the United States. His mother worked entry level jobs at fast food restaurants including Wendy's and Roy Rogers. They lived in neighborhoods that were considered to be governmental public housing. Larry began playing organized sports through recreational leagues offered within his community. His uncle served as a basketball coach at the local community center. He viewed his cousins as brothers and played on their sports teams throughout childhood. During different periods of time, Larry and his mother lived with his grandfather when they needed support and housing.

In the ninth grade, Larry moved to a different city in the eastern region of the United States. He was offered the opportunity to attend a private Christian high school; which was predominately African American. Four recent NBA draft selections also played at the same high school. He lived with his basketball coach. Larry was honored with some of the most prestigious high school all-American awards. Larry earned an athletic scholarship to play basketball at University X and is entering his senior year. During his junior and senior year, he appeared in the starting line-up on a regular basis. He is currently seeking a bachelor's degree in social sciences. Larry will be the first in his family to graduate from college.

4.4.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

There are a variety of contextual variables that have influenced Larry's life. Larry was raised in an urban environment. He and his mother lived in public housing, which Larry referred to as the

projects. His grandfather and uncle served as support systems for Larry and his mother. His uncle served as the basketball coach for the recreational teams throughout Larry's childhood. His grandfather provided Larry and his mother housing when they were in need.

Larry: 0088: My cousin's dad, you know,
0089: I just,
0090: he always was there for me when I didn't have stuff.
0091: He would help my mom out when I needed something,
0092: whatever like that.
0093: He also /took me to basketball/
0094: kept me doing that so that was good.
0095: And then my grandfather,
0096: he was just there for me,
0097: especially when we didn't have stuff like that,
0098: he was just give me money,
0099: give me and my cousins money,
0100: and stuff like that.
0101: He let me and my mom live at the house when we had nowhere to live.
0102: We lived /there/ for free a few years or whatever until we found a place.
0103: So I just look at the people like that
0104: who were always there for me,
0105: were always you know a positive influence on my life.

Throughout childhood, Larry utilized community resources including recreational centers within his community. He played organized basketball and football at his local community centers. While participating in sports was an outlet and positive resource in Larry's community, it seemed that Larry made the inference that he would have liked additional activities or resources to be offered.

Larry: 0030: I've just been playing in ever since I was little.
0031: You know, as a kid, especially growing up in like
0032: the area that I grew up in,
0033: urban area,
0034: the projects,
0035: that's pretty much all there is for kids to do is sports,
0036: football, basketball.
0037: And I played both when I was young.
0038: I was just playing it to have fun,
0039: playing with my friends.
0040: It was something that we did pretty much every day.

Growing up in an urban area influenced Larry to be very conscious of the experiences of youth living in similar situations. He believed that participation in sports plays a positive role and can be used as a tool to help youth change their living situation. Larry specifically mentioned that sports can be used as a way to “get out” of their community. This statement highlights his perspective that sometimes youth want or need to escape certain living situations by leaving their communities to increase their chances of being successful. As a result, Larry and his mother decided that it was in his best interest to leave his community and attend a private high school. This opportunity was made available because of his potential to be a good basketball player.

Charles: 0221: Just describe the importance of sports in your community

Larry: 0222: Okay. Sports in my community
0223: you know is very important
0224: because it's a way for a lot of kids to make it out of the community
0225: especially when you grew up in a bad area
0226: like me, myself, it was a way for me to get out.
0227: I was able to go to high school in a different area,
0228: different state, you know,
0229: being around positive people.
0230: And also you know it's an outlet for a lot of kids,
0231: just to stay out of trouble,
0232: stay off the streets,
0233: instead of going down the wrong path.
0234: So it definitely plays a major part in that as well.

Larry considered moving away from his family to attend a high school in a different state one of the major decisions in his life. His participation in basketball played a significant role in making this decision. He had a very close relationship with his mother and other family members such as his grandfather, uncle, and cousins, so this decision would involve Larry leaving his support network. The arrangements involved Larry living with his future high school coach. He

viewed this decision as “taking a risk” that was necessary to be able to help provide for his family.

Larry: 0291: The first major decision it influenced was me leaving my home state
0292: and going to a different state,
0293: leaving my family and my mom back at home,
0294: going out there on my own
0295: with a total stranger that I didn’t even know that well,
0296: I was able to take that risk and it worked out for the most part.
0297: And it also you know changed my perspective on life
0298: and my ability as far as looking at my ability with basketball and
0299: how far I could take it, how far it could go with it,
0300: how far I can run with it or whatever,
0301: as far as life, can make a career out of it.
0302: Take it seriously.
0303: Was able to go to college out of it.
0304: Look at my future out of it.
0305: How I’m going to be able to provide for my family because of it.

His life experiences have influenced Larry to relate to the stories described in the lyrics of hip-hop music.

Larry: 0170: but hip-hop plays a major role /in my life/
0171: it’s all I’ve been listening to all my life.
0172: It’s what I listen to before every game,
0173: throughout the day,
0174: in the like when I’m in the car,
0175: I mean it’s pretty much a part of your life.
0176: Part of the lifestyle that you live also.
0177: And you also can relate to some of the stuff people talk about.

Charles: 0178: What are the things you can relate to?

Larry: 0179: You know like when people talk about growing up in the
poverty area,
0180: you can see yourself,
0181: like yeah he’s talking about me.
0182: If you grew up in the same area like that, single parent home,
0183: didn’t have nothing to eat you know,
0184: /nights/ and stuff like that, didn’t have a lot of money.
0185: Being around certain people,
0186: individuals, from the neighborhood that wasn’t always good,

0187: great influences and things like that.

Growing up in an urban area also has motivated Larry to want to help youth within similar communities. He is planning to help build community capacity and provide outreach to youth who are in need.

Charles: 0410: Okay. And what do you want to do after your basketball career is over?

Larry: 0411: /I just you know/ want to go back and help kids,
0412: you know, in my community and other communities
0413: who like grew up with the same type of background that I did
0414: and didn't really have much and may have nobody to come talk to,
0415: didn't have mentors in their neighborhood.
0416: I just want to go back and help kids in that aspect
in that area.

Larry will be the first person from his family to graduate from college. He described how he used basketball to pay for the expenses related to attending a four year university. He mentioned that he would not have been able to afford to attend college if he did not receive an athletic scholarship. He is very proud that he is able to pursue a college degree. He attributed this accomplishment to work ethic and dedication. As a result, Larry believed that he has created an opportunity to provide for his family.

Charles: 0122: And how does that make you feel being the first generation college student?

Larry: 0123: Feels good.
0124: Feels great
0125: especially for me to be the first one.
0126: Definitely good, shows you know
0127: that I strived to be good, be great with what I did,
0128: was able to use basketball to get into college.
0129: It also feels good to make my mom proud.
0130: /to be able to go to college when she didn't have to pay for that/.
0131: If it wasn't for basketball,
0132: I probably wouldn't have been in college

0133: because I wouldn't have been able to afford it.

Charles: 0134: Alright. And so how does that influence kind of your outlook on basketball?

Larry: 0135: I think it influences it because
0136: it proves to me that you know anything is possible
0137: if you just work hard at it.
0138: So you basketball you have to work hard,
0139: you got to be great,
0140: work hard every day and you'll be good in basketball;
0141: your skills will get better.
0142: And it also helped me you know,
0143: go hard in basketball and I'll be able to provide for my family.
0144: that's how I looked at it.

Charles: 0145: Got it. So that's kind of like your motivation.
0146: Go hard for your family,
0147: to provide for your family?

Larry: 0148: yeah.

4.4.3 Identity Development

Larry's athletic role seemed to be an important aspect of his life. He contributed gaining access to college as result of his ability to develop skills related to basketball. Larry understood that most people need to work extremely hard at developing their basketball skills in order to play at the NCAA Division I level. As a result, he placed a lot of time and energy into developing his basketball skills. His motivation towards being great in basketball has its foundation in Larry wanting to provide for his family. Larry also seemed to be very conscious of perceptions of African American athletes. His consciousness offers insight into how race may be of high salience for Larry. He believed that he is viewed differently on campus compared to students who do not participate in varsity sports. Larry believed that people critique the actions of African American athletes more so than other students. Larry described how African American athletes

are perceived by other people as being “flashy” and having access to certain “privileges.” He believed that often times these views are misconceptions and invalid.

Charles: 0323: Tell me the story of how being a Black male athlete has affected your life

Larry: 0324: It’s affected my life in /many ways/
0325: because I’m looked at different.
0326: I’ve got a closer eye on me
0327: especially with being a black athlete,
0328: because a lot of black athletes are known to be flashy
0329: or like not great people.
0330: I mean I’m not going to say bad all the way,
0331: but just not great people.
0332: As far as like at first a lot of black athletes wasn’t accepted in the sport,
0333: so it makes you look different.
0334: And then being an athlete itself,
0335: you know,
0336: makes us look different as far as school because people think that
0337: we get certain privileges and things like that,
0338: which is pretty much not true all the time,
0339: but for the most part it’s not true,
0340: so we’re pretty much regular students
0341: but we’re looked at different in the eye of we have a closer watch on us.
0342: We’re not allowed to do certain things that regular people would be able to do.

Charles: 0343: Okay. How does that make you feel?

Larry: 0344: I mean in a way makes me feel bad that I’m just characterized as a
0345: black athlete because I’m just a regular person,
0346: just like anybody else.
0347: There are certain things that regular people do that I wish I could
0348: do but I can’t
0349: because I’m looked at closely under a magnifying glass.
0350: There are a lot of things I got to watch what I do, watch what I say
0351: and things like that.

Larry believed that other stereotypes related to African American male athletes are that they don’t work hard and are not intelligent. These stereotypes made Larry upset because he believed that he was intelligent and was committed to doing well in school.

Charles: 0371: What stereotypes are associated with being a black male college athlete?

Larry: 0372: Don't do your work.
0373: Not really that smart.
0374: You get everything handed to you.

Charles: 0375: And how do those stereotypes make you feel?

Larry: 0376: Me individually,
0377: it makes me feel kind of mad, upset
0378: that people would think that when they don't really know
0379: because I am smart,
0380: otherwise I wouldn't be here.
0381: And I do my own work,
0382: regardless of what people say, I do my own work
0383: on my own so

Larry was asked to describe what makes him proud of his racial or ethnic background. He mentioned that he was proud of African American males who are in college. He mentioned that historically there has not been large numbers of this group to attend college. He was also proud of having the first African American president.

Charles: 0360: Okay. Describe what makes you proud of your racial or ethnic background.

Larry: 0361: I'm proud to be as far as my ethnic background,
0362: just to be in college
0363: because like just being a Black male in college
0364: in the beginning those numbers weren't high
0365: so I'm glad to be a part of that.
0366: Also to be a black man in society today,
0367: when we have our first black president.
0368: I'm proud to be a part of that.

Charles: 0369: Is there anything that you're not proud of or ashamed of in terms of being a Black male?

Larry: 0370: No, not really.

Hip-hop culture has also influenced Larry's identity development. He mentioned that he can relate to the stories described in the lyrics of the hip-hop songs. Stories of overcoming poverty, living in an urban area, and having a resilient mother who sacrificed for her family resonated with Larry. Other people within Larry's community also listened to hip-hop music. He remembered hearing hip-hop music playing from homes and cars when walking down the streets of his neighborhood. Hip-hop has influenced Larry's preference in style of clothing and getting tattoos.

Charles: 0151: how has hip-hop music and culture influenced you?

Larry: 0152: It influenced me a lot because
0153: growing up where I grew up,
0154: that's all I listened to.
0155: I mean that's pretty much
0156: what you hear walking down the street, your house,
0157: watch it on TV,
0158: everybody you're around,
0159: that's about it,
0160: you got friends that do it,
0161: just for fun you listen to it,
0162: as far as fashion,
0163: that's where you get your clothes,
0164: that's how you get the trend that clothes are in,
0165: how I dress and stuff like that.
0166: And also you know,
0167: as far as me having tattoos
0168: and stuff like that,
0169: it's also a trend from like hip-hop and basketball,
0170: but hip-hop plays a major role /in my life/
0171: it's all I've been listening to all my life.
0172: It's what I listen to before every game,
0173: throughout the day,
0174: in the like when I'm in the car,
0175: I mean it's pretty much a part of your life.
0176: Part of the lifestyle that you live also.
0177: And you also can relate to some of the stuff people talk about.

Charles: 0178: What are the things you can relate to?

Larry: 0179: You know like when people talk about growing up in the poverty area,
0180: you can see yourself,
0181: like yeah he's talking about me.
0182: If you grew up in the same area like that, single parent home,
0183: didn't have nothing to eat you know,
0184: /nights/ and stuff like that, didn't have a lot of money.
0185: Being around certain people,
0186: individuals, from the neighborhood that wasn't always good,
0187: great influences and things like that.

Charles: 0188: Okay, and you feel like obviously you can relate to it,
0189: do you feel like a lot of athletes can relate to hip-hop culture?

Larry: 0190: I think for the most part a lot of athletes
0191: you know can relate to hip-hop,
0192: especially you know Black athletes.
0193: You know, most of us come from urban areas.
0194: We listened to it,
0195: grew up around it.

The role models in Larry's life influenced his decision to dedicate a large amount of time developing his basketball skills. His uncle was his coach in elementary at the recreational leagues in his community. As a result, he was introduced to the game at an early age by his uncle. Eventually, he lived with his high school basketball coach. Larry's high school coach taught him about national recruiting rankings and other "business" aspects associated with earning an athletic scholarship at a NCAA Division I institution. This inspired Larry to take developing his basketball skills very seriously.

Larry: 0240: Ninth to my senior year,
0241: I moved to a different state,
0242: an area in the eastern US
0243: I went to a private school
0244: It was like a small, private Christian school.
0245: I lived with my basketball coach.
0247: He pretty much taught me a lot about the game.
0248: Taught me a lot about the business aspect of the game,
0249: introduced me to a lot of people,
0250: talked to me you know about a lot of recruiting things like that,
0251: colleges he pretty much was the reason I took basketball serious as

0252: far as trying to find a way to go to colleges free
 0253: and you know all that stuff.
 0254: Because before I moved to a different state,
 0255: I didn't really take basketball serious.
 0256: I was just playing it to play it.
 0257: Like I never knew about like AAU and all that other stuff until I moved
 down there.
 0258: So he pretty much,
 0259: you know, is the reason why I'm here today as far as like being in college
 0260: and stuff like that.
 0261: And he's like the reason I became real good
 0262: because he had me working had every day.
 0263: Practice he told me go hard, everybody I go against go hard, go at them.
 0264: All those guys are ranked up ahead of you
 0265: and you probably can pass them if you just go at them.
 0266: And that's what I did.

Larry viewed his mother as serving as a role model. He respected her sacrifices and
 resilience. He respected her struggle to provide him throughout his childhood.

Charles: 0072: So tell me the story about your role models,
 0073: how did role models influence your life when you were younger?

Larry: 0074: Pretty much just
 0075: my mom
 0076: because she always worked hard or whatever
 0077: trying to provide for us because we didn't have much,
 0078: but she always did her best.
 0079: She always stayed strong for us,
 0080: even though when we didn't have stuff and things like that
 0081: she still would find a way,
 0082: make a way for us you know
 0083: stay strong
 0084: when it /get down or whatever/.
 0085: She worked hard when I was young,
 0086: two jobs or whatever,
 0087: when I was young to provide for us.

As a result, one of his main priorities is to be able to give back to his mother.

Charles: 0452: Rank your top three priorities in life and explain why.

Larry: 0453: Be successful.
 0454: So I won't have to go back to struggling like I did when I was younger.
 0455: Be able to help my mom.

0456: Be able to get her anything she wants.
0457: Graduate.
0458: From college.

Charles: 0459: So help you mom is number two, and then graduate from college?

Larry: 0460: yeah.

The previously discussed contextual variables have influenced Larry's development of an athletic identity, his worldviews about race and ethnicity and affiliation with hip-hop culture. As a result, Larry's perceptions of social roles that society has assigned and ascribed are also influenced. When asked about his top three roles in life, Larry offered the following response:

Charles: 0465: What would be your top three roles in life then?

Larry: 0466: be a good student,
0467: good basketball player,
0468: and a good mentor, teacher.

Charles: 0469: Who do you mentor?

Larry: 0470: I mean right now,
0471: I don't specifically mentor nobody
0472: but I just know people look up to me as far as being a basketball player.

Larry believed that his top three social roles are being a good student, a good basketball player and a good mentor. Throughout the interview he described how basketball and school could provide an opportunity to provide for his family. Larry clearly has accepted the responsibility of helping his mother. He respected her resilience and sacrifice in taking care of him as a child. Additionally, he embraced the concept of helping people living in vulnerable situations, particularly people living in impoverished areas. Accordingly, he viewed being a mentor as a social role. These factors have shaped his vocational identity and career aspirations to help his community.

Larry: 0504 Well outside
0505 just accomplish my goals,
0506 be able to go back to my community and help,
0507 as far as taking like,
0508 majoring in social work even,
0509 that degree, taking the classes that could help me.
0510 As far as how would I be able to go back and help them,
0511 what would I be able to help them with,
0512 just some of the theories and stuff that you learn.
0513 Why people act a certain way or do certain things.

Charles: 0514 So taking the classes, having that knowledge base

Larry: 0515 Yeah.

4.4.4 Career Development Tasks

When Larry was in elementary school, he wanted to be a firefighter. This decision was influenced by his interactions with firefighters who spoke on career days at his elementary school. This career aspiration gives insight into Larry's accomplishing of the career task of becoming concerned with his future as a worker. It seemed that Larry developed secure attachment relationships with his mother, grandfather, and uncle. As a result, he was able to form a positive conception of himself.

Charles: 0390: Describe your career aspirations and what you wanted to do when
0391: you were in elementary school and
0392: then middle school and when you were younger.

Larry: 0393: when I was younger, I wanted to be a firefighter.

Charles: 0394: And why did you want to be a firefighter?

Larry: 0395: I don't know.
0396: I think I just wanted to ride on the truck.

Charles: 0397: And was this like elementary?

Larry: 0398: yeah

Charles: 0399: And these are like people you saw in your neighborhood?

Larry: 0400: Plus you know in elementary you always got them coming to the school,
0401: talking and stuff like that

Charles: 0402: So they came to the school.

Their family seemed to believe that Larry would have a better opportunity of being successful if he moved to a different state and attended a private high school. This opportunity was made possible because of his potential to develop into a special basketball player. Based on developing a secure attachment relationship with his mother, Larry was able to leave his family at an early age and attend high school in a different state. Consequently, basketball became a major focal point and driver for his career aspirations in high school.

Larry: 0406: Yeah when I moved out,
0407: once I started playing basketball for real it just changed.
0408: I knew that was what I wanted to do.
0409: Play basketball.

Charles: 0410: Okay. And what do you want to do after your basketball career is over?

Larry: 0411: /I just you know/ want to go back and help kids,
0412: you know, in my community and other communities
0413: who like grew up with the same type of background that I did
0414: and didn't really have much and may have nobody to come talk to,
0415: didn't have mentors in their neighborhood.
0416: I just want to go back and help kids in that aspect
in that area.

Charles: 0417: And you're pursuing what degree?

Larry: 0418: Right now, social work

Larry developed motivation to help build community capacity with vulnerable populations. This motivation was fueled by his experiences as a child. He was interested in providing resources for youth to be able to pursue their dreams, specifically through mentorship.

As a result, he decided to pursue a bachelor degree in social work. He was interested in learning about theories and developing skills to be able to the communities he is so passionate about.

Charles: 0498 Describe the strategies
0499 you have considered
0500 for accomplishing your career goals
0501 and you can do for basketball,
0502 but I also wanted to know for accomplishing career goals outside
0503 of playing basketball.

Larry: 0504 Well outside
0505 just accomplish my goals,
0506 be able to go back to my community and help,
0507 as far as taking like,
0508 majoring in social work even,
0509 that degree, taking the classes that could help me.
0510 As far as how would I be able to go back and help them,
0511 what would I be able to help them with,
0512 just some of the theories and stuff that you learn.
0513 Why people act a certain way or do certain things.

Charles: 0514 So taking the classes, having that knowledge base

Larry: 0515 Yeah.

Larry seemed to have found a fit between his vocational identity and career aspirations. He pursued a degree that aligns with his passion of helping people. What is not clear in the interview is whether he searched broadly over various professions to narrow his decision.

4.5 LONNIE'S NARRATIVE

4.5.1 Background Information

Lonnie's entire family lived in a large city in the northeastern region of the United States. The majority of his relatives, including aunts, uncles and cousins, attended the same public

elementary, middle and high schools in his neighborhood. Lonnie's grandparents were respected by residents in his neighborhood and they were known for helping community members when in need. His grandparents also cooked large meals and invited community members to share in the meal with their family. Although Lonnie's mother and father did not stay in a relationship, Lonnie had a good relationship with his father before his father died. Lonnie and his father played basketball in the neighborhood parks. Lonnie's father passed away when Lonnie was in the fourth grade. Lonnie did not have a relationship with many of his father's children. Lonnie described how he saw 13 names listed as his siblings in his father's obituary, but only kept in contact with six of his siblings.

Lonnie developed a strong relationship with his older cousin, who is three years older than Lonnie. Due to his mother's work schedule, Lonnie spent a lot of time with his older cousin and aunt. Lonnie considered the relationship with his older cousin to be similar to a brotherhood. At an early age, they played basketball together at the courts in their neighborhood. Lonnie's mother decided to have Lonnie transfer to a boarding school in the eighth grade. He lived at the boarding school and attended classes on Mondays through Fridays. On the weekends, Lonnie continued to spend time with his older cousin. His boarding school incorporated after school programming for its students. Students were engaged in study table and other constructive activities. Lonnie's residential counselor coached Lonnie through basketball workouts as his afterschool activity.

The residential counselor also coordinated basketball leagues for students at the boarding school. When Lonnie was in the eighth grade, he was invited to try out for an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) team. Another student who played for the league coordinated by his residential advisor asked Lonnie if he wanted to try out for the AAU team. After joining his summer AAU

team, Lonnie began to travel to various tournaments and camps. He also developed a close relationship with his AAU coach. When Lonnie was 13 years old, his older cousin began to have negative encounters with law enforcement. His cousin was first arrested when he was 16 years old.

Lonnie continued to excel at basketball. He was only the second player in his high school to earn four all-state honors. He participated in prestigious high school All-American camps. Lonnie decided to transfer to another boarding school in a different state at the conclusion of his junior year of high school. The new president of his boarding school implemented new policies. The new policies included a revised dress code and restrictions related to students having tattoos. During a meeting with Lonnie's mother and the president of the school, Lonnie confirmed that he was uncomfortable with remaining at the school. He eventually earned an athletic scholarship to University X. During the study, he was completing his freshmen year was undecided on an academic major.

4.5.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Lonnie's geographical community seemed to play major role in Lonnie's life experiences. The neighborhood has crime and potential negative influences. Lonnie described how fights between rival neighborhoods were the norm. He also mentioned that gun violence was associated with his neighborhood. As a result, there seemed to be a need for youth living in Lonnie's neighborhood to find constructive activities. Lonnie gravitated toward playing basketball. Lonnie mentioned that playing basketball in AAU leagues gave him the opportunity to travel for the majority of the summer, which allowed Lonnie to be away from his neighborhood and stay out of trouble.

Lonnie: 0621 I think it was important for me
0622 because it took me away from-
0623 from all the drugs and everything
0624 that was in my neighborhood-
0625 all the violence
0626 and all that,
0627 and all the like because
0628 I'm- around my way is like I'm from 52nd street
0629 so it's like people from 60th street-
0630 I don't really mess with them like that.
0631 And there's a lot of fights
0632 sometimes people get shot-
0633 and when I first started playing basketball
0634 I wasn't home
0635 so it was like
0636 I was hearing stuff that happened
0637 but I'm like dang
0638 I could have been right there,
0639 but it was like as I kept playing
0640 it was like-
0641 it was less and less time that I was home
0642 so it was keeping me out of trouble.

Lonnie spent a lot of time playing basketball at the local courts with his older cousin. Lonnie and his cousin developed a close relationship. Lonnie viewed the relationship with his cousin to be similar to that of a brother. Lonnie and his cousin created the nickname "the two sharp boys." The boys wrote their nicknames on the basketball courts in the neighborhood. Lonnie's cousin eventually got into legal trouble at the age of 16 years old and was arrested.

Lonnie: 0088 Yeah me and my cousin,
0089 he's locked up right now,
0090 used to always-
0091 like we had a curfew,
0092 I just-
0093 because my mom used to work
0094 so I used to stay with my aunt
0095 and my cousin was more like my brother,
0096 so we used to just go to all the courts
0097 around the neighborhood
0098 and play around with the other kids and the older guys.
0099 I really started taking it serious-
0100 well he started taking it serious before I did.

0101 I went to go watch a couple of his games.
 0102 He was good.
 0103 I could see myself doing that
 0104 like one day playing ball serious,
 0105 but then he-
 0106 my cousin got caught up on the streets.
 0107 He took the drug route,
 0108 but- and my mom sent me to a boarding school
 0109 and she introduced me to a man who worked at the school
 0110 that was my residential advisor
 0111 and you know the school was so small
 0112 and middle school we didn't really have a team
 0113 so he had like his own little league
 0114 just for like students
 0115 and I just fell in love with basketball from there.
 Charles: 0116 So when your cousin-
 0117 you were kind of playing ball with your cousin,
 0118 at what age was that?
 Lonnie: 0119 I was like ten through like thirteen, fourteen.
 0120 We used to call ourselves the /two sharp boys/.
 0121 We used to write it everywhere too,
 0122 on all the courts.

Lonnie's mother was aware of the potential dangers and negative influences of their neighborhood. His mother's awareness is demonstrated in the decision to have Lonnie attend and live at a boarding school throughout the week. Although there were negative influences in his community, residents in his neighborhood attempted to be a positive influence towards Lonnie once they saw he had potential to be good in basketball at the collegiate level. If his neighbors saw Lonnie sitting on steps, they would encourage Lonnie to go and practice to develop his basketball skills at the local recreation center. The community also emphasized that they were proud of accomplishments and potential, which Lonnie describes as "showing love."

Lonnie: 0678 In my city I know,
 0679 yeah, basketball is important in my city.
 0680 That's all everybody talk about is either Meek
 0681 or basketball
 0682 or a cheesesteak or something,

0683 but in my neighborhood,
0684 basketball it wasn't,
0685 nah it's not important at all.
0686 In just my little neighborhood,
0687 that's why like so many people
0688 in around my way showed me love
0689 and they like proud of me
0690 and like they see me
0691 like I can be chilling on the steps or something
0692 like on the bad block
0693 but they-
0694 they'll /feel some type of way about that/.
0695 They'll want me to go to the gym or something.
0696 That was when I was younger.
0697 They was just trying to tell me
0698 like you don't need to be on this block right now.
0699 That's why I just spent most of my time at the rec center.

Lonnie's mother raised the family with limited financial resources. So the importance of basketball was emphasized when she sacrificed paying some of the household bills in order to send Lonnie to a basketball camp in San Diego, California. Lonnie heard his mother crying on the phone because she was stressed over the decision.

Lonnie: 0190 I remember my mom,
0191 she wanted me to go to this camp-
0192 well coach wanted me to go to this camp,
0193 but it was in San Diego
0194 and my mom didn't really have the money.
0195 She didn't have the money to send me.
0196 I just remember her on the phone crying
0197 with my uncle saying how she didn't pay one of the bills
0198 so she could send me to the camp
0199 and me and my mom's relationship from when I was younger,
0200 it wasn't that good,
0201 but I just remember her on the phone
0202 and like crying and saying telling her uncle how much she loved me
0203 and how much she didn't think I would be grateful,
0204 so ever since that day
0205 I just-
0206 I've been playing basketball for my mom
0207 for real.

Lonnie also had support from his grandparents. His grandparents were positive figures in his community. Lonnie noted that his grandparents would cook and invite members of the neighborhood to share with their family. His grandparents would also allow people live with them if they were in need. Lonnie admired his grandparents and viewed them as being his role models. Many residents in his neighborhood viewed his grandfather and grandmother as roles models. This allowed for Lonnie to be known within his community because he was associated with his grandparents. As a result, community members recognized Lonnie for being associated with his grandparents and having talent in playing basketball.

Lonnie: 0322 I always looked up to my grandma
0323 and my grandpa.
0324 My grandpa,
0325 he was like the strongest man that I knew.
0326 He was like-
0327 I don't understand how he was so nice to everybody all the time,
0328 but it was like he never was mad.
0329 If he had it /
0330 you had it/
0331 He'd cook for the whole neighborhood
0332 like it wasn't just the family.
0333 He cooked for the whole neighborhood.
0334 If you needed somewhere to stay,
0335 he'd let you stay there.
0336 I mean just people from the neighborhood.

Charles: 0337 So that made you kind of look up to him?
0338 That's something that you want to do?

Lonnie: 0339 Yeah everybody like-
0340 my neighborhood is big,
0341 but it's like everybody in the whole neighborhood
0342 looked up to my grandpa.

Charles: 0343 How did that make you feel?

Lonnie: 0344 I mean sometimes
0345 it made me feel accepted.
0346 It's like everybody already knew who I was
0347 when I walked around the neighborhood.

0348 I mean my grandma,
0349 she was like the same.
0350 Everybody knew who my grandma was.
0351 She was always,
0352 I mean my grandma was always there for me
0353 when I was going through a problem with my mom.
0354 She would always take my side,
0355 but then she passed away
0356 and my mom went through it
0357 so I was trying to be strong for my mom.

4.5.3 Identity Development

Lonnie seemed to have developed a strong athletic identity. Basketball has always been an important activity in his life. Until Lonnie was in the fourth grade, he played basketball at the playgrounds with his father. This helped to build a strong relationship with his father.

Charles: 0072 Oh your /pop's/ from there?
0073 Okay.
0074 When did your dad pass?
Lonnie: 0075 When I was in 4th grade.
Charles: 0076 Did you have like a relationship with him
0077 up until that point?
Lonnie: 0078 Yeah, we was real close.
0079 I mean him and my mom weren't together,
0080 but I used to always see him
0081 and we'd go shoot around at the courts
0082 and all that.

Subsequently, after his father passed away, Lonnie began to play basketball at the courts in his neighborhood with his older cousin. He watched his older cousin play basketball for school teams and Lonnie was inspired to "take basketball seriously." Basketball seemed to be used as a tool to develop relationships with important people in his life. Eventually, he developed a close relationship with his AAU coach. Lonnie viewed his coach as a mentor.

Lonnie: 0164 Yeah I played AAU I think 8th grade,
0165 started in 8th grade.

0166 Somebody from the little league,
0168 somebody from the league
0169 he was in my class
0170 and he played AAU for the for this team.
0171 He asked we did I want to play.
0172 He took me to the practice
0173 and he introduced me to the coach
0174 The coach that's like my mentor.
0175 He put a lot of guys in D-I colleges.
0176 He knows a lot of guys in the pro's
0177 so a lot of guys through the city
0178 I mean they play for the team
0179 or another AAU team in the city.

In addition to using basketball to help develop relationships with his father, older cousin and AAU coach, basketball was seen as a constructive activity to help keep Lonnie out of trouble. Playing AAU basketball offered safety because if Lonnie wasn't practicing, he was traveling to tournaments. Traveling to tournaments allowed Lonnie to leave his community. His AAU coach would also invite Lonnie and his friends to stay at his home to give them a break from the stressors within their community.

Lonnie: 0643 And like my AAU coach
0644 they knew how it was,
0645 where I stayed at,
0646 and he would like-
0647 I would stay up there sometimes
0648 just have like a couple of my friends
0649 and my cousin come up to his house
0650 so it wasn't that far.
0651 You know my city is not that big-
0652 it's big
0653 but you know it's not that big,
0654 so people would come up there
0655 and just chill with me.
0656 He didn't want me in no trouble.
0657 And then when I did get in trouble,
0658 my mom wouldn't let me play so-

When Lonnie attended the boarding school beginning in the eighth grade, he was given the opportunity to play basketball as his after school activity with his residential advisor. Once again, basketball was associated with being a positive activity and the importance of his participation was reinforced by people who were in supportive roles. In addition to being exposed to basketball at an early age, Lonnie also received positive recognition for playing by community members and family members. Once Lonnie began to receive city and state basketball honors, community members would encourage Lonnie to work on his basketball skills at the recreational centers instead of sitting on the porch and hanging out with friends. Community members mentioned that they were proud of Lonnie for his basketball talent. Members from his father's side of the family began to reach out to Lonnie to get connected.

Lonnie: 0379 Yeah that definitely did.
 0380 I remember
 0381 like before I started playing basketball,
 0382 I didn't know nobody.
 0383 Like outside of where I stayed at,
 0384 like my neighborhood,
 0385 I didn't hang with nobody
 0386 except like my cousin
 0387 and you know just people from around the way.
 0388 And then there was like maybe 9th grade
 0389 when I start-
 0390 when people in the city start
 0391 like my name start buzzing around the city
 0392 and just seen like people just was coming out of nowhere.
 0393 It was like family members
 0394 that I never,
 0395 like my dad's side of the family.
 0396 I don't know anybody.
 0397 I don't know my grandma.
 0398 I don't know my uncles,
 0399 my aunts.
 0400 I just know my two sisters
 0401 and my little brother.
 0402 And it was like when I started playing ball serious,
 0403 it was like everybody wanted
 0404 to come around and be a part.

0405 It was like I don't know.
0406 My mom always told me
0407 because I was-
0408 once my dad's side of the family
0409 started trying to come around,
0410 I was I mean just talking to them
0411 and like everything was cool,
0412 but my mom she warned me
0413 like people going to come out of nowhere
0414 when you start being successful,
0415 when you start doing successful things
0416 so I mean I seen a lot of people come out of nowhere,
0417 like people that I've seen,
0418 like people that I've seen
0419 wouldn't never say nothing to me,
0420 especially girls.
0421 I mean
0422 I've seen girls-
0423 I ain't even going to talk about that.

Lonnie viewed Allen Iverson as a celebrity role model. Lonnie related to Allen Iverson because he was a small guard in the NBA. The city backed Iverson since he played so well and was the main superstar on his NBA team.

Lonnie: 0365 I just-
0366 Allen Iverson was my role model.
Charles: 0367 Why was he your role model?
Lonnie: 0368 I was never so big
0369 like the other basketball players,
0370 he just was the same.
0371 He just showed me just small-
0372 small guards can still make it to the NBA.
0373 Once I started playing ball serious,
0374 that's all I wanted to do was play in the NBA.

Lonnie was also conscious of public perception of how athletes are viewed. He believed that the media helps to reinforce the idea that athletes receive special privileges that are not afforded to others. These privileges include special treatment by educators and authority figures. Although he did not provide a specific example as to how the media perpetuates this stereotype, he provided an example of how students in his high school subscribed to this view of athletes. In

his example, he described how students viewed his high school math teacher as giving him additional assistance during class because he was an athlete.

Lonnie: 0562 I think
0563 the media think that
0564 like a lot of athletes have it easy.
0565 They don't really,
0566 they don't really understand how much you have to put in
0567 to get to this point.
0568 I think,
0569 I think a lot of people just
0570 yeah that's it.
0571 I just think that the media think it's a cakewalk.

Interviewer: 0572 Have you-
0573 like have you heard it?
0574 Do they say it directly
0575 or they say it kind of indirectly?

Lonnie: 0576 Nah like-
0577 I don't know how to word it,
0578 but I know a lot of people don't think
0579 that athletes should get the
0580 - get recognized like we should,
0581 or get as much praise as we should,
0582 but I know some people think that we get special privileges.
0583 In high school,
0584 everybody thought that I had a special privilege.
0585 That wasn't the case at all.
0586 I wish I knew what a special privilege felt like
0587 in high school.

Charles: 0588 How did you feel like-
0589 why do you feel like people in high school
0590 thought that you had special privileges?

Lonnie: 0591 Because I know like
0592 I would stay after talk to my teacher.
0593 Like my math teacher,
0594 I had problems with math
0595 and I was close to my math teacher
0596 so we like developed a relationship
0597 and she would like-
0598 I would go to her in the middle of class
0599 while she at her desk
0600 and she would help me with my work,
0601 but people just took that as
0602 oh he,

0603 that's Lonnie,
 0604 like she just up there doing his work for him.
 0605 That's what a lot of people in the school thought
 0606 that she just did my work.
 Charles: 0607 And she was really just helping you
 Lonnie: 0608 She was really just helping me.

Lonnie described other stereotypes associated with collegiate athletes as people viewing athletes as being ignorant, promiscuous sexually, and not being serious academically. Lonnie viewed these perceptions as being invalid.

Charles: 0839 What stereotypes
 0840 are associated with being a Black male
 0841 collegiate athlete?
 Lonnie: 0842 Stereotypes?
 0843 That we're not smart.
 0844 That we have multiple women.
 0845 Don't do schoolwork.
 0846 There's a couple.
 0847 That all I can think of right now.
 Charles: 0848 Okay.
 0849 How do those stereotypes make you feel?
 Lonnie: 0850 I don't think they're true.
 0851 I mean as far as not doing work,
 0852 I mean that's up to you.
 0853 I mean
 0854 I know plenty of athletes
 0855 that could have went to school for academics.
 0857 As far as athletes being not smart
 0858 I think it all depend on who the athlete is.
 0859 As far as having multiple women,
 0860 it depend on who you is too,
 0861 but when people see you play
 0862 and they see you on TV,
 0863 of course girls going to fall for you.
 0864 That's just how the world is.
 0865 Don't matter if you're an athlete,
 0866 you could be a singer,
 0867 a rapper.
 0868 Once you-
 0869 it's like yeah
 0870 once they see you on tv
 0871 and see that you got a shot of being successful-
 0872 I don't think it has anything to do with basketball.

Factors that influenced Lonnie's racial identity included his neighborhood and interaction with students at a rural boarding school during his senior year of high school. Lonnie grew up in a predominately African American community until he entered his senior year of high school. His only interaction with people of different ethnicities, particularly European Americans, was as authority figures and business professionals. European Americans with which Lonnie interacted included teachers and principals. Lonnie interacted with Asian Americans at the local convenience stores. His first regular interaction with peers of different races was when Lonnie transferred to a boarding school in a rural area of state that was different than where he was raised. The school was predominately white.

Lonnie: 0740 I didn't know it was like that out there.
0741 I talked to /Deon/ from a division I university.
0742 He told me a whole-
0743 he told me some totally different-
0744 that it was poppin and all this like college.
0745 Having parties and all that.
0746 I got there and- I got there,
0747 man,
0748 it was a whole another story.
0749 It was- it was just people that was-
0750 nobody in that school was like me.
0751 It was like everybody was different,
0752 so it was like-
0753 I got used to talking to people that weren't the same as me.
0754 It was like,
0755 I never really been around white people before
0756 I think that got me ready for University X
0757 because at University X there's a lot of white kids.
0758 And I didn't really know how to interact with them
0759 before I went to my second boarding school.
0760 I think that prepared me for University X.
Charles: 0761 Prepared you for University X?
0762 Got it.
0763 So you're transitioning to each of my questions.
0764 I want to transition to talking about race a little bit.
0765 Describe like your earliest memories of like differences
0766 between races.

Lonnie: 0767 I mean,
0768 I really never
0769 met a white person
0770 unless it was my teacher
0771 or like my principal
0772 like I said until last year.
0773 I never really looked at white people any type of way
0774 or Asian people any type of way,
0775 I just never came into contact with them.
0776 Only like type of Asian people that I saw
0777 was like at the store working.
0778 So it was like my neighborhood was just all black.
0779 And then like every neighborhood I ever lived in was all black.

Lonnie mentioned that this experience helped him prepare for attending his current college, which is predominately white. During this experience, he gained insight on communicating and interacting with different cultures. Before this experience he did not realize some of the commonalities in interest and how people of different ethnicities behaved in a similar way.

Charles: 0780 So when you moved to that school in a different state,
0781 that was kind of your first time interacting people of different race
0782 on a regular basis.
0783 Talk-
0784 What did you learn for that or
0785 talk about that experience.

Lonnie: 0786 I mean
0787 I know I had to talk to them different.
0788 They didn't really understand me.
0789 I talked a lot of slang in high school.
0790 So it was like I had to talk more proper
0791 when I talk to them.
0792 It was like-
0793 At the new school,
0794 they was cool
0795 because I would try to talk like them sometimes
0796 and they would try to talk like me sometimes
0797 so it was cool.
0798 It was a good experience.
0799 That was a good experience.

Interviewer: 0800 You said that helped you prepare for University X.
0801 So kind of talk about that a little bit.

Lonnie: 0802 Because I mean

0803 I always though like around black people
0804 you had to act a certain way,
0805 but it's like nah white people act just like black people,
0806 so it's like I got more comfortable
0807 being around white people.

Interviewer: 0808 So it was a good experience.

Lonnie: 0809 Yeah.

Lonnie also noted that hip hop culture and celebrity culture have influenced his life. Lonnie believed that hip hop culture influenced his decision in getting amount and type of tattoos. It also influenced preference in clothing. Lonnie did not feel that hip hop music and culture influenced his worldviews and opinions.

Charles: 0542 Kind of switching gears a little bit,
0543 how has hip hop music and culture influenced you?

Lonnie: 0544 That's all I listen to.
0545 I don't really-
0546 well I listen to R&B too.
0547 I don't really know how it influenced me.
0548 I don't know.
0549 I guess you can say my tats.
0550 Tattoos
0551 or the way I dress.
0552 Yeah, I definitely watch and see what on the video,
0553 and see what one of the rappers is wearing.
0554 Yeah mainly with me,
0556 it just influenced my fashion.

Charles: 0557 And has it influenced how you see the world?

0558 Or anything like that?

Lonnie: 0559 No.

4.5.4 Career Development Tasks

Lonnie's mother had work responsibilities, which called for Lonnie to live with his aunt and cousin. Lonnie mentioned that he did not have a good relationship with his mother when he was young. Lonnie wanted to build a relationship with his mother that was similar to the relationship that his cousin had with his aunt. Lonnie also went to boarding school in the eighth grade, which

meant that he was away from home during the week. Lonnie recalled hearing a phone conversation where his mother was frustrated because she wanted to send Lonnie to a camp in California. His mother did not have the money to send Lonnie, so she sacrificed paying a bill. His mother not only described being frustrated at her financial situation, but also mentioned that she didn't feel that Lonnie would be grateful. Overhearing this conversation was an instrumental experience for Lonnie. He was hurt because he thought that he displayed his appreciation for his mother. Additionally, this experience was influential because at that point he dedicated his efforts in playing basketball to help his mother.

Charles: 0208 So you overheard the conversation and that hit home

Lonnie: 0209 She still don't know to this day
0210 that I heard her conversation.

Charles: 0211 And she was just saying she didn't know if you were grateful
0212 for kind of the
0213 what she was going through?

Lonnie: 0214 yeah because when I was young,
0215 me and my mom,
0216 we weren't close.
0217 She was always at work
0218 and I was always you know
0219 with my cousin
0220 and we just never really bonded,
0221 but I took upon myself to get a relationship with my mom.
0222 I seen the relationship that my cousin had with his mom,
0223 and I had that relationship with her too,
0224 but I wanted that with my own mom.

Charles: 0225 So when you heard
0226 you know
0227 your mom on the phone
0228 saying she wished she could send you to this camp
0229 and that you weren't grateful,
0230 how did that make you feel?

Lonnie: 0231 I mean it just made me feel sad,
0232 a little bit sad.
0233 A little bit angry.

0234 I mean I thought I was a grateful kid.
0235 I didn't really ask for a lot from her,
0236 but she-
0237 I mean she been through a lot with all her kids.
0238 My little sister,
0239 I mean they still go through a lot to this day.
0240 She calls me so
0241 I can kind of mediate
0242 so I think that experience helped me grow as a man.

Restraints in his relationship with his mother may have influenced his attachment relationship with his mother. Lonnie's father passed away when Lonnie was in the fourth grade. This may have influenced his indecisiveness about a career in elementary school. Lonnie may have been more concerned about survival and securing basic needs.

Lonnie: 0921 Elementary school.
0922 I don't know what I wanted to be in elementary school.
0923 I know teacher used to ask.
0924 I used to probably just say like a fireman or something,
0925 just make anything up.
0926 In middle school,
0927 that's when I started watching basketball more,
0928 it was like I just wanted to play in the NBA.

Lonnie may have developed insecure attachment relationship with his mother, but seemed to develop secure attachments with his aunt (his cousin's mother). As a result, he seemed to develop a future orientation. Lonnie is also inspired to build a positive relationship with his mother, similar to the relationship that his cousin had with Lonnie's aunt. Lonnie began to develop career concern in middle school.

Lonnie was optimistic about playing basketball. Basketball was an important activity in Lonnie's life. He played basketball to build relationships with his father, cousin and eventually his AAU coach. Playing basketball also allowed him to stay out of trouble and have relief from the violence in his neighborhood. As a result of the time spent playing basketball, his skills really

developed, and he began to be recognized for his talent. Lonnie received city and state recognition in basketball awards and honors. Lonnie related to the NBA superstar, Allen Iverson. Allen Iverson was a small guard who excelled at basketball. Iverson came from a poor background. Iverson wore tattoos and hip hop clothing, so Lonnie could relate to the NBA superstar. Lonnie was inspired to play basketball in the NBA once he entered middle school.

As Lonnie developed basketball skills, people reinforced the idea that Lonnie needed to continue to develop his basketball skills. Community members encouraged Lonnie to work out when they saw Lonnie hanging out with friends on his porch. His family on his father's side began to connect with Lonnie. He began to receive college recruitment letters. Basketball influenced decisions he made around education.

Charles: 0710 tell me the story about how basketball
 0711 influenced major decisions you made in life.

Lonnie: 0712 It influenced my college decision.
 0713 And then it influenced,
 0714 it influenced the high school that I graduated from
 0715 because I could have easily just went to West
 0716 and played.
 0717 My mom,
 0718 she didn't want me around there,
 0719 but basketball just really influenced my decision on school
 0720 and my education.

Lonnie's mother encouraged Lonnie to pursue his dream of playing basketball professionally. Lonnie did not feel comfortable with following advice from many people. His mother was one of the few people that Lonnie trusted. His mother advised Lonnie to work hard if playing basketball was his professional aspiration. Lonnie and his mother did not discuss careers outside of playing basketball professionally. Additionally, Lonnie did not have jobs growing up.

His main concern was developing his basketball skills. As a result, Lonnie did not explore a broad range of careers outside of playing basketball professionally.

Charles: 0935 So currently
0936 who do you depend on to help you make decisions
0937 about a professional career?

Lonnie: 0938 My mom
0939 and just my mom.

Charles: 0940 That's the main person you trust on that one?

Lonnie: 0941 Yeah I don't think it's good to have
0942 a whole bunch of different opinions
0943 in your ear

Charles: 0944 Okay.
0945 What advice has she given you?

Lonnie: 0946 I mean
0947 she just she just told me
0948 if NBA's really my dream,
0949 just keep working hard
0950 and don't do- don't do nothing to jeopardize it.
0951 Don't put nothing before it.
0952 When you're on the court,
0953 just give it your all.
0954 Play hard.
0955 And never give up.

Charles: 0956 Have you guys talked about
0957 careers outside of the NBA?

Lonnie: 0958 Nah.
0959 Not really.

Charles: 0960 Did you have any jobs growing up?

Lonnie: 0961 Nah.

Lonnie's main priorities in college were his family, basketball, and school. Lonnie believed that his experience with basketball would help in pursuing a career after his professional

career has concluded and help in developing life skills. Particularly, Lonnie mentioned that his experiences with basketball have taught him how to be loyal, which is a very important value for Lonnie.

Lonnie: 0972 I mean basketball
0973 it just –
0974 basketball taught me to be a loyal person.
0975 When I was playing with-
0976 I played with my AAU team,
0977 and we weren't,
0978 when I was playing,
0979 we was kind of broke.
0980 It was like
0981 only tournaments I was playing was local
0982 and like Philly, Delaware, Jersey, New York.
0983 It as like
0984 somebody else on my team,
0985 he didn't think he was getting publicity
0986 that he deserved
0987 or whatever you want to call it,
0988 so he left and he went to go play with a different team,
0989 and that team,
0990 that's like our rival
0991 but it's like a real rival
0992 like we don't like them.
0993 And my coaches don't like their coaches
0994 and he went to go play with them
0995 and my coach I seen-
0996 probably he was one of our best players
0997 and our coach he was like-
0998 he was like upset,
0999 sad,
1000 because he treated us like his own kids
1001 like fed us all day and all that
1002 and he went to go play with the enemy,
1003 but then when that didn't work out
1004 and he tried to come back,
1005 and I seen it
1006 and my coach doesn't hold grudges.
1007 He let him come back,
1008 but I seen it in the other players
1009 and other players' faces.
1010 We talked-
1011 didn't really-

1012 wasn't really feeling that.
1013 So like can't always just go where who's winning.
1014 You got to ride with-
1015 you got to ride with your team.
1016 Win or lose.
1017 Can't be just bandwagon,
1018 just hopping team to team.
1019 That's what I /understand/.
1020 Playing with my AAU team
1021 taught me to be loyal to the people that's loyal to you.
1022 And don't go for coaches telling you they promise you sneakers
1023 and gear and all that,
1024 just ride out with your team.

Interviewer: 1025 So loyalty is the big thing.

Lonnie: 1026 Yep.

Interviewer: 1027 How will your experiences with sports
1028 help once your basketball career has ended?

Lonnie: 1029 I mean like loyalty.
1030 Loyalty is deeper than basketball.
1031 You got to be loyal in whatever you do.
1032 You got to be fully committed.
1033 You can't be in a relationship with your wife
1034 and not be loyal,
1035 not be loyal to her,
1036 have kids with her and not be loyal to your family.
1037 So I think loyalty is a big thing to me.
1038 I think if-
1039 I just think that will help me as a man.

During the study, Lonnie was completing his freshmen year and undecided on a n academic major.

4.6 CONCLUSION

Each narrative features life experiences that have influenced the student-athletes' worldview. Each student-athlete has constructed their reality in a unique fashion. All of the narratives offer insight into the drive, motivation, determination, and resilience of each student-athlete. The narratives provide context for understanding how each student-athlete will conceptualize experiences and relationships in the college environment. Specifically, the narratives offer a micro level view of how each student-athlete has constructed their career development attitudes. While each student-athlete has a distinctive story, there are commonalities that surface throughout the narratives. The next chapter highlights these common themes.

5.0 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four featured four narratives from selected student-athletes interviewed in the study. The narratives are presented to provide insight on the uniqueness of their life experiences. Since each narrative has integrity as a separate passage, the other nine narratives are provided in Appendix A. Chapter five is designed to describe common themes among the narratives and particularities. It is also an opportunity for me to analyze and interpret the meaning behind the student-athletes' responses to the interview questions. The broad categories of 1) developmental contextual factors, 2) identity development, and 3) career development tasks were utilized to offer consistency with the narratives in chapter four.

The research problem described in chapter one highlights that there is limited research in applying racial identity in vocational psychology. As a result, there is a need to conduct research related to African Americans from a variety of backgrounds and social economic statuses (Brown & Pinterits, 2001). Researching role identity can help college administrators identify possible strengths of African American male college student-athletes, which may promote empowerment among this group. The study was designed to better understand the experiences of African American male collegiate athletes, so we can have insight into factors that influence their worldview.

A common theme in this study is that athletic identity is salient in all of the student-athletes. Many of their life experiences that have helped to shape their worldview involve sports. The study is focused on how role identity is related to career development attitudes among collegiate African American male student-athletes. While the research problem describes lack of studies on applying racial identity in vocational psychology, one of the potential practical problems associated with the student-athletes in the study involves the threat of identity foreclosure. If a student-athlete develops a foreclosed athletic identity, they may not leave room to embrace the student role and develop skills for careers outside of playing professional basketball.

Discussions about career aspirations with my former college teammates planted a seed of curiosity for me about the concept of identity foreclosure. In particular, a discussion resonated with me. During his last year of competition in college, I asked a former teammate about his plans if he didn't have an opportunity to play basketball professionally. My former teammate responded, "every time I think about not making it, I work harder." As a result, I became curious about how his life experiences differed from mine. I became curious about how those life experiences helped to shape his worldview and conception about his role in the college environment.

Identity foreclosure is one theme described in this chapter. There are a range of other themes presented during the interviews that affect the worldviews of the student-athletes in this study. This chapter explores the commonality of experiences among the student-athletes in the study. Furthermore, this chapter explores how the particularities of the student-athlete's experience relate thematically to the literature. Concepts related to 1) developmental contextual factors, 2) identity development, and 3) career development tasks are described.

5.2 STUDENT-ATHLETE SURVEY RESPONSES

The vast majority of the analysis in this chapter is related to the student-athlete responses to in-person interviews, in which I posed questions about influential experiences in their life. The qualitative approach is dominant in this study. Additionally, the student-athletes were asked to complete three surveys, including the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS), the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) and the Career Development Inventory (CDI). The results of their responses are summarized in Table 5.1. A noteworthy figure to highlight includes all of the student-athletes seemed to have salient athletic identities based on the AIMS. In this study, lower scores are associated with an athletic identity. Responses of “1” or “2” on the Likert scale indicate that the participant identifies as an athlete. All of the student-athletes in the study average overall AIMS score were below 2.5. Average scores of 6 or 7 would have indicated that athlete role was an insignificant factor in shaping the student-athletes self-concept. The student-athlete responses in this study indicate that the athletic role was influential.

When the athlete role is viewed as part of a person’s self-concept, it has the potential to influence social relationships, activities, and the way an individual processes experiences (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). Basketball seemed to be an influential factor in all of the student-athletes’ lives. Playing basketball influenced decisions about which high schools and college to attend. The student-athletes shared experiences that involved family members, friends or significant others which were often connected to playing basketball. Beyond being a routine activity, playing sports seemed to help shape how the student-athletes formed perceptions about their realities.

Responses to the interview questions described how playing basketball seemed to help shape how the student-athletes formed perceptions about their realities. For example, many of

the student-athletes perceived that students and faculty in college held negative stereotypes about athletes. Since the athlete role seemed to be salient, the participants interpreted experiences on campus as it related to their role as a college athlete at University X and in their communities. Based on their AIMS scores, the athlete role influenced their conceptualization of how they were being perceived on campus and in their communities.

Over commitment to the athletic role may lead to dysfunctional practices such as over training, anxiety when not training or the use of performance enhancing drugs (Horton & Mack, 2000). The student-athletes in this study did not seem to display this dysfunctional behavior. However, the importance placed on the athletic role may conflict with other roles and activities (Horton & Mack, 2000). Their time commitment to playing sports was tremendous. The student-athletes were dedicated to developing sport-related skills for the majority of their lives. Although the athlete role seemed to be salient in all of the student-athletes' lives, some of the student-athletes seemed to display a balance in other roles and reference group orientations. In particular, some of the student-athletes also embraced the student role more than others in the study. While many did not seem to display over commitment to athlete identity leading to physical issues, emotional health issues, or social isolation, career immaturity seemed to be an issue for some of the student-athletes who did not explore career fields outside of playing basketball professionally.

The public regard domain of the MIBI is related to one's perception of how other groups positively or negatively view African Americans (Sellers et al., 1998). All of the student-athletes responded in the 3 to 5 range related to the public regard category based on the MIBI. This indicates that the student-athletes may believe the public has somewhat negative perceptions of African Americans. In contrast, all of the student-athletes in the study, except for Kelly,

responded in the 1 to 2 range for private regard. The private regard subscale refers to the extent that to which an individual personally regards his or her own racial group (Sellers et al., 1998). Kelly scored 4.0 on the private regard subscale indicating that he had neutral and possibly negative feelings towards being African American. However, it is important to note that Kelly was born in a non-western country, so he may identify as being black racially, but not African American in regards to his ethnicity.

The student-athletes' responses to the public regard subscale are related to their perception of negative stereotypes towards African American male student-athletes. Many of the student-athletes described how other students on campus held negative stereotypes including the African American males being unintelligent and lazy academically. The student-athletes perceived other negative stereotypes to be that African American male student-athletes were promiscuous sexually and considered flashy. Research indicates that a major determinant of stereotypes towards African Americans is formed around African American temperaments, physical abilities and intelligence. Many stereotypes have been associated with African American males being physically superior and intellectually inferior (Sartore & Cunningham, 2006). The student-athletes in this study perceive behaviors by colleagues in class as aligning with these stereotypes.

Centrality is related to whether race is a core aspect of individual's self-concept (Steinfeldt et al. 2010). Adrian and Chuck were the only two participants to score 1 and 2 in the centrality subscale. Chuck and Adrian's scores seem to reflect that race is a significant influence in how they conceptualize their experiences, since it is a major part of their self-concept. The other student-athletes scored between the 2.75 to 4.0 range. These scores seem to indicate that race is a factor influencing their self-concept, but not as extensively as Chuck and Adrian.

The majority of student-athletes in the study responded in the 3.44 to 5.11 range for the nationalist ideology. These scores indicate that the student-athletes do not completely agree with the core line of logic that African Americans should be in control of their own destiny without collaboration or input from other groups (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). In comparison to the assimilationist and humanist subscales, the majority of student-athletes' responses to the MIBI indicate that they are not in favor of the characteristics of the Minority ideology. However, Ben and Larry's scores to the minority scale were lower than the assimilationists and humanists ideology. Their responses indicate that they are in favor of focusing on commonalities by all minorities including awareness of marginalization based on classism, racism, sexism, heterosexualism and ableism (Steinfeldt et al., 2010).

The student-athletes' scores on the CDI indicate that they are in need of support related to understanding the world of work. This category is designed to measure an individual's knowledge of types of occupations and ways to obtain and succeed in jobs (Savickas, 2000). Adrian, Chuck and Marcus scored the highest in the career planning category, which indicates that they have been involved with post-high school activities around planning. The majority of student-athletes seemed to have substantially higher scores in the career exploration category compared to the other categories. This category is designed to measure the individual's willingness to find and utilize resources for career planning (Savickas, 2000). These responses indicate that the student-athletes are willing to utilize career resources when provided. Although Bernard, Kelly and James scored higher individually in the career exploration category compared to the other categories, when compared to their teammates' career exploration scores, their scores were considerably lower.

There did not seem to be a trend associated with year in school and scores in the four career categories. Bernard had the lowest scores in the four categories. His life experiences may have influenced his ability to complete tasks in the growth stage of career development. Although he exhibited resilience to overcome obstacles in his social environment, it was difficult as a child to focus on his future as a worker when he was concerned about his basic physiological and safety needs. While Lonnie's scores were higher than some of his teammates on the CDI, his responses to the interview questions seemed to demonstrate that he did not explore or plan for a career outside of playing basketball. This observation raises the concern that the responses to the CDI may have been different if the student-athletes were asked to respond by reflecting on career aspirations other than a professional basketball career. Other figures provide descriptive data to complement the individual narratives of each student-athlete. Their responses to these surveys provide additional information about each student-athlete's identity and worldview. The subsequent sections of this chapter explore the commonality and particularities of experiences among the student-athletes in the study by highlighting their responses to the interview questions.

Table 5.1: Student-Athlete Survey Responses

Name	Ath. Year	Ath. Identity Meas. Scale (AIMS)	Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)							Career Development Inventory (CDI)			
			Centrality	Ideology				Regard		CP	CE	DM	WW
				Assimil.	Humanist	Minority	Nation.	Private	Public				
Adrian	Fr.	1.14	1.88	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.33	1.00	4.33	67%	88%	6%	1%
Ben	Sr.	2.00	3.50	3.00	3.11	2.67	4.00	1.67	3.50	25%	68%	1%	1%
Bernard	Jr.	2.43	3.50	4.11	2.44	4.11	4.78	1.83	4.33	1%	13%	1%	1%
Chuck	So.	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.22	3.33	2.78	1.17	4.83	58%	61%	34%	27%
Corey	Fr.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
James	Sr.	1.71	3.25	1.00	1.33	2.00	2.78	1.00	3.83	25%	30%	7%	1%
Kelly	So.	1.86	4.00	4.33	3.44	4.44	5.11	4.00	3.67	5%	7%	8%	1%
Larry	Jr.	1.86	3.00	3.00	2.22	2.56	3.44	1.00	3.83	28%	96%	4%	4%
Leland	Fr.	2.43	3.19	1.78	2.00	2.89	3.89	1.33	3.17	20%	85%	13%	9%
Lonnie	Fr.	2.29	2.88	2.56	2.44	3.89	4.89	1.33	4.50	20%	53%	42%	22%
Marcus	Sr.	2.29	2.88	1.44	1.67	4.78	4.78	1.33	3.00	40%	60%	2%	8%
Mike	So.	1.43	2.75	3.00	3.00	3.78	4.78	1.67	3.17	10%	82%	1%	1%
Sam	So.	2.43	3.38	2.67	2.11	3.33	4.00	1.00	3.17	9%	79%	22%	7%

Key: Ath. – Athletic; Assimil. – Assimilationist; CP – Career Planning; CE – Career Exploration; DM – Decision Making; WW – World of Work

5.3 DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXUAL FACTORS

5.3.1 Geographic Community: Importance of Sports Displayed through Public Recognition by Community Members

Many of the student-athletes in this study were influenced by their geographical community, such as neighborhoods or their city. Particularly, community members offered recognition to the student-athletes when they excelled at basketball. The recognition was presented in an array of forms. For example, local newspapers ran features on the student-athletes in high school or

community members encouraged the young men to keep working hard to develop their game. The recognition for the student-athletes' athletic performance and potential reinforced two messages 1) that this group was special compared to their peers and 2) that being successful is related to excelling in sports.

Sam was featured in a news article for his athletic talent in the eighth grade. His community formally recognized Sam for his athletic accomplishments through the local newspapers, but also informally through conversations. Sam's recognition was intensified because his older brother excelled at basketball and football in high school and college. Sam's second oldest brother is seven years older than Sam. He eventually earned an athletic scholarship to play football at a NCAA Division I institution. When Sam was younger, he believed that he was growing up in his brother's "shadow." He was always being compared to his brother. At times, the continual comparisons to his brother were annoying. Sam wanted to be viewed as his own person. However, Sam also viewed the comparisons as serving as a motivational factor. It inspired Sam to want to be better than his brother at basketball.

Sam's community did not have many people earning athletic scholarships to Division I institutions. As a result, Sam and his brother received a lot of recognition for the athletic ability in the local newspapers. Since his second oldest brother was seven years older, they received media attention simultaneously. As Sam's brother's college career concluded at his university, his brother received local media attention because he was a NFL prospect and excelling in college athletics. Simultaneously, Sam received media attention because he excelled in high school locally and was a Division I college prospect.

Recognition of athletic talents can also inspire community members to attempt to ensure the well-being of the student-athlete. Community members seemed to feel a need to protect the youth who lived in their neighborhoods and showed the potential to have athletic talent. Although there were negative influences in Lonnie's community, residents in his neighborhood attempted to be a positive influence towards Lonnie once they saw he had potential to succeed in basketball at the collegiate level. If his neighbors saw Lonnie sitting on steps and not engaged in productive activities, they would encourage Lonnie to go and practice to develop his basketball skills at the local recreation center. The community also emphasized that they were proud of his accomplishments and potential, which Lonnie described as "showing love".

In addition to having encouragement from community members, Lonnie also received positive recognition for playing basketball from family members. Before receiving recognition as being one of the best players in the city and state in basketball, Lonnie did not hear from many of his family members on his dad's side of the family. After Lonnie began to receive accolades for his basketball talent, members from his father's side of the family began to reach out to Lonnie to become connected. Harrison Jr. et al. (2002) describe how for African American males, involvement in sports is a powerful determinant of social acceptability. Lonnie's experiences with community and family members are examples of how African American males are encouraged and possibly pressured to play sports. He was accepted by community members, who "showed him love" based on his ability to play basketball.

5.3.2 Geographic Community: Community Pride

Similar to community members exhibiting recognition for their youth's athletic talent, community members also displayed pride in hometown sport teams. Various communities are

embedded with sports traditions. Sports can serve as a tool for communities to build cohesion. Community pride is displayed when local teams win state championships or when local talent excels at the collegiate and professional level. Ben's community has a tradition of youth excelling in athletics at the collegiate and professional level. Ben participated in the local "Bitty" League designed for local youth to be engaged in sports. Eventually, Ben played for the local high school. Youth viewed Ben's local high school players as role models. For Ben, the pride of playing for his neighborhood high school was also embedded because his family members played for this high school.

Many of the youth living in Ben's neighborhood respected the athletes who played sports for the local high school. There is only one public high school in the area and the community offers its support. During childhood, Ben admired a high school basketball star who attended the local high school. The athlete currently plays in the NBA. Ben also admired his older cousin, who played for the local high school and eventually played for a NCAA Division II institution. Ben used sports to earn an athletic scholarship to attend a local private Christian high school. He attended this school during his ninth and tenth grade years. However, he decided to transfer during his eleventh and twelfth grade years. He wanted to have the opportunity to play for his neighborhood high school. Ben wanted the opportunity to attend high school with his friends and family and just as importantly, carry on a tradition of attending the neighborhood high school. The tradition of sports in Ben's community resonated with him, creating a loyalty to the community.

Similarly, James recognized how his city's pride in sports served as a tool for community cohesion and capacity building. James mentioned that sports are an essential part of the neighborhoods within his city. He viewed sports as serving the role of bringing the community

together. While his family encouraged James to participate in sports, recognition for his performance in the community also influenced James to value sports. James mentioned that the community embraces high school teams that play well, which contributes to community members being more positive when the teams are performing well. James believed that sports play a role in helping community members have a sense of unity. Adrian also noticed that the tradition of sports was associated with community members having pride in local high school sports teams. Additionally, he mentioned that his community showed pride in supporting the college and professional teams near the city in which he was raised. Many people within the community attended high school basketball games. They also supported the professional teams by attending the games and wearing the team's apparel.

An example of Adrian's geographical community's allegiance to their local sports teams includes their reaction to Adrian's college decision. During high school, Adrian received a lot of positive media coverage as a local talent. When Adrian was in the tenth grade, he verbally committed to attending a large university in his state. Subsequently, he decided that attending that institution was not the best decision. As a result, he explored attending other institutions. Once the local newspapers were notified that Adrian was not attending the university in his state, they published negative articles about his decision.

Although the articles hurt him, Adrian had a support network that helped him deal with the criticism. His parents served as his main support in this situation. Nevertheless, this is an example of how Adrian's community valued sports. Specifically, the community members expected the local high school athletes to attend universities within the state. Adrian perceives that presence of multiple basketball courts in his geographical and ethnic communities as being another symbol of the importance of sports in his community; particularly basketball. Aspects of

his racial identity that influence his perception of basketball courts in predominately African American communities are explored in later sections of this chapter, but it is important to note that Adrian perceives the presence of basketball courts in his community as signaling some type of significance related to sports.

Throughout history, sport has served several functions within African American communities including 1) providing the opportunity for social mobility, 2) building community cohesion, 3) creating community leaders and role models, 4) enhancing social interaction, 5) discrediting racial stereotypes, 6) providing white Americans with their first interaction with blacks and 7) displaying public symbolism of racial progress (Hartmann, 2000). For example, during the 1920s through the 1940s, sport helped to build cohesion in African American communities at a time when there were intra-racial cultural differences between southern born and northern born blacks (Ruck, 2011). Additionally, segregation forced Africans Americans to interact and stick together to survive in their geographic communities. As teams shifted from sandlot baseball to professional, Ruck (2011) describes how baseball's role in the African American communities functioned to strengthen this cohesion.

Baseball encouraged that sense of cohesion both locally in cities such as Pittsburgh and Chicago, and nationally, across an increasingly dispersed black America. In Pittsburgh, the Grays and Crawfords offered heroes for an otherwise fractured black community. Nationally, black teams created a highly visible institution with aura of accomplishment that fostered a positive sense of an emerging black America. (p.45)

Similar to past generations, the student-athletes in this study experienced sport serving the function of building community cohesion and pride. As athletes within these communities, they assumed the responsibility of representing their geographical community. The student-athletes were conscious of how community members took pride in local teams and came to together to support these teams. Although contemporary social context is different from the 1920s through

1940s era, sports have remained a staple in African American communities across the country. This trend seems to be a tradition that has been passed down through the generations.

5.3.3 Geographic Community: Using Sports to Escape their Community

Throughout many of the interviews, there was an overarching theme associated with using sport to leave or “escape” their community. Many of the student-athletes identified risk factors that caused them to view their community as being unsafe. They also identified obstacles within their communities that threatened to impede on their future success. Risk factors within Ben’s community were a major factor that helped to shape Ben’s development. As described previously, Ben’s community emphasizes the importance of sports at an early age through their recreational leagues, including the Bitty League.

In Ben’s community, the importance of sports is also reinforced through the community’s pride in high school sports. Although there seemed to be resources for developing youth through sports, there were obstacles that could impede on youth’s educational, social, and psychological development, including poverty and crime. There seemed to be a perception that participation in sports is one of the few avenues for youth to use to escape and create better living situations. At the age of fourteen, Ben was told that the only way to escape his community was through playing sports. This perception further embedded the message that sports are an avenue to success. However, this perception also indicated that community members felt a need to leave the community to be successful. While Ben’s community had many characteristics that could be viewed as assets, this perception was a clear threat to the community’s ability to build capacity.

Growing up in an urban area influenced Larry to be very conscious of the experiences of youth living in similar situations. Larry believed that participation in sports can be used as a tool

to help youth change their living situation. Larry specifically mentioned that sports can be used by youth as a way to “get out” of their community. This statement highlights his perspective that sometimes youth want or need to escape certain living situations by leaving their communities to increase their chances of being successful. As a result, Larry and his mother decided that it was in his best interest to leave his community and attend a private high school in a different state. This opportunity was made available because of his potential to be a good basketball player.

Larry considered moving away from his family to be one of the major decisions in his life. His participation in basketball played a significant role in making this decision. He had a very close relationship with his mother and other family members such as his grandfather, uncle and cousins. Thus this decision involved Larry leaving his support network. The arrangements involved Larry living with his future high school coach. He viewed this decision as “taking a risk” that was necessary to be able to help provide for his family.

Corey was determined to be the first person in his family to graduate from college. Although basketball became very important in Corey’s life, it wasn’t his major priority until high school. Corey’s major focus was on how to escape his environment, which included adults using and selling drugs. When asked about his top priorities, Corey’s mentioned that he was committed to not using drugs or alcohol, being surrounded by positive people and completing school. Corey demonstrated the resilience to prevent his social environment from impeding on his ability to gain access to college. Corey was motivated by wanting to escape the risk factors presented by his family and within his neighborhood.

In contrast, Mike mentioned that basketball is more important than school at this point. He viewed basketball as an opportunity to provide to for his family, particularly his mother and daughter. His top priorities were being a good father and being able to get his family “out of the

hood.” He was interested in helping his family live in a neighborhood that has residents of a higher socioeconomic status in a community that is considered safe. Mike viewed basketball as a tool to provide for his family and accomplish his goals in life. Once again, the student-athletes who live in low socioeconomic communities had the perception that in order to be successful and provide for their families, they need to leave or escape the community in which they were born. Basketball was viewed as a tool to do so.

Kelly was also influenced by his geographic community. He was raised in a community in a nonwestern country. Kelly described how many youth seek sport as a way for upward mobility. Kelly noted that many children in his country play soccer at an early age and migrate to other countries to have an opportunity to develop their skills. They make this decision with the hopes of playing soccer professionally. Many children in his country cannot afford to pay for a quality education. As a result, sports are considered to be very important in various geographic communities in his country as a way for social mobility. Kelly decided to play basketball because it would offer an opportunity to live in the United States. Kelly noted that there were limited opportunities to be successful in his country due to corruption.

Utilizing the ecosystems perspective, when the social environment does not provide for the needs of its systems, it causes stress. Systems within a social environment naturally seek equilibrium. The systems interact with each other to achieve their goals. The systems within an environment may have a coping capacity and resilience, but if their needs are not met the systems are at risk of life stress (Lesser & Pope, 2011). The student-athletes in the study, who expressed a need to escape their community, demonstrated that the social environment was not providing for the systems within that community. As a result, the student-athletes felt stress. Although they were able to display resilience and coping capacity to overcome obstacles

presented in their community, the student-athletes believed that basketball could be used as a tool to escape.

5.3.4 Basketball used as a Constructive Activity

Some of the student-athletes viewed sports as being a constructive activity that helped to promote positive social development. The student-athletes emphasized that they used sports to help stay out of trouble. Sports consumed time that could otherwise be used to engage in negative activities. It seemed to teach lessons associated with discipline, persistence, teamwork, and work ethic. Although Sam played basketball at a high level in high school, his time was not completely consumed with playing basketball as a youth. He played a variety of sports and participated in many activities as a child. He played baseball, enjoyed skateboarding, snowboarding, biking, hitting golf balls, and created games in the woods. He met most of his life-long friends through playing games in the neighborhood. These activities also served as a way for Sam and his friends to have fun in a constructive manner.

According to James, in addition to building community capacity and cohesion in the African American communities, participation in sports may be related to lowering crime. This comment implies that sports bring community members together, but also provide youth with a constructive activity as an alternative to drug activity, violence, and other forms of crime. Chuck's mother kept him involved in organized sports. Chuck's mother was concerned with certain unhealthy activities that could distract youth growing up in their home city. Chuck mentioned that youth can get involved in unhealthy and dangerous activities if they do not have constructive outlets. He played baseball in elementary school and eventually played organized basketball in middle school and high school.

Corey's five uncles lived in the same house with Corey, his mother, sister and grandmother. Members of his family had issues with using drugs and alcohol. Negative experiences with this environment inspired Corey to be committed to not using drugs and alcohol. Corey made a commitment to not use drugs so that he could live a different life than his relatives. Corey's geographical community also seemed to have negative influences associated with drug use and selling in his neighborhood. Corey viewed playing basketball as a constructive activity that had the potential to have a positive influence on his life. This was a way to distinguish Corey from the negative factors that surrounded him.

When Corey was in the sixth grade, his father was murdered through gun violence. After the death of his father, Corey lost interest in playing basketball. Although Corey did not have a great relationship with his father because he was not consistently in his life, Corey was affected to the point where he was disinterested in playing basketball. His father was also involved with selling and using drugs. However, when Corey spent time with his father, they played basketball. Family members encouraged Corey to continue to play basketball. They emphasized that playing basketball would make his father proud. Corey decided to continue to play basketball. While in elementary and middle school, Corey played basketball at the local parks. However, the courts were not a safe environment. People would go to the local parks and gamble on the basketball games. In addition to gambling, there were fights. However, Corey partially attributes his ability to stay out of trouble to the fact that he was always playing basketball.

Lonnie's neighborhood also had crime and potential negative influences. Lonnie described how fights between revival neighborhoods were the norm. He also mentioned that gun violence was associated with his neighborhood. As a result, there seemed to be a need for Lonnie to find constructive activities. Lonnie gravitated toward playing basketball. Lonnie mentioned

that playing basketball presented the opportunity to travel to other cities to play in tournaments. The summer teams traveled for the majority of the summer. Playing AAU basketball allowed Lonnie to be away from his neighborhood and stay out of trouble. His AAU coach would also invite Lonnie and his friends to stay at his home to give them a break from the stressors within their community.

Lonnie spent a lot of time playing basketball at the local courts with his older cousin. Lonnie and his cousin developed a close relationship. Lonnie viewed his cousin as a brother. Lonnie and his cousin created the nickname “the two sharp boys.” The boys wrote their nicknames on the basketball courts in the neighborhood. Lonnie’s cousin eventually got into legal trouble at the age of 16 years old and was arrested. Lonnie’s mother was aware of the potential dangers and negative influences of their neighborhood. The mother’s awareness is demonstrated in the decision to have Lonnie attend and live at a boarding school throughout the week. When Lonnie attended the boarding school beginning in the eighth grade, he was given the opportunity to play basketball as his after school activity with his residential advisor. Once again, basketball was associated with being a positive activity and the importance of his participation was reinforced by people who were in supportive roles.

5.3.5 Role of Male Figures: Emphasis on the Importance of Sports

Family pressure plays an important role in the early socialization of boys. Often, boys are encouraged to participate in sport because a father, older brother, or uncle had success in sport (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). Social learning theory can help conceptualize how athletes develop identities and learn sport roles. A key concept related to social learning theory is the significance of role models (Buford May, 2009).

Role models can be considered people who influence an individual's behaviors, attitudes and aspirations. Family members, peers, and others who have sustained contact can be considered direct role models (Buford May, 2009). Traditionally, the African American community relies heavily on family for social support, so introduction to sport has greater impact on the child when it comes from the family. Furthermore, African American families often believe that there are fewer options for achieving success for African American boys. Limited options in conjunction with high expectation of success through sport can result in parents pressuring African American boys to pursue sport (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009).

Many of the student-athletes were directly influenced by males who were in their lives. Some of the student-athletes built relationships with their biological fathers. Some of the student-athletes had fathers who served as their coaches during elementary and middle school. Others developed relationships with their older brothers. A commonality among the male relationships was that the males in their lives emphasized the importance of sports. As a result, many of the student-athletes embraced the athletic role as a part of their identity. Participation in sports was a ritual among males in many of the student-athletes' families. Particularly, the student-athletes were steered toward playing basketball.

Playing sports was a staple in Marcus' family, for example. His father had an extraordinary basketball career at a NCAA Division I institution. He was eventually inducted into the university's hall of fame. Marcus was introduced to basketball at very young age. He watched his father play pick-up basketball games and referee basketball games. Also, Marcus' grandfather on his father's side of the family was very athletic when he was younger. Marcus described how his grandfather would emphasize the importance of physical training and preparation. Since Marcus' mother and grandmother emphasized academic preparation, he

seemed to be able to develop a balance between academic and athletic development at an early age.

Similarly, Sam viewed his older brothers as being role models. He was inspired to excel in sports because his brothers were talented and developed sport related skills. Sam was influenced to listen to rap music because he followed his brothers' interests. He listened to the same hip hop artists that his brothers preferred. This example is important because it highlights how Sam wanted "to do everything they were doing." In addition to listening to hip hop artists, Sam's older brothers played basketball and football at a high level during high school and college, which influenced Sam to also be interested in playing sports at a high level.

At an early age, *athlete* and *student* were core roles for James. He began playing basketball and football at the age of nine. His father was his coach until he entered high school. His father helped him develop his basketball skills through his coaching and also structuring a daily workout routine. This daily interaction and commitment to the sport helped to build a strong father-son relationship. James' father did not play basketball in college, so he decided to read books and attend coaches' clinics to learn more about basketball to be an effective basketball coach.

James and his father had a close bond, which was strengthened through sports. When James won the Most Valuable Player award at a local basketball tournament at the age of nine, his father was extremely proud. This was an award that his father aspired to earn as a youngster. Using to sport to build a relationship with their father was also a major theme in Leland's life. He was exposed to playing basketball at the age of seven and acknowledged that his father was his first coach. His father was the coach of his YMCA recreational team. Leland and his father used sports as a way to bond and build their relationship.

5.3.6 Role of Male Figures: If Biological Father is not Present and Active

There were circumstances where the males in the student-athletes' lives were not the biological father, but served the traditional father role. Specifically, the male who served this role was a basketball coach. In addition to coaching, these males accepted the responsibility of housing the student-athletes, providing food, being a positive role model, and participating in other activities typically facilitated by the biological father in other families. The student-athletes' relationship with their coaches reinforced the message that basketball was an important aspect to their success, including building relationships. In addition to filling the need of having a supportive male, the coaches influenced the student-athletes' perception of the role of basketball in accomplishing their career and social goals. Basketball was affiliated with achieving success and building meaningful relationships with the males in their lives.

Participating in organized basketball provided Bernard with the opportunity to begin a relationship with his coach who filled the father role in Bernard's life. Bernard began living with his coach and his family in the seventh grade. As a result, Bernard was able to receive the support needed to live a healthy life. Bernard's coach has continued to serve in this role, particularly with helping Bernard in making important decisions.

The role models in Larry's life influenced his decision to dedicate a large amount of time developing his basketball skills. His uncle was his coach in elementary school at the recreational leagues in his community. As a result, he was introduced to the game at an early age. Eventually, he lived with his high school basketball coach when he moved to a different state. Larry's high school coach taught him about national recruiting rankings and other "business" aspects associated with earning an athletic scholarship at a NCAA Division I institution. In addition to filling the need of a supportive male in Larry's life, his coach also influenced his perception of

the role of basketball in accomplishing his career and social goals. This inspired Larry to take developing his basketball skills very seriously.

In addition to the support received from his mother and grandparents, Mike utilized community resources such as recreational leagues to provide social support. As a child, he participated in basketball leagues through the local youth association. His mother was extensively involved with his basketball teams. She eventually began coaching his teams while he was in elementary school. Mike developed a strong relationship with his mother. She has been very supportive and served as his primary caregiver throughout his life. He considers his mother to be one of his role models and his number one supporter. Mike eventually developed a very strong relationship with his AAU coach. Mike became close friends with his AAU coach's son through playing basketball on the same team. Mike spent a lot of time at their home with his family. Mike believed that his AAU coach has always been supportive. He viewed his AAU coach as being a father-figure.

Lonnie seemed to have developed a strong athletic identity. Basketball has always been an important activity in his life. When Lonnie was very young, from the first grade until the fourth grade, he played basketball at the playgrounds with his father. Subsequently, after his father passed away, Lonnie began to play basketball at the courts in his neighborhood with his older cousin. He watched his older cousin play basketball for school teams and Lonnie was inspired to "take basketball seriously." Basketball seemed to be used as a tool to develop relationships with important people in his life. Eventually, he developed a close relationship with his AAU coach. Lonnie viewed his coach as a mentor.

Traditionally, African Americans rely heavily on family for social support, so introduction to sport has greater impact on the child when it comes from the family (Johnson &

Migliaccio, 2009). Many of the student-athletes in this study depended on their father for social support. If the father was not present or active in their lives, the student-athletes sought social support from other people, including a mother or another relative. Some of the student-athletes gravitated towards a non-family member, specifically a basketball coach to provide social support. They viewed the basketball coach as a relative, serving as a father-like figure. According to Buford May (2009) the coaches in the student-athlete's lives can be considered direct role models.

5.3.7 Family History with Higher Education: First Generation College Students

The student-athletes' family history with higher education seemed to be an influential factor in their social and academic development. If the student-athlete was a first generation college student, they typically grew up in a low socio-economic household. The family's household income affected the communities in which they were raised. Many of the student-athletes who were first generation college students viewed basketball as a way of accessing higher education. They experienced success at an early age through basketball and conceptualized basketball as an avenue for obtaining success in the future. The student-athletes accepted the challenge of being the first in their family to graduate from college. They viewed earning a college degree as an obligation and embraced the responsibility. The student-athletes displayed a sense of pride in knowing that they could be the first in their family to graduate from college.

Ben's socioeconomic status is an environmental factor that affected his development. He was raised in a single parent household with a low family income. As the oldest child, he accepted the responsibility of helping to provide for the house while in high school. Ben will also

be the first in his family to graduate from college. This accomplishment is a great source of pride for Ben. Bernard's experiences in childhood and adolescence are also influenced by his family's socioeconomic status and educational background. Until Bernard entered the eighth grade he was living in a single-family household, and there are indications that his family had financial difficulties. Bernard was raised by his mother until he entered the eighth grade. Bernard's parents completed a job corps program so his father and mother's formal level of education are equivalent to a high school education. Lack of financial stability and his parents' level of educational attainment may have affected Bernard's future aspirations during childhood. When asked about his career aspirations in elementary school, Bernard mentioned that he was only concerned with "just getting by."

Later in the interview, I asked for clarification about what he meant by "I was just getting by," and Bernard mentioned that he was "focused on survival," Bernard and his older sister were responsible for taking care of their basic needs during periods of their childhood. Circumstances prevented Bernard's mother from having a traditional role in providing care for Bernard and his sister. Bernard was concerned with his physiological needs of food, shelter, and safety. As a result, self-actualization was not a priority at the time. Due to his living situation, it was decided that it was in Bernard's best interest to live with his best friend's father and mother. When Bernard's basic needs were provided, he was able to focus on going to college and achieving self-actualization.

Sam was raised in a household with low income. Evidence of their family's socioeconomic status is associated with their mother's educational level. Sam's mother was a single parent. She eventually earned an associate degree, but did not obtain this degree until after her oldest son was born. The three boys also shared a bedroom for the majority of their

lives. Sam appreciated and respected his mother's sacrifice and hard work into making sure her sons' needs were provided. As a result, he viewed his mother as a direct role model. Sam values dedication, hard work, and the importance of sacrifice. Sam hopes to exercise these values with his son.

There are a variety of contextual variables that have influenced Larry's life. Larry was raised in an urban environment. The assumption can be made that his family had limited financial resources. His mother, who provided the single income to the household, worked entry level jobs at fast food restaurants, including Wendy's and Roy Rogers. They lived in public housing, which Larry referred to as the "projects." Additionally, Larry is the first person in his family to attend college. His grandfather and uncle served as support systems for Larry and his mother. His uncle served as the basketball coach for the recreational teams throughout Larry's childhood. His grandfather provided Larry and his mother housing when they were in need. Larry described how he used basketball to be able to pay for the expenses related to attending a four year institution. He mentioned that he would not have been able to attend college if he did not receive an athletic scholarship. Larry is very proud that he is able to pursue a college degree. He attributed this accomplishment to work ethic and dedication. As a result, Larry believed that he has created an opportunity to provide for his family.

Mike seemed to demonstrate that he developed skills related to career confidence in childhood as he transitioned into his senior year of high school and eventually his freshmen year of college. Throughout his life, he continued to develop his basketball skills. He viewed this skill set as an asset which would be the key to his enrolling in a NCAA Division I institution. Similar to Larry, Mike believed that if he did not capitalize on earning a basketball scholarship, he would be required to attend a community college near his neighborhood. He acknowledged that he

would be the first person to go to college directly from high school, and he viewed earning a basketball scholarship as being the main avenue to do so.

Lastly, Corey seemed to value education. He was determined to be the first person in his family to graduate from college. Although basketball became very important in Corey's life, it wasn't a major priority until high school. Corey was very talented but did not take basketball seriously until high school. Corey's major focus was on how to escape his environment, which included adults using and selling drugs. Corey's top priorities were not using drugs or alcohol, being surrounded by positive people, and completing school.

The socioeconomic situation of the student-athletes influenced how they perceived accessing college. The first generation college students were motivated to gain access to college by using basketball as a resource. While there is economic diversity across the African American community, African Americans represent a higher percentage of working class and poor, as well as those living in inner cities (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). Basketball seemed to be a cost efficient sport that was made accessible to the student-athletes as children. There were basketball courts available in their neighborhoods and local recreational leagues.

The first generation college students in this study, did not view earning an academic merit scholarship as realistic. Strain theory describes how deviance results from particular social arrangements in society. The kind of deviance depends on whether society provides the means to achieve cultural goals (Macionis, 2009). For example, Mike and Larry believed that they would not be able to afford college without playing basketball. They did not view earning an academic merit scholarship as a realistic means for accessing the college of their choice. As a result, they used basketball to obtain success and gain access to college. Mike and Larry used unconventional means for accessing higher educational opportunities, which could lead to

wealth. However, they did not revert to crime or deviance. Mike and Larry used athletics and implemented hard work and dedication to achieve their goals.

5.3.8 Family History with Higher Education: Student-athletes who have Parents who Graduated from College

The student-athletes who had parents who graduated from college benefitted from their parent's experience. Their family income seemed to be aligned with middle class socio-economic status. As a result, there seemed to be less risk factors associated with crime in their neighborhoods. The basic physiological needs of food, shelter and safety were not an issue, so the student-athletes could focus on their future. These student-athletes were also able to reference their parent's experience with higher education. They were able to form presumptions about how attending college maybe because they could use their parents' experience as a reference. They were encouraged to be concerned about their future as a worker at an early age.

Parents' and main caregivers' socioeconomic level can play a tremendous role in shaping an individual's career pattern. Both of James's parents attended college. His father did not complete his undergraduate degree, but attended as a student-athlete who played football at a Division I university. His mother earned a bachelor's degree from a college. Both parents worked to provide for the family. His mother provided the primary income as a human resources manager, while his father worked as an electrician. At an early age, James's mother emphasized the importance of education. His mother ensured that homework and school related responsibilities were completed each night.

When James was in high school, his mother also emphasized that it was important for him to graduate from college, considering he would be the third person in his family to

accomplish this goal. Being the third person to graduate from college served as a motivator. Similarly, Chuck was encouraged by his family members to attend college. He had the expectation that he would attend college at a young age. Both of his parents attended college. As a result, there seemed to be an emphasis on the value of higher education. More importantly, there was an expectation that Chuck would attend and graduate from college. His mother served as a role model and instilled certain values. In addition to the importance of education, these values included honesty, integrity and work ethic.

Leland's father eventually earned a master's degree in business administration. Although Leland did not directly disclose his socioeconomic status during the interview, his father's education indicates that they were possibly in a middle class family. His mother attended college, but did not complete a degree. However, when living with his great-grandparents, Leland slept in a bedroom with two siblings. This indicates that the family may have been more aligned with a working class socioeconomic status. Leland mentioned that living with his great-grandparents was a good experience because it gave him a sense of "not having much" growing up.

Leland's father earned a master's degree in business administration. His father helped spark an interest in math and science during middle school and high school. As a result, Leland also developed an interest in pursuing a career in business or engineering. Once Leland arrived at University X, he decided to pursue a degree in business administration. In particular, he was interested in pursuing a career as an accountant.

Marcus parents' socioeconomic level and educational background seemed to have created educational standards and expectations for Marcus. Both parents graduated with an undergraduate degree, while his mother earned a master's degree. Marcus mentioned that his grandparents on his mother side of the family also emphasized the importance of education.

Marcus' main role models were family members, including his parents and grandparents. During the interview, Marcus emphasized that family members stressed the importance of education. This encouragement helped to motivate Marcus to excel academically at an early age. In particular, Marcus highlighted how his mother's side of the family was particularly instrumental in stressing the importance of education.

The student-athletes who had parents who attended college benefitted from their parent's experience. These student-athletes were able reference their parents experience so they could form expectations of how college would be. More importantly, a standard was established that the student-athletes should attend college and that education was of importance. The student-athletes were able to also reference their parents' experience in the working world to form perceptions about the process of establishing a career.

5.3.9 Relationship with Capitalism: Student-athletes Definition of Success

The student-athletes live in a capitalistic society. They seemed to have internalized capitalistic values specifically equating success with being able to live a certain quality of life financially. Many of the student-athletes sought to be wealthy. If they were not consumed with becoming wealthy, they were interested in having a certain standard of living and quality of life. For many of the student-athletes, basketball was a key component to achieving success throughout their lives. At an early age, basketball earned positive public recognition in their communities. For some of the student-athletes, they earned basketball scholarships to private high schools. Lastly all of the student-athletes in the study, except for Marcus and Chuck, earned athletic scholarships that covered the costs associated with attending University X.

The majority of student-athletes in the study connected their definition of success with playing basketball. They either viewed excelling at basketball as a means to achieving success or completely defined success as excelling in basketball. The student-athletes who viewed basketball as a means of becoming successful defined “success” as being able to take care of their family or potentially earning a wage that will offer a middle to upper class standard of living. They viewed playing basketball at the collegiate level as a way of obtaining an athletic scholarship to a university. They also viewed playing basketball as an avenue to earning a salary, if given the opportunity to play professionally.

The student-athletes who did not receive an athletic scholarship viewed basketball as being an important aspect of their life, but did not perceive playing basketball professionally as a viable option. There was a greater emphasis on careers outside of playing basketball for the student-athletes who didn't earn an athletic scholarship. These student-athletes developed a strong athletic identity and viewed basketball as a significant experience. However, other roles were also significant. Marcus and Chuck would be able to find other avenues for feeling successful if they did not excel at basketball. Some of the student-athletes who earned an athletic scholarship could also find other avenues to achieve success outside of the basketball. However, there is a group of student-athletes whose definition of success is dependent on their performance athletically.

When asked how he defines personal success, Mike mentioned that he wanted to play professional basketball so that he can provide for his mother and daughter. Mike emphasized throughout the interview that he was motivated to be successful so that he could help his mother and family. Mike utilized basketball as a means to access a career and college education. Larry also mentioned that he wanted to be able to provide for his family, particularly his mother. He

viewed basketball as being a tool to do so. Unlike some of the other student-athletes in the study, Sam was not interested in becoming wealthy. He just wanted to live a comfortable lifestyle. However, he also mentioned that he was focused on being able to provide for his child.

Kelly's perception of limited opportunities in his native country influenced his decision to participate in basketball leagues. Kelly believed that there are limited opportunities for youth in his country to be successful. He emphasized that many youth cannot afford to pay for a quality education. As a result, sports are viewed as an avenue to become successful. Although, Kelly uses sport to access college, it is important to note that Kelly's family seemed to have a wealthy socioeconomic background. His father was elected a king of their community. Additionally, his father owned a petroleum gas company. As a result, Kelly felt comfortable focusing on developing his basketball skills as a child and teenager and did not worry about finding a job for money.

Strain theory describes how deviance results from particular social arrangements in society. The kind of deviance depends on whether society provides the means to achieve cultural goals. Often people believe that the United States, the "success story" is someone who gains wealth and status through talent, education and hard work (Macionis, 2009). The student-athletes used basketball as a means to access education, wealth, status and success. Strain theory explains their actions as innovation because they used an unconventional to achieve cultural success (Macionis, 2009). However, they did not revert to crime or deviance. The student-athletes used athletics to access higher education. They still implemented hard work and dedication to achieve their goals.

5.4 IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

5.4.1 Athletic Identity: Exposure to Sports at an Early Age

Johnson and Migliaccio (2009) describe four components that work in conjunction with each other to establish the athletic identity as a primary identity in African American boys' self-understanding. The first component is introduction and access to sport at an early age. The majority of student-athletes in the study were exposed to basketball at an early age. As a result, participating in sports is one of the most consistent activities in the student-athletes' lives. The student-athletes receive the message that basketball is significant in shaping how they view the self.

The athletic role seemed salient in Ben's life. Growing up in his geographical community played a tremendous role in his development of a strong athletic identity. He was introduced and had access to sports at an early age. He played in the local Bitty Leagues at eight years old. Every year, he was selected to be a member on the all-star team through the Bitty League. The all-star team traveled to compete against neighboring cities and towns.

Sam's older brothers were a major influence because they exposed Sam to sports. His brothers participated in sports and encouraged Sam to develop his basketball skills at an early age. Sam's oldest brother emphasized playing defense and the importance of being in good physical condition, while his second oldest brother emphasized dribbling and passing skills. The role of athlete seemed to be a part of Bernard's self-concept. It has influenced his social relationships and activities. Bernard was exposed to basketball at a young age. Bernard was

introduced to basketball through his older cousin. After his cousin passed away, Bernard was inspired to continue to develop his basketball skills in the local parks in his neighborhood.

Similarly, Adrian was exposed to basketball at very young age. He was given a small basketball hoop at the age of one. Adrian played in a variety of recreational leagues while in elementary school. During elementary school, Adrian received recognition and accolades for his basketball skills. He earned all-star team accolades and won trophies for league championships. Adrian began traveling for summer tournaments in middle school. During the ninth grade, he was featured in the starting lineup on the varsity high school team, which was a position held all four years. Playing basketball at a high level became an important part of how Adrian was identified.

5.4.2 Athletic Identity: Relationship between Sports and Role-models

Based on Johnson and Migliaccio's (2009) research, in addition to being introduced and having access to basketball at an early age, the African American boy begins to relate to a reference group. In particular, the boys relate to professional athletes who serve as role models for attaining the American Dream. These dynamics help to further develop and solidify a boy's athletic identity. Many of the student-athletes view their parents as being role models. However, they also referenced college student-athletes and NBA players as serving as role models. Specifically, they view professional athletes as being not only successful in their sport but also wealthy. As the student-athletes develop their skills, they view being a professional athlete as a career that is achievable and realistic. If they are not able to play sports professionally, basketball is viewed as an avenue to accessing college. As a result, collegiate and professional athletes

serve as role models for attaining the American Dream. When family members excel athletically at the collegiate and professional level, the message is reinforced further.

Ben began to relate to athletes as role models. He admired his older cousin who played at the local high school. His cousin earned an athletic scholarship to a NCAA Division II institution. He also viewed a current NBA player who attended his local high school as a role model. The NBA player grew up in Ben's hometown and earned a scholarship to a Division I university. Seeing his role models excel in basketball motivated him to work harder in developing his basketball skills. His mother also emphasized the importance of staying involved in sports as a way of staying out of trouble.

Lonnie was optimistic about playing basketball professionally. Basketball was an important activity in Lonnie's life. He played basketball to build relationships with his father, cousin and eventually his AAU coach. He used basketball as a constructive activity to stay out of trouble and away from the violence in his neighborhood. As a result of the time spent playing basketball, his skills really developed and he began to be recognized for his talent. Lonnie received city and state recognition in basketball awards and honors. Lonnie related to the NBA superstar, Allen Iverson. Allen Iverson was a small guard who excelled at basketball. Iverson came from a poor background. Iverson wore tattoos and hip hop clothing, which also allowed Lonnie to relate to the NBA superstar. Lonnie aspired to play basketball in the NBA once he entered middle school.

Kelly was exposed to sports at an early age. Sports were deemed as being important to members of his geographic community. Many of the youth in his home country played soccer and decided to migrate to other countries to develop their skills. Kelly's primary role models are Kevin Garnett and his parents. Garnett is a professional basketball player, who Kelly respects for

his passion for the game. Kelly's parents encouraged Kelly to play sports. His mother wanted Kelly to run track, while his father wanted to Kelly to play soccer. Kelly's oldest brother encouraged Kelly to play basketball. Kelly's oldest brother played basketball and eventually played professionally in Spain.

Marcus' most influential role models were his parents and grandparents. Although Marcus mentioned that public figures served as role models, his family served as the chief role models. He spent time bonding with his father through sports. Marcus' father was inducted into his university's hall of fame for his accomplishments while on the basketball team. Additionally, his grandfather used sports to teach life lessons such as knowing the importance of training and preparation. Since Marcus viewed his father and grandfather as role models, he imitates desirable qualities that they display. One of the desirable qualities exhibited by his father was a commitment to athletics.

James was exposed to basketball and football at a young age. He spent time bonding with his father through sports. Since James viewed his father and mother as role models, he imitates desirable qualities that they display. Similar to Marcus, one of the desirable qualities exhibited by his father was a commitment to athletics. His father was a former student-athlete at a NCAA Division I university. In addition, he served as James's football and basketball coach in elementary and middle school. Equally as important is the influence of his role models. His most influential role models were his parents. James seemed to be particularly impressed with his mother's success professionally considering she grew up in a poor environment. Throughout the interview, James noted that he respects people who can overcome adversity. He is particularly impressed with his mother's path to success.

5.4.3 Athletic Identity: Public Recognition and National Rankings

The first two components that Johnson and Migliaccio (2009) describe as working in conjunction with each other to establish the athletic identity as a primary identity in African American boys' self-understanding have been discussed in previous sections of this chapter. The third component in establishing an athletic identity is related to having social recognition of the identity. This leads the boy to immerse himself in the identity. The recognition can be developed through the community, his peer groups, or the media. Examples of social recognition through the local media and community members have been explored in the developmental contextual factors section of this chapter.

Additionally, some of the student-athletes have experiences with national ranking publications. The student-athletes were taught that exposure through AAU summer leagues are important in earning a scholarship. Many of the student-athletes decide to play for a different AAU team to gain more exposure with college coaches. They want to play in the prestigious tournaments and camps. Playing in the prestigious tournaments and camps also increases the likelihood that they will be featured in a high school national ranking publication.

5.4.4 Athletic Identity: Identity Foreclosure

The last component Johnson & Migliaccio (2009) describe that helps to establish the athletic identity as a primary identity in African American boys' self-understanding is related to identity foreclosure. As the child's athletic identity develops, other aspects of the self can become limited through identity specialization. This process may lead the child to rejecting other activities and identities, fully immersing themselves in an athletic identity. If the student-athlete develops a

foreclosed athletic identity, they are in danger of not embracing other experiences, particularly experiences that develop the student role. If the student-athlete does not develop embrace the student role, they will fail to explore viable career options outside of playing basketball professionally. As a result, they will not see the need to develop transferable skills related to other professions.

During Sam's sophomore year of high school, he was consumed with seeking his goal of playing in the NBA. People advised Sam to have a secondary plan, but he believed that he would have the opportunity to play professionally in Europe, if he was not drafted by a NBA team. This perspective changed when Sam entered the eleventh grade. He began to see talented guys fall short of their aspirations play professionally because of injuries. Similarly, during this time, Sam's brother was the starting quarterback at a NCAA Division I university and did not make the final roster for a NFL team. His brother's experience helped to confirm that he needed to reflect on professions of interest in addition to playing basketball professionally.

After earning a basketball scholarship, he decided to major in social sciences. He believed that this major will help his preparation for a coaching career, once his basketball playing career has concluded. Sam mentioned that his education is a more important priority than basketball at this point in his life because he wants to be prepared once his playing career has ended. When Corey entered college, he was focused on playing professional basketball in the NBA. However, Corey observed that other former student-athletes from University X did not make a team in the NBA. Additionally, these former student-athletes were returning to campus to complete their degree. Corey was motivated to not leave campus before completing his degree.

Lonnie's main concern was developing his basketball skills. As a result, he did not explore a broad range of careers outside of playing basketball professionally. Lonnie's main

priorities were in college are his family, basketball and school. Lonnie believed that his experience with basketball will help in pursuing a career after his professional basketball career has concluded, and help in developing life skills. Particularly, Lonnie mentioned that his experiences with basketball have taught Lonnie how to be loyal, which is a very important value for Lonnie. His sole dedication to basketball may have been at the expense of developing other roles and career interests.

While there are benefits to having a salient athletic identity, there are also potential drawbacks. Over commitment to the athlete role may lead to dysfunctional behavior. Specifically, over commitment can lead to the restrictions of the development of a multidimensional self-concept (Horton & Mack, 2000). The student-athletes who seemed to have a foreclosed athletic identity did not develop other aspects of the self-concept. For example, Lonnie seemed to not be concerned with developing the student role so he could explore careers outside of playing sports. However, Corey and Sam exhibited a foreclosed athletic identity, but transitioned into embracing other dimensions of their self-concept.

5.4.5 Stereotypes: Unintelligent and Privileged

Many of the student-athletes in the study have perceptions about stereotypes associated with being an African American male student-athlete. Themes around being viewed as unintelligent surfaced throughout the interviews. While people honored their athletic abilities, they routinely encountered perceptions that they were unable to compete in an academic setting. These stereotypes did not seem to hinder the student-athletes' confidence in school. Many of the student-athletes mentioned that they were motivated to prove the stereotypes to be invalid, or they did not believe in the stereotypes. However, the negative perceptions seemed to hinder

relationships with students and professors. If the student-athletes did not trust colleagues in the class or professors, they seemed to be less inclined to engage in the discourse of the class. Additionally, dealing with negative perceptions seemed to be another stressor to manage. They were forced to balance the stressors of managing a strict practice and competition schedule. The stress of consistently performing during athletic competition was combined with the stress of managing relationships with people who hold negative perceptions of their academic ability.

Three of the student-athletes in the study described an incident in a college algebra class when asked to describe stereotypes associated with being an African American male student-athlete. The incident involved a student accusing the student-athletes of not being serious about their academic regimen and responsibilities. The student-athletes viewed the student's comments as an example of the negative stereotypes associated with being unintelligent and privileged. While there is validity in the student-athletes' view of the student's comments as being biased, the student-athletes also seemed to not be conscious of how talking in class may have been a distraction to other students and how their presence may have changed the dynamics of the class.

Corey was conscious of stereotypes associated with being an African American male student-athlete. The main stereotype described by Corey is that African American male athletes are afforded special privileges regarding academic responsibilities and expectations in college courses. Corey described an example in a college algebra class. Another student in the class became frustrated when student-athletes were talking during the lecture. The frustrated student made the comment that she actually paid for the class and believed that student-athletes were not taking the class seriously.

The frustrated student's comment indicated that she perceives that student-athletes are given a "free" education and additionally, that student-athletes are not serious about their

education. Corey believed that this perception was invalid and biased. He noted that although student-athletes missed multiple classes due to athletic commitments, they were excelling in the course. Corey mentioned that they put forth effort outside of the class to keep up with the course requirements. They participated in tutoring in the academic center on campus, study sessions in hotels, and studied on buses.

Mike was also aware of the stereotypes associated with African American male athletes. Specifically, he described how African American athletes may be viewed as deficient intellectually and having others complete their course work in college. Mike also used the math class experience as an example of the stereotypes associated with African American male collegiate student-athletes. Mike highlighted that the student in the algebra class asked the student-athletes to “please be quiet; some of us actually do our work.” As a result, the student-athletes in the class were upset because they knew that they put forth effort academically.

Ben believed that African American athletes are held to different standards in comparison to other college students. He believed that people view African American athletes as having access to more resources. He also believed that a stereotype associated with African American athletes is that they are arrogant. Sam is aware of the media’s influence in shaping public perception about athletes. Sam believed that there has been a negative perception of athletes not being diligent students. However, he believed that there have been recent trends of also promoting athletes has being able to excel academically. He used a commercial featured by the NCAA which highlighted the recent trends in graduation rates for minority student-athletes as an example. Sam noted that he understood that these were misconceptions and stereotypes of collegiate athletes. Sam was not influenced by these perceptions. He was aware of his academic goals, which included earning a master’s degree.

Sam believed that the main stereotypes associated with athletes are that they do not attend class regularly, do not persist and graduate when in college, and they have other people do their assignments. Even though Sam is conscious of these stereotypes, he did not allow the stereotypes to affect his academic aspirations and behavior. James viewed these negative stereotypes as a social injustice and chose to speak out against it in a particular class. He was confident in his academic background when entering college. He also highlighted that he had exceptional time management skills because of his athletic travel and practice regiment.

Larry believed that other stereotypes related to African American male athletes were that they don't work hard and are not intelligent. These stereotypes made Larry upset because he believed that he is intelligent and has a work ethic related to his college courses. Chuck was also conscious of stereotypes associated with African American athletes. Chuck believed that predominate stereotypes of African American male collegiate athletes were that they have poor work ethic and that they are not intelligent. Chuck was annoyed by the stereotypes because he did not agree with this perspective. He was bothered by this perception specifically because he earned an academic scholarship. When people are informed that he earned an academic merit scholarship, they are surprised. Additionally, they viewed Chuck as the exception on the team. He informed people that this perspective is not accurate; actually, his teammates are also intelligent.

Adrian was conscious of the public's perceptions of African American male athletes. Adrian believed that a common stereotype associated with African American male student-athletes was that they lack intelligence. Adrian is not bothered by the stereotype because he was confident in his academic abilities. Adrian's mother and grandmother reinforced the importance

of academic performance throughout his life. The grandmother and mother expected Adrian to maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout high school and college.

Lonnie was also conscious about of how athletes are portrayed through the media and other public outlets. He believed that the media helped to reinforce the idea that athletes receive special privileges that are not afforded to others. These privileges include special treatment by educators and authority figures. Although he did not provide a specific example as to how the media perpetuates this stereotype, he provided an example of how students in his high school subscribed to this view of athletes. In his example, he described how students viewed his math teacher as giving him additional assistance during class because he was an athlete. Lonnie described other stereotypes associated with collegiate athletes as people viewing athletes as being ignorant, promiscuous sexually, and not being serious academically. Lonnie viewed these perceptions as being invalid.

In addition to Kelly being conscious and proud of his nationality and ethnicity, he is also cognizant of perceptions based on race. Kelly believed that there are various stereotypes associated with black athletes in the United States. He believes that stereotypes include black collegiate athletes being viewed as unintelligent, disrespectful, and arrogant. Kelly was motivated by the stereotypes. He wanted to disprove these misconceptions. He began to recognize the stereotypes when he arrived in the United States. Kelly was assigned a paper related to researching how athletes are perceived. His research helped to highlight some of the stereotypes associated with the athletes in the United States.

5.4.6 Stereotypes: Flashy, Arrogant and Sexually Promiscuous

In addition to being viewed as privileged and unintelligent, the student-athletes believed that other stereotypes include being viewed as flashy, arrogant, and sexually promiscuous. Similar to the effects of other stereotypes, some of the student-athletes used these negative perceptions as motivation to change that view. Others disregard the stereotypes. However, these perceptions influence relationships with students and other people in the university community. Marcus' responses to questions about stereotypes associated with African American male athletes highlight that he was aware of possible negative perception of this group, but he emphasized that he is determined to prove those perceptions wrong.

James formed perceptions related to racial factors that have influenced his life. When asked how the media influences people's perception of athletes, he immediately describes how the media influences the public's perception of African American athletes. Although the question was framed around athletes in general, he described the media's perception of African American athletes. He later mentioned that the media also influences stereotypes of athletes in general regardless of race, but his initial response was to associate the media's perception of African American athletes.

James believed that the stereotypical views of African American athletes were being sexually promiscuous, unintelligent and given everything. Although, there have been times when people's negative views have angered James, he believed that his actions help to refute these stereotypes. He mentioned that he carries a high grade point average, is in the process of obtaining an undergraduate degree, and excels athletically. Larry also seemed to be very conscious of perceptions of African American athletes. His consciousness offers insight into how

race may be of high salience for Larry. He believed that he is viewed differently on campus compared to students who do not participate in varsity sports.

Larry believed that people critique the actions of African American athletes more so than other students. Larry described the perception of African American athletes by other people as being “flashy” and having access to certain “privileges.” He believed that often times these views are misconceptions and invalid. Leland acknowledged that there are various stereotypes associated with being an African American male collegiate athlete. Leland perceived these stereotypes to be that African American male athletes are flashy, live a fast life, and are womanizers. Although people may have these stereotypes, he did not let their perspective bother him.

Harrison Jr. et al. (2002) notes that because of the numerous negative stereotypes imposed on African American males, they may embrace positive stereotypes. Self-stereotyping has a self-protective facet that embraces positive traits. As a result, the student-athletes in this study may have a contradictory relationship with being labeled as an athlete. They are praised for their athletic talent and skills on the basketball court, while they face negative stereotypes off the court. Many stereotypes about African American male athletes are formed around assumptions about having superior physical abilities and lack of intelligence (Sartore & Cunningham, 2006). The student-athletes in this study faced these stereotypes, which potentially affected how they approached relationships with other students on campus. As a result, the student-athletes may be guarded and cautious about engaging in relationships with other students on campus.

5.4.7 Racial Identity: Adaptation Strategies in Predominately White Settings

Many of the student-athletes lived in communities that were predominately African American. They have experiences where they attended high school in a predominately white setting. Mike relocated to different neighborhoods multiple times. He lived in communities that were predominately African American; other neighborhoods were predominately Latino, while others were predominately white. The student-athletes in the study implemented adaptation strategies to function in the predominately white settings. They were able to adapt to the norms of different cultures. These experiences influenced the student-athletes to use similar strategies in college.

Mike has encountered cultural and ethnic differences throughout his life. Based on his family's financial situation, he was required to live in numerous communities. He relied on strategies of adaptation to adjust to the demands of the different social environments. Mike's earliest memories of racial differences were in high school. Mike used adaptation strategies to address the stress of being an ethnic minority at a predominately white high school. He described standing out because he was one of the few minority students in the school and he was athletic. Mike described how he just felt a need to "fit in," so he adapted.

Factors that influenced Lonnie's racial identity included his neighborhood and interaction with students at a rural boarding school during his senior year of high school. Lonnie grew up in predominately African American community until he entered his senior year of high school. His only interaction with people of different ethnicities; particularly European Americans were as authority figures and business professionals; including teachers, principals and police officers. Lonnie interacted with Asian Americans at the local convenience stores because they managed the stores. His first regular interaction with peers of different races was when he transferred to a boarding school in a rural area in a different state, which was predominately white. Lonnie

mentioned that this experience helped prepare Lonnie for attending his current college, which is predominately white. During this experience, he gained insight on communicating and interacting with different cultures. Before this experience he did not realize some of the commonalities in interest and how people of different ethnicities behaved in a similar way.

Ben's community was predominately African American. When asked about making the transition to a predominately White institution for college, Ben noted that he was able to make the transition. He attributed his ability to relate to other ethnic groups due to his experiences with white athletes while playing AAU basketball.

Many student-athletes utilized adaptation strategies when entering new social environments. In particular, they adapted to predominately white settings. This characteristic aligns with the assimilationist ideology based on the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity. People who align with the assimilationist ideology endorse the strategy of working within the established systems (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). Mike, Ben and Lonnie found it advantageous to adjust into the established set of norms in predominately white social environments.

5.4.8 Racial Identity: Quality of Education as it relates to Racial Representation in Schools

Throughout the student-athletes' lives, many of them have interpreted messages as it relates to the proportion of white students in a school and the quality of education. During high school, the student-athletes may attend a private high school because they have been offered a basketball scholarship. Often times, they may be an ethnic minority. They interpret being in a predominately white setting as being in a school with quality education or high academic standards. Sam noticed the trends of white flight in his community. Additionally, he noticed that

the white students in his high school were enrolled in the advanced placement courses. Chuck recognizes forms of institutionalized racism and classism that have affected African American communities. Chuck recognized that the predominately African American neighborhoods were associated with the low performing high schools. Chuck provided an example of how these dynamics influenced disparities many urban communities in comparison to suburban areas.

The student-athletes received messages that quality of education is associated with predominately white settings. While the student-athletes are conscious of the race dynamics involved with their experiences with factors influencing quality of education, socioeconomic must also be taken into consideration. Often quality of education is influenced by access to financial resources and a community's capacity to alleviate potential risk factors and academic distractions.

The demographics of Sam's community seemed to change as he got older. Sam mentioned that in elementary school his classes were predominately white. As he progressed to middle school and high school, the proportion of white students decreased. During middle and high school, the student population was predominantly black and Latino. Sam believed that the change in dynamics occurred because the white families had the resources to move to different neighborhoods where they perceived the education to be of better quality. Sam mentioned that people within the community noted that his high school performed poorly on the state standard examinations. Sam mentioned that the black families did not have the resources to leave the community and attend better school districts. Sam also noted that there was a disparity among ethnic minority students and white students who attended his high school. The white students were enrolled in advanced placement courses, while the African American and Latino students were not enrolled in advanced placement courses.

Sam attributed these changing dynamics to being associated with the quality of education in his community and the ability of certain families to relocate to other communities with better quality of education. One of James' more complex transitions in life was when he moved to a suburban neighborhood. He mentioned that it was a different socioeconomic situation, and he was one of five African Americans in his class. James highlighted that basketball served as a way to overcome the barrier of cultural differences but often people are more comfortable with people from similar ethnic backgrounds.

5.4.9 Racial Identity: First Experience with Racial Differences

The student-athletes in the study shared experiences about their earliest memory of race differences. These experiences seemed to have the potential to shape their worldview about race. Additionally, their current interpretation of their first experience with race differences provides insight into their ideology related to their racial identity. The student-athletes received messages about being different in some way. There may have been differences in their language vernacular or differences in cultural norms. As the student-athletes encountered more experiences with people from other ethnicities and cultures, many used adaptation strategies to adjust to racial differences.

Chuck's earliest memory of racial differences involved his participation in a summer camp. Chuck, who was nominated by his teachers, earned a scholarship to attend the camp. The camp was predominately composed as white children. Chuck believed that the program was an initiative to recruit ethnic minority students living in urban areas to attend the camp. He noticed the cultural differences. However, he was able to adapt and adjust to the cultural differences. Chuck mentioned that the experience was frustrating because at times other kids would avoid

Chuck. Chuck described similar interactions throughout his life as “small experiences” where he made adjustments or adapted. Chuck also provided the example of his observation of law enforcement in his city. Chuck described how police officers may use excessive force when interacting with young African Americans.

Corey’s earliest experience of race differences occurred when he was nine years old. Corey and his sister participated in a program called Children’s Fresh Air Fun. The program involved Corey and his sister living with a host family in Canada. Corey and his sister attempted to play soccer with white children in the park. The other children refused to play with Corey and his sister because they were black. The white children mentioned that they were not allowed to play with black children. The white children’s parents confirmed that they were not allowed to play with black children. Corey and his sister were shocked at the actions of the white children and their parents.

5.4.10 Racial Identity: Racial and Ethnic Pride

When asked about racial and ethnic pride, many of the student-athletes referred to historical figures from the Civil Rights Movement. They respected the sacrifice and struggle associated with leaders who helped change society. They appreciated how people of past generations helped to create opportunities for the current generation. The student-athletes also mentioned that President Obama was a source of ethnic pride. They were proud that he was the first African American president of the United States. They mentioned that if an African American could be a president, then the possibilities were limitless for future generations. The accomplishments of successful African Americans from past and current generations have helped to develop confidence among the student-athletes that they can accomplish their goals.

Marcus viewed sports as being important to the African American community. He described sports as serving various functions in the African American community, including being a way to be expressive, utilizing sport as an escape, and having fun. He also emphasized that there is an expectation for African Americans to have an association with sports, particularly basketball and football. His racial identity was influenced by his role models, which are family members. When asked how his role models influenced him, Marcus emphasized “great black men” in his response. Marcus seemed proud of the idea that his grandfather was one of the first African American police officers in their home city.

Sam was proud of how African Americans progressed through the struggle of institutional and blatant racism. Sam’s grandmother told him stories about the difficulties of living in the United States as an African American in the past. James noted that he is proud that the United States elected an African American president. He mentioned that African Americans acknowledge when other African Americans are successful, which serves a way demonstrating community unity. The success of other African Americans in business, politics, and sports promotes a sense of confidence that James can also achieve his dreams and aspirations. Larry was asked to describe what makes him proud of his racial or ethnic background. He mentioned that he was proud of African American males who are in college. He mentioned that historically there has not been large numbers of this group to attend college. He is also proud of having the first African American president.

Chuck’s mother emphasized the importance of recognizing the significance of being knowledgeable about historical African American figures. As a result, these figures have served as a role model for Chuck. Specifically, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X are historical

figures that have served as roles models. Chuck is proud that many African American have overcome adversity including racism to become successful.

Adrian considered race when conceptualizing symbols in his world. Adrian considered basketball to be a predominately African American sport as it relates to the representation of athletes who play in college and professionally. Adrian noted that typically there are multiple basketball courts in predominately African American communities. Adrian viewed the presence of basketball courts in these communities as representing a symbol that African Americans should view basketball as being important. Specifically, basketball should be viewed as something that African American kids can “fall back on.” Adrian believed that the presence of basketball courts send the message that African Americans should be proud that they are predominately represented as players in college and the NBA, and that there should be pride in the African American representation in basketball because there is lack of representation in other fields. Adrian acknowledged that there is a lack of representation of African American owners in professional sports.

Adrian is proud of African Americans who have positively impacted society throughout history. He acknowledged the contributions of Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Rosa Parks, and Harriet Tubman to the Civil Rights movements and demanding social justice. He highlighted that he was proud of Michael Jordan as an icon. He also noted that seeing an African American president was of significance. Corey was proud of historical African American figures who served as leaders in the Civil Rights Movement. Some of the people noted were Martin Luther King Jr. and Harriet Tubman. Additionally, Leland was proud of how African Americans have overcome institutional racism over past generations. He highlights that African Americans have made contributions to society. Leland mentioned that he is proud of President Obama for being

the first African American president. Leland mentioned that before President Obama was elected, that he didn't realize that an African American becoming president of the United States was possible.

5.4.11 Hip Hop Culture: Lyrics of Songs

Hip hop culture and music seemed to influence the student-athletes identity. Some of the student-athletes were able to relate to the lyrics of rap songs. They believed that the lyrics in some of the songs described the social environment in which they were raised. Similar to the messages described in the lyrics of the songs, some of the student-athletes can relate to wanting to overcome poverty to accomplish their dreams of having a certain quality of life. Other student-athletes can relate to the lyrics in a metaphoric sense. They can relate to overcoming obstacles in their lives that may not relate to poverty. Many of the student-athletes listen to the rap music every day, specifically before games.

Another factor that influences James's identity is his interest in hip hop culture. He listened to hip hop music every day. Listening to rap music was a part of his daily routine in the morning. He mentioned that the lyrics of the songs motivated him. In particular, he enjoyed listening to an artist named Meek Mills' album entitled *Dream Chasing*. James compared the stories in the songs to his personal life. James is currently chasing his dreams of playing basketball professionally in the NBA.

His favorite song on the *Dream Chasing* album is entitled "Get This Money." The chorus of the song include the first thing being on Meek Mills' mind when he awakes is increasing his money and that he needs to continue to "stay on his grind" to get it. James can relate to the entire album because the artist describes how he endured a difficult time in his life. However he is

willing to work hard to be successful and accomplish his dreams. James can relate to how relationships with friends change when going through difficult times. He entered into the basketball season with high expectations. The media also projected that he would have a tremendous season statistically. Entering the season, he was named the conference pre-season player of the year. At the conclusion of the season, he did not win this distinction.

Hip-hop culture also influenced Larry's identity development. He mentioned that he can relate to the stories described in the lyrics of the hip-hop songs. Stories of overcoming poverty, living in an urban area, and having a resilient mother who sacrifices for her family resonated with Larry. Other people within Larry's community also listen to hip-hop music. He remembered hearing hip-hop music playing from homes and cars when walking down the streets of his neighborhood. Hip-hop influenced Larry's preference in style of clothing and getting tattoos. Mike related to stories presented in the lyrics of some rap songs indicating that there is struggle associated with being successful. He referred to this process as "trying to grind." He believed that he had a relationship with hip-hop music because he could relate to the artists.

5.4.12 Hip Hop Culture: A way to Express Identity

In addition to relating to the lyrics of rap in regards to overcoming obstacles, hip culture also influenced the student-athletes identity development in other ways. Some of the student-athletes used hip hop music and culture as a way to express their identity to others. For example, Marcus took pride in being able to relate to hip hop culture more than other students at his high school. He believed that he was able to relate more to hip hop culture than his white peers because he is African American. Specifically, Marcus viewed being able to relate to hip hop culture serving as a safe space to relate to other African American students in a predominately white setting. Some

of the other student-athletes mentioned that hip hop culture influenced their choice in style of clothing and was influential in their decision to get multiple tattoos. These student-athletes' connection with hip hop culture signifies the influence of celebrity culture. Hip hop artists are promoted on television through reality television and movies. Similar to professional athletes, the student-athletes were able to connect with ethnic minority male hip hop artists who are symbols of success in celebrity culture.

Marcus grew up in suburban neighborhoods and attended predominately white schools. As a result, he connected hip hop culture with being a representation of something different from the norms within his suburban community. He viewed hip hop culture as a way to express his identity. He connected hip hop culture with being affiliated with African American culture. Particularly, he viewed hip hop culture as giving him a sense of racial identity. In another narrative, he associated "real" hip hop with African American culture. Marcus viewed hip hop as a safe place to relate to other African Americans in high school. He also viewed knowing the lyrics of the songs as a means for gain social capital. Marcus used basketball as an avenue to gain social status among his peers in a predominately white school and living in a suburban neighborhood. While Marcus viewed knowing hip hop songs as a way to be differentiated from his peers, he used basketball as a tool to transcend race and also connect with a social group.

Lonnie also noted that hip hop culture and celebrity culture have influenced his life. Lonnie believed that hip hop culture influenced his decision in getting the amount and type of tattoos. It also influenced preference in clothing. However, Lonnie did not feel that hip hop music and culture has influenced his worldviews and opinions.

In contrast, Kelly appreciated traditions from his native country. In particular, he is fond of cultural music from his home country. He did not listen to a lot of American music until he

arrived in the United States in high school. His older brother exposed Kelly to hip hop music because his older brother traveled to play basketball internationally, but it was not consistent. Kelly began listening to hip hop music once he arrived in the United States. However, he continued to listen to cultural music from his native country when he wanted to be reminded of home.

5.4.13 Spiritual Identity

Spirituality seemed to be a salient identity for some of the student-athletes. For those student-athletes who emphasized the importance of a spiritual relationship with a higher being, they contributed their success to faith. Often, the student-athletes viewed their ability to survive adverse situations as result of the grace of God. These student-athletes mentioned God being a top priority in their life. Faith served as a value that helped the student-athletes to develop resilience and overcome potentially vulnerable situations. Leland was inspired to witness to other students about his religion. Ben described how God helped to him to avoid negative situations in high school. Adrian indicated that spirituality may influence his identity. He noted that his relationship with God is his first priority. Adrian valued faith and considered it an important aspect of his life. His second priority is his family and basketball.

Spirituality is clearly of high salience among Leland's reference group orientation. Leland mentioned how spirituality impacted his worldview. He has been socialized through his parents to value his Christian religious beliefs. While in homeschooling, his mother began each lesson with devotion and scripture reading. When asked about his top priorities in life, Leland noted that he wanted to be a Godly example to his peers. He was a member of the student-athlete Christian group that coordinates with athletes on his campus. He was interested in ministering to

his peers having others join in his religious beliefs. He used the Bible as a reference in ministering to his peers.

When Leland asked about strategies used in making important decisions, he referred to his dependence on God. He mentioned that he prays before making important decisions. Additionally, Leland noted that he depended on his parents and his support network when making important decisions. When discussing the media's influence on the perception of athletes, Leland described his preference of unselfish team players. Jeremy Lin and Tim Tebow have exhibited values related to teamwork, respect, and humility.

Although Leland is conscious of racial differences, he preferred to view all people as being a part of humanity. Leland viewed everyone as being God's people. He described himself as being "colorblind." Leland has friends from a variety of ethnicities. He began interacting with children of different races at a young age. During early childhood, two of his closest friends were white. Although he chose to view all people as being a part of humanity and everyone being God's people, he was conscious that some people have racist views. Leland's father helped to raise consciousness about potential racists views people may have.

5.4.14 Fatherhood: Roles and Responsibilities

Multiple student-athletes in the study are fathers. Being a father and collegiate student-athlete presents additional responsibilities. The student-athletes noted that providing for their children was top priority. Some of the student-athletes did not have a consistent relationship with their fathers. As a result, they were determined to build a better relationship with their children than the relationship established with their fathers. The student-athletes seemed to embrace the role and responsibilities of being a father. Having a child also seemed to increase the urgency to live

a certain standard of living after college because they want to be able to provide for their children.

Sam's role as a father was very important. Sam wanted to be able to provide for his son. He also embraced the responsibility of being a positive role model for other youth. He believed that his obligation of being a collegiate athlete is being a role model for youth and appreciated the opportunity to graduate from college because many people are not afforded this opportunity. He also wanted to inspire youth to pursue higher education. Ben was dedicated to being a committed father. He was interested in being more involved in his child's life than his father was in his life. Ben also embraced the responsibilities of being a positive role model for his younger brothers and the youth living in his home city.

During childhood, Mike didn't build a strong relationship with his father because his father was consistently incarcerated. However, Mike acknowledged that his father introduced him to basketball and recognized the potential for Mike to be great at a very early age. Mike and his father would play basketball in the park until it was late at night. His father would intensely compete against Mike in basketball and encourage him to get stronger. When asked about his relationship with his father, Mike noted that there was strain because his father was not consistently in his life. However, he currently is continuing to build a relationship with his father. Mike appreciated how his father saw his potential to be great at an early age and recognized that Mike had talent. During their conversations as adults, his father encouraged Mike to be a better father than he was. Mike's experiences with his father have inspired him to strive to be a reliable and responsible parent for his 11-month-old daughter.

5.5 CAREER DEVELOPMENT TASKS

5.5.1 Growth Stage: Attachment Relationships and Concern about Future

Children who establish secure attachment relationships with their caregivers are able to establish trust. They are prepared to trust themselves and others. This security enables children and adolescents the ability to explore working world. They are able to dream about how they will fit into the working world forming conceptions about their place in it (Savickas, 2002). The student-athletes who seemed to have developed secure attachment relationships with their primary caregivers had the confidence to explore new social environments and the working world. The student-athletes who did not develop secure attachment relationships demonstrated difficulties with trust. If a person does not feel safe, then surviving the present is their primary concern (Savickas, 2002). The student-athletes with insecure attachment relationships also seemed to form negative conceptions of others. However, they seemed to demonstrate confidence, particularly in their basketball skills.

During elementary and middle school, Marcus wanted to be a professional basketball player. He was exposed to basketball at an early age. His role models had success in the sport. He developed skills that were as good if not better than the peers in his neighborhood. Marcus demonstrated optimism to accomplish the lofty task of playing professional basketball nurtured by the secure attachments developed with his parents and grandparents. During middle elementary and middle school he knew that he wanted to be great. He also expressed interest in being a doctor or astronaut.

Sam seemed to have developed a secure attachment relationship with his mother. Sam developed a trust that helped when exploring various environments. Sam felt safe in fostering a

future orientation and helped Sam have the confidence to plan for the future. When Sam was in elementary school, he aspired to be a firefighter or police officer. During middle school, he was interested in being an accountant because he developed good math skills. During the ninth and tenth grades, his focus shifted to being a professional basketball player. Eventually, Sam explored other careers outside of playing basketball professionally.

As a child and adolescent, James seemed to develop secure attachments with his parents. He had admiration for his mother's ability to excel professionally and take care of many of the responsibilities related to being a supportive and caring mother. He developed a strong relationship with his father; particularly using sport as an avenue to bond. His father served as his football and basketball coach during elementary and middle school. As a result, during childhood and early adolescence James felt comfortable exploring the world of work and his place in it. His security in exploring his place in the world of work is demonstrated by conversations about his early career aspirations. James' felt secure in daydreaming about possible careers during his childhood. He also seemed optimistic about the future. Subsequently, he developed an interest in playing basketball professionally, being a sports analysts, and coaching. He interacted with many coaches, including his father.

When Larry was in elementary school, he wanted to be a firefighter. This decision was influenced by his interactions with firefighters who spoke on career days at his elementary school. This career aspiration gives insight into Larry's accomplishing of the career task of becoming concerned his future as a worker. It seemed that Larry developed secure attachment relationships with his mother, grandfather and uncle. As a result, he was able to form a positive conception of himself. Adrian developed secure attachment relationships with his mother, father, and grandmothers. Adrian seemed confident in exploring the work world at a young age. He has

always wanted to play basketball professionally in the NBA. He was exposed to playing organized basketball at an early age, developed exceptional basketball skills, and had a support network to help in feeling secure to daydream about the possibility of playing basketball professionally. As a result, Adrian demonstrated that he was concerned about his future as a worker.

Adrian's father was a truck driver. His mother was an accountant. Additionally, his uncles and grandfather were entrepreneurs. His uncles owned clothing stores in his home city. His grandfather owned a gas station. Having access to people in variety of business related fields influenced Adrian to develop an interest in majoring in business in college. He developed this interest in high school. Specifically, Adrian is interested in the marketing field.

Corey seemed to have difficulties developing secure attachment relationships with his parents and other relatives. Children who establish secure attachments to parents or caregivers learn to trust others. Corey was raised in an environment where the adults in his life were involved with drugs and alcohol. Experiences during childhood influenced Corey to be committed to not drinking or using drugs. However, the experiences may have also negatively affected Corey's willingness to form secure attachment relationships with his parents.

Corey struggled with trusting the adult family members in his life. In particular, Corey had issues trusting his mother. Corey felt that he should have been notified about his father's death sooner by his mother. Corey believed that he was affected emotionally by his father's death. As a result, there was also a period of time when Corey didn't trust himself to play basketball. Corey eventually developed the confidence to continue to play basketball when he moved to a different city to live. Corey also developed confidence related to dreaming about possibilities professionally. During elementary school, Corey wanted to be a lawyer. He was

confident in his ability to catch people in lies during elementary school, so he thought being a lawyer may be a good profession.

Mike seemed to become concerned about his future as a worker during his childhood. One factor which influenced this concern was his socioeconomic status growing up. His family income was low due to his mother being a teenage mother and his father not consistently being present in his life. However, he had family support from his grandparents and during early adolescence, from his AAU coach. His mother, grandfather, father, and AAU coach all encouraged Mike to develop his basketball skills at an early age. During childhood, he seemed to develop secure attachments with his mother and grandparents. During elementary school Mike wanted to be a police officer. His aspiration to be a police officer was inspired by his grandfather serving in the military. This helped Mike feel secure in the future to explore other environments. He displayed his ability to demonstrate characteristics of career control when decided to attend preparatory school during his senior year of high school. He believed that attending this school which required him to move away from his family would increase the likelihood of being recruited by NCAA Division I universities.

Leland seemed to develop secure attachment bonds with his parents. As result, Leland seemed to develop career concern about his future as a professional. Leland developed trust within himself and his parents in exploring various career aspirations. During the class sessions, his mother began with a religious devotional and scripture from the Bible. Leland is socialized to have Christian values.

Lonnie's mother had work responsibilities, which called for Lonnie to live with his aunt and cousin. Lonnie mentioned that he did not have a good relationship with his mother when he was young. Lonnie may have developed insecure attachment bonds with his mother, but seemed

to develop secure attachments with his aunt (cousin's mother). As a result, he seemed to develop a future orientation. Lonnie was also inspired to build a positive relationship with his mother, similar to the relationship that his cousin had with his aunt. Lonnie began to develop career concern in middle school.

Kelly seemed to have developed secure attachment relationships with his biological mother and father. He viewed his father and mother as being role models in his life. He lived with his biological parents until he moved to the United States during his freshman year of high school. As a result, Kelly felt safe in surviving his social environment. Kelly also developed a concern about his future as a worker. Kelly's parents and older brother encouraged Kelly to participate in sports at the age of nine. His father pushed for soccer, while his mother preferred track. However, Kelly decided to play basketball. He was intrigued by the game once he saw his older brother practice with a basketball club team. Kelly's decision to play basketball demonstrates his ability to increasingly gain control over his vocational activities. His parents were supportive of his decision.

5.5.2 Growth Stage: Career Control

During childhood and adolescents, proactive behaviors such as making decisions, delaying gratification, and negotiating increase a sense of interpersonal autonomy and agency. If the child and adolescent do not develop skills to practice proactive behaviors, they may lack decisiveness and confidence related to making career decisions. As a result, people may allow others to make decisions related to their career decisions (Savickas, 2002).

During adolescence, Marcus had job experiences that helped to address the career tasks of career control. As an umpire he learned problem solving skills. Just as importantly, Marcus

learned to stand by the decisions that he made. It also helped to develop confidence in making judgments and decisions. His experience working in the warehouse at a soft drink company, in which his father was employed, exposed him to additional experiences in the work world. It also helped him to learn the chain of command in an organization. As a result, Marcus is able to accomplish the career task of career conception. He conceptualized how life should be led. Subsequently, he developed career confidence. Marcus expected to be successful in encountering challenges in the future.

5.5.3 Growth Stage: Confidence to make Career Decisions

Career confidence is designated by the anticipation of success in overcoming challenges. Career confidence derives from daydreaming about one's role in society and the working world to establishing goals and actualizing roles. Career confidence arises from solving problems encountered in daily activities. These activities can include household chores and school work. If career confidence is developed, adolescents are able to demonstrate behaviors related to task mastery (Savickas, 2002). The student-athletes in this study exhibited a range of behaviors related to career confidence. Some of the student-athletes demonstrated behaviors that indicated confidence in exploring careers outside of playing basketball or coaching. Other student-athletes in the study demonstrated the confidence to explore new environments, such as being engaged in a college environment, but did not have the confidence to explore careers outside of playing basketball professionally or coaching.

Eventually in high school, James became interested in the broadcasting profession and coaching. During the growth stage of career development, James demonstrated the confidence to set career goals and actualizing those roles. He gained this confidence from success playing

basketball and the disciplined associated with practicing his skills. Often times, he sacrificed spending time with friends to develop his basketball skills. In addition to shadowing his father while he did electrical work, James also embraced having household responsibilities because he was the oldest child.

When asked if he were not as successful in basketball, would he place a higher priority on academics than playing basketball, James mentioned that academics would be more important. James noted that he would realize that playing professionally may not have been an option, and he aspired to obtain a master's degree in business administration. However, since playing basketball professionally is a realistic and obtainable goal, he chooses to make sure he devotes enough time to developing his basketball skills.

In order to accomplish his career goals James implemented strategies that have worked in the past including sticking to a regiment and working hard. Similar strategies were implemented to achieve his career goals related to playing basketball professionally and becoming a broadcaster. James successfully accomplished the tasks associated with the growth stage of career development including 1) increasing his concern about his future; 2) increasing personal control over his vocational activities; 3) forming conceptions about how to make educational choices and 4) acquiring the confidence to make and implement these career choices. As result, he was in a good position to complete tasks associated with the exploration stage of development. As he continued to develop clarity about his self-concept, he also gained clarity about his vocational preferences.

Chuck developed career concern from his parents. In addition to instilling values of hard work and integrity, his parents emphasized the importance of valuing education. As result, Chuck developed a concern about his future as a worker. He mentioned that he always wanted to

be a medical doctor. He remembered watching the Health Channel in elementary school. As an infant and child, Chuck seemed to have developed secure attachment relationships with his parents. His security allowed Chuck to daydream about his place in the world of work at a young age.

As a result of these secure attachments with his parents, Chuck was comfortable exploring new social environments and gaining a concern about his future as a worker. Examples of exploring new environments included participating in the 5th grade summer camp. The experience with the 5th grade summer camp was his first experience with different ethnic cultures. His experience with the summer camp, allowed Chuck to gain confidence to later explore new social environments. These social environments included participating on sports teams. Later as an adolescent, Chuck also felt comfortable attending a predominately white university in a different state than where he lived. Chuck demonstrated the career confidence to pursue a pre-medical school academic track. He built momentum by having academic and athletic success in high school and earning an academic merit scholarship to college.

During high school, Leland developed confidence to explore various career fields of interest. In addition to performing well academically and having the support of his parents, he also held a job. Leland was a dishwasher for his high school cafeteria. As a result, he learned about timeliness and being manageable. Leland's father worked in the business industry as an insurance representative. His father earned a master's degree in business administration. His father helped spark an interest in math and science during middle school and high school. As a result, Leland also developed an interest in pursuing a career in business or engineering. Once Leland arrived at college, he decided to pursue a degree in business administration. In particular, he is interested in pursuing a career as an accountant.

Leland viewed his mother and father as role models. His parents have influenced his decision to pursue a business degree. Leland depended on his mother and father to help him make career decisions outside of playing basketball professionally. As he transitioned into college, he began to depend more heavily on his academic counselor in the athletics department. Adrian depended on his parents and grandmother to make decisions about a professional career. Adrian's parents and grandmother have encouraged Adrian to establish goals and work hard to achieve his goals. They emphasize that anything is possible.

As a result, Adrian has decided to focus on excelling at playing basketball to hopefully play professionally. Adrian was also dedicated to maintaining a 3.0 GPA while possibly pursuing a marketing degree. Adrian viewed basketball and course work as being of equal importance at this point in his life. Adrian believed that excelling in basketball would present opportunities professionally and is a way of financing his college education. He also has career aspirations outside of playing basketball professionally, specifically the marketing field. While Adrian had career aspirations of pursuing a profession in the marketing field, he has not held a job outside of playing basketball. Additionally, he had not held an internship in high school or middle school. He worked as a caddy for a month in high school, but has not had any other work experience.

5.5.4 Exploration Stage: Occupational Choice

During the years of exploration, society expects youth to make decisions about whom and what they may become. The adolescent is expected to establish a vocational identity by making an occupational choice (Savickas, 2002). The majority of the student-athletes in the study identified playing basketball as a career choice. However, there was a range of occupational choices that were identified as an alternative choice once their playing career has concluded. While some of

the student-athletes identified alternate careers, others had not established alternative careers. If the student-athlete developed a foreclosed athletic identity, the likelihood of exploring careers outside of playing basketball professionally decreased. The student-athletes who did not earn an athletic scholarship were good examples of establishing a vocational identity that was demonstrated through their occupational choice. Although it is questionable as to whether Chuck explored broadly, he selected a career occupation in the health field that will help develop transferable skills if he is unable to be a medical doctor. However, some of the student-athletes who earned an athletic scholarship also demonstrated the ability to establish an occupational choice outside of playing basketball professionally.

As Marcus graduated from high school and entered college, he began to address the tasks associated with the exploration stage. Through crystallization Marcus broadly explored ideas around his preference in a career. During the crystallization stage, people focus on the more attractive selves for exploration. Although Marcus has a high athletic identity, his role as a college student seems to be more important. He didn't receive an athletic scholarship, but received scholarship money academically. As a result, he used knowledge about the self and occupational information to test the reality and likelihood of playing basketball professionally.

While staying connected to basketball as a student manager and eventually becoming a member of the team as a player, he explored career related to his academic major in economics. This process is related to the developmental task of specification of an occupational choice. Making the decision to return to the basketball team after graduating from undergraduate school and pursuing a master's degree in business was an important step in addressing the specification task. Marcus was interested in using his master's degree to pursue a career in the business field that related to sports. He also wanted to use the additional year of being on the basketball team to

build his professional network. In addition to his parents, Marcus built a support network to help him make career related decisions.

Chuck seemed to have a strong athletic identity. However, his student role seemed to be more important. His parents have emphasized the importance of education at an early age. Both of his parents attended college. It seemed that they have clear expectations that Chuck also pursue a college degree. Chuck's career aspirations eventually translated into his vocational identity. In elementary school, he aspired to be a medical doctor. Chuck's professional interests were consistent. During the study, he was following a pre-medical school track. Chuck noted that school was more important to him than basketball. He mentioned that he is more focused on his achievement in school. He perceived being successful academically and in a profession outside of playing basketball as realistic. He earned an academic scholarship to University X. Chuck seemed determined to achieve his academic goals and gain acceptance to a medical school. It is difficult to gauge whether Chuck explored broadly to form tentative ideas about where he fits into society professionally. He has always mentioned wanting to be a medical doctor. It is evident that Chuck has developed a support network to help explore other career options outside being a medical doctor. This network includes his mother and academic advisors in college.

Chuck demonstrated that he has reflected on whether playing basketball is realistic or attainable. He decided that focusing more on his academic pursuits is more advantageous than pursuing a professional basketball career. However, Chuck acknowledged that his experiences with sports have provided an opportunity to develop transferable skills and professional characteristics. These skills and characteristics include work ethic, determination, consistency, and being able to work as a team. Chuck believed that his experience with sport will assist with his development of leadership skills that will be beneficial in his professional career.

Chuck seemed to be at a pivotal point in his career development. He demonstrated the ability to address tasks related to crystallization within the exploration stage. Chuck seemed to be encountering tasks associated with the specification in the exploration stage of development. He clearly indicated that he is interested in the health profession. He will need to solidify if the pre-medical school track is appropriate. Actualizing an occupational choice includes converting his actions to actually obtain a job in the field of choice. Chuck was learning to make adjustments to his study regiment to balance basketball and his rigorous academic demands. In addition, he has engaged in internship opportunities with medical labs.

During his sophomore year of high school, Sam was consumed with seeking his goal of playing in the NBA. People advised Sam have a secondary plan, but he believed that he would have the opportunity to play professionally in Europe if a NBA team did not draft him. This perspective changed when Sam entered the eleventh grade. He began to see talented guys fall short of their aspirations to play basketball professionally because of injuries. Similarly, during this time, Sam's brother was the starting quarterback at a NCAA Division I university and did not make the final roster for a NFL team. His brother's experience helped to confirm that he needed to reflect on professions of interest in addition to playing basketball professionally.

As a result, he developed an interest in criminal law. Sam's current academic major in college is administration of justice. Sam was interested in possibly seeking a career that required a business as he completed high school. However, Sam's older cousin persuaded Sam to not pursue a business major. His cousin pursued a business major in college while participating in a fraternity and had difficulties balancing the academic regiment and responsibilities of being in a fraternity. As a result, Sam was convinced that pursuing a business major and playing basket at the Division I level was not realistic.

The decision to pursue administration of justice instead of a business degree may have been an indication that Sam had a realistic view of his academic skill set. Sam noted in the interview that his first time earning a 3.0 grade point average was in college. However, if Sam explored an introductory course related to the business major, he may have realized that he had the potential skill set to pursue a business degree. Even with taking an introductory course in business there may have been difficulties with courses such as business calculus and economics, which are prerequisites for the business major.

When Kelly lived in the United States his host parents emphasized the importance of having a “Plan B” and not solely depending on basketball to become successful. They encouraged Kelly to use education as a way to create professional opportunities. Kelly became interested in the business field, particularly because of his biological family’s business ventures. Specifically, he wanted to be a “successful business man” like his father. Kelly’s father owned a petroleum gas company. Other relatives own clothing companies and glass companies. As a result, Kelly is pursuing a marketing degree at University X. Kelly’s host parents are involved with following up about his academic progress to ensure that Kelly is maximizing his academic experience in college.

James selected his group of occupations based on experiences that served as gauges for the attainability of careers of interest. After earning a scholarship to play basketball at a very high level in college, he was a major contributor to the basketball team for four years. As a result, his aspirations to play professionally seem very realistic. He also majored in communications, which is aligned with being a sports broadcaster. These factors indicate that he also has successfully fulfilled the task associated with crystallization in the exploration stage. In order to accomplish his career goals, James implemented strategies that have worked in the past

including sticking to a regiment and working hard. Similar strategies were implemented to achieve his career goals related to playing basketball professionally and becoming a broadcaster.

Larry developed motivation to help build community capacity with vulnerable populations. This motivation was fueled by his experiences as a child. He was interested in providing resources for youth to be able to pursue their dreams, specifically through mentorship. As a result, Larry decided to pursue a bachelor degree in social work. He was interested in learning about theories and developing skills to be able to aid the communities he is so passionate about. Larry seemed to have found a fit between his vocational identity and career aspirations. He was pursuing a degree that aligns with his passion of helping people. What is not clear in the interview is whether he searched broadly over various professions to narrow his decision.

Adrian has decided to focus on excelling at playing basketball to hopefully play professionally. Adrian is also dedicated to maintaining a 3.0 GPA, while possibly pursuing a marketing degree. Adrian viewed basketball and course work as being of equal importance at this point in his life. Adrian believed that excelling in basketball will present opportunities professionally and is a way of financing his college education. He also has career aspirations outside of playing basketball professionally, specifically the marketing field. While Adrian had career aspirations of pursuing a profession in the marketing field, he has not held a job outside of playing basketball. Additionally, he has not held an internship in high school or middle school. He worked as a caddy for a month in high school, but has not had any other work experience.

Corey may benefit from exploring other professions outside of being a sports analyst or coach. Throughout the interview Corey discussed how he was opposed to drug and alcohol abuse. Corey also advocated for his friend to make responsible decisions. If Corey increased his

knowledge on the world of work and the range of professions, he may find interest in a profession related to a social service field. Corey seemed passionate about youth making responsible decisions and empowering vulnerable populations. While in college, Mike had characterized various occupations according to their requirements, routines and rewards. He was interested in playing basketball professionally, managing a business or being a sports analyst. All of his career aspirations are related to his interest in sports.

Leland's parents socialized him to have spirituality to be a part of his self-concept. As a result, Leland was interested in becoming a minister at an early age. He also began playing basketball at the age of seven, which influenced his aspirations of playing for the NBA. During high school, Leland developed confidence to explore various career fields of interest. In addition to performing well academically and having the support of his parents, he also held a job. Leland was a dishwasher for his high school cafeteria. As a result, he learned about timeliness and being manageable.

Leland's father worked in the business industry as an insurance representative. His father earned a master's degree in business administration. His father helped spark an interest in math and science during middle school and high school. As a result, Leland also developed an interest in pursuing a career in business or engineering. Once Leland arrived at college, he decided to pursue a degree in business administration. In particular, he is interested in pursuing a career as an accountant. Leland viewed his mother and father as role models. His parents influenced his decision to pursue a business degree. Leland depended on his mother and father to help him make career decisions outside of playing basketball professionally. As he transitioned into college, he began to depend more heavily on his academic counselor in the athletics department.

Although during the study Leland was pursuing a degree in business administration, he noted that at this point in his life, basketball was more important than school. He viewed the opportunity to play basketball professionally as not being available for an extended period of time. However, Leland also emphasized the importance of pursuing a career field outside of playing sports professionally. Leland also viewed his experiences with sports as being advantageous for his professional career outside of playing basketball. Leland seemed proud to be able balance his academic regiment and playing basketball.

5.5.5 Selection of Educational Institution

Some of the student-athletes in the study have experiences with making decisions about which high school to attend. These student-athletes considered the ramifications of their basketball careers when making the decision. Some of the student-athletes decided to attend private schools outside of their neighborhood; they actually moved outside their home state. If they moved outside of their home state, the student-athletes lived away from their family. As a result, a message was relayed that basketball is an important factor when making educational decisions. Basketball was viewed as a tool to access a preferred educational institution. This was also the beginning stage of being recruited for their athletic potential and attributes. Other student-athletes decided to stay in their community to play for the local high school of their neighborhood.

For example, Ben transferred from a private school in which he earned an athletic scholarship to his local high school in his neighborhood. He was proud of this accomplishment. It also helped to engrain the idea that playing basketball can be used as a resource to obtain his life goals, specifically a quality education. He attended this school during his ninth and tenth

grade years. However, he decided to transfer during his eleventh and twelfth grade years. For Ben, his affiliation with the tradition and pride of his neighborhood resonated as being important. Consequently, student-athletes in the study made decisions about their educational institutions by considering the ramifications related to sports and allegiance to their community.

For Sam growing up in the same neighborhood for the majority of his life resulted in a sense of loyalty and pride in his geographical community. Sam represented the area through his participation on the varsity basketball team. As a result, it was a difficult decision for Sam when he decided to transfer to a high school in a different city during his senior year. Sam felt that his initial high school was not preparing him to excel at the NCAA Division I collegiate level. Sam wanted to play better competition. Sam felt the members of the community expected Sam to stay at his initial high school. However, the people in Sam's support network encouraged Sam to transfer. They felt the move was in his best interest. Sam's support network included his closest friends, his former coach from a recreational league, and most importantly, his older brothers.

James's family made an important decision about which high school to attend based on the factors of quality of education and opportunity to play varsity basketball as a freshman. These factors highlight how athlete and student were core social roles for James. This is another example of how his parents also valued both sports and education. Growing up in an urban area influenced Larry to be very conscious of the experiences of youth living in similar situations. He believed that participation in sport plays a positive role. He believed that participation in sports can be used as a tool to help youth change their living situation. Larry specifically mentioned that sports can be used as a way to "get out" of their community. This statement highlights his perspective that sometimes youth want or need to escape certain living situations by leaving their communities to increase their chances of being successful. As a result, Larry and his mother

decided that it was in his best interest to leave his community and attend a private high school in a different state. This opportunity was made available because of his potential to be a good basketball player.

Larry considered moving away from his family to attend a high school in a different state one of the major decisions in his life. His participation in basketball played a significant role in making this decision. He had a very close relationship with his mother and other family members such as his grandfather, uncle, and cousins, so this decision involved Larry leaving his support network. The arrangements involved Larry living with his future high school coach. He viewed this decision as “taking a risk” that was necessary to be able to help provide for his family.

Mike did not feel that he received enough recognition for his athletic talent, so he decided to enroll in a preparatory school for his senior year of high school. This school offered Mike more exposure to NCAA Division I universities. He also decided to play with a different AAU team. The new team would offer more exposure as well. Mike’s willingness to change high schools based on basketball indicates that receiving recognition for playing basketball was significant to him. He recognized that basketball has influenced major decisions made in his life. Chuck acknowledged that his athletic role is also very important. His participation in sports has influenced many decisions. In particular, his participation has influenced decisions he has made about the high school and college that he decided to attend.

5.6 CONCLUSION

There was an array of themes presented in this chapter. Student-athletes socioeconomic status influenced experiences within their communities. Some of the student-athletes were subjected to

risk-factors associated with living in poor neighborhoods. As a result, the student-athletes described the need to “escape” these communities. While many of these communities posed risk-factors, the communities also offered resources combat the potential risks. Many of the student-athletes’ received the message that sports are important from people in their geographical communities. Community members embraced the tradition and pride associated with people from their community excelling in high school, college, and professional sports.

The student-athletes’ athletic identity was strengthened by identifying with role models, who emphasize the importance of sports. The student-athletes identified parents as role models as well as professional athletes. Additionally, the student-athletes formed perceptions of how race influenced their experiences as African American males. Particularly, they were conscious of stereotypes associated with African American male student-athletes. These perceptions surfaced through common experiences. Specifically, multiple student-athletes described an incident in an algebra class that highlighted their perceptions of stereotypes. Other factors are also indicators of the student-athlete’s identity and reference group orientation. These factors include their spirituality and relationship with hip hop and celebrity culture.

The student-athletes experiences during childhood and adolescence influenced the development of a vocational identity. The attachment relationships with their primary caregivers influenced their confidence to explore social environments. This included their perception of society’s expectations for their place in the working world. The student-athletes also had experiences that helped shape the extent to which they developed skills that helped them make a decision about appropriateness of various careers. Chapter six will discuss the implication for practice when working with African American collegiate student-athletes complete career development tasks.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATION FOR PRACTICE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five explored the commonality of experiences and particularities among the student-athletes in the study as it related thematically to the literature. Concepts related to 1) developmental contextual factors, 2) identity development, and 3) career development tasks were described. The overall journey has directed me on a path that offered insight into the worldviews of the student-athletes of this study. The student-athlete narratives were complemented by quantitative scales to paint a picture of their life experiences. This journey has offered insight into how the student-athletes have constructed their realities. When analyzing their career development attitudes, it is important to account for how they are influenced by their social environment. This chapter presents a summary of the study's findings and important conclusions. Discourse around the possible utilization of the information in this dissertation to create interventions and the need for further research is also presented.

6.2 FINDINGS RELATED TO THE LITERATURE

6.2.1 Socialization Process for Developing an Athletic Identity

There were a range of themes presented in the literature that surfaced throughout the study. Particularly, the socialization of African American males in establishing athlete as a primary identity was relevant to this study. Johnson and Migliaccio (2009) described four components. The first component is introduction and access to sport at an early age. Secondly, the boy begins to relate to a reference group, particularly professional athletes who serve as role models for attaining the American Dream, which helps to further develop and solidify a boy's athletic identity. Thirdly, social recognition of the identity leads the boy to immerse himself in the identity. The recognition can be developed through the community, his peer groups or the media. Lastly as the child's athletic identity develops, other aspects of the self become limited through identity specialization. This process may lead the child to rejecting other activities and identities, fully immersing himself in an athletic identity (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009).

Some of the student-athletes in this study followed this path, which resulted in their athletic identity being salient, while rejecting other identities. However, other student-athletes in the study were able to find a balance between athletics and other social roles. The student-athletes who were fully immersed into an athletic identity were in danger of exhibiting characteristics related to a foreclosed identity. Over commitment to the athletic role may lead to dysfunctional practices, including career immaturity (Horton & Mack, 2000). The student-athletes in this study, who displayed characteristics associated with a foreclosed athletic identity, were in danger of not embracing the student role. As a result, they did not plan for careers outside of playing basketball professionally.

Based on responses to the AIMS, all of the student-athletes seemed to have salient athletic identities. All of the student-athletes in the study average overall AIMS score were below 2.5. The student-athlete responses to the AIMS indicated that the athletic role was influential. When the athlete role is viewed as part of a person's self-concept, it has the potential to influence social relationships, activities, and the way an individual processes experiences (Steinfeldt et al., 2010). Basketball seemed to be an influential factor in all of the student-athletes' lives. Playing basketball influenced decisions about which high schools and college to attend.

The student-athletes shared experiences that involved family members, friends or significant others which were often connected to playing basketball. Beyond being a routine activity, playing sports seemed to help shape how the student-athletes formed perceptions about their realities. For example, many of the student-athletes perceived that students and faculty in college held negative stereotypes about athletes. Since the athlete role seemed to be salient, the participants interpreted experiences on campus as it related to their role as a college athlete at University X and in their communities.

6.2.2 Influence Role Models

Role models were another major influence in helping to shape the student-athletes' identity and worldviews. Many of the student-athletes described their parent as being a direct role model. Additionally, many of them were introduced to sports through parents or a family member with whom the student-athlete had a close relationship. As a result, sports became significant to the student-athlete. Harrison Jr. et al (2002) describe how sports are related to social acceptability.

The majority of student-athletes in this study describe how they were accepted within their communities or in new environments because of their athletic talent.

Traditionally, African Americans rely heavily on family for social support, so introduction to sport has greater impact on the child when it comes from the family (Johnson & Migliaccio, 2009). Many of the student-athletes in this study depended on their father for social support. If the father was not present or active in their lives, the student-athletes sought social support from other people, including a mother or another relative. Some of the student-athletes gravitated towards a non-family member, specifically a basketball coach to provide social support. They viewed the basketball coach as a relative, serving as a father-like figure. According to Buford May (2009) the coaches in the student-athlete's lives can be considered direct role models. Naturally, basketball was involved with building a relationship with important people in the student-athletes' lives.

6.2.3 Social Stereotypes

Findings in the study also related to social stereotypes. Harrison Jr. et al. (2002) notes that because of the numerous negative stereotypes imposed on African American males, they may embrace positive stereotypes. Self-stereotyping has a self-protective facet that embraces positive traits. As a result, the student-athletes in this study seemed to have a contradictory relationship with being labeled as an athlete. They were praised for their athletic talent and skills on the basketball court, while they faced negative stereotypes off the court. Many stereotypes about African American male athletes are formed around assumptions about having superior physical abilities and lack of intelligence (Sartore & Cunningham, 2006).

All of the student-athletes responded in the 3 to 5 range related to the public regard category based on the MIBI. This indicates that the student-athletes may believe the public has somewhat negative perceptions of African Americans. Many of the student-athletes described how other students on campus held negative stereotypes including the African American male athletes being unintelligent and lazy academically. The student-athletes perceived other negative stereotypes to be that African American male athletes were promiscuous sexually and considered flashy.

The stereotypes potentially affected how the student-athletes approached relationships with other students on campus. As a result, they may be guarded and cautious about engaging in relationships with other students on campus. Their responses to the interview questions confirmed that they were conscious of the social stereotypes described in the literature. Often, they viewed the stereotypes associated with African American male athletes as being unintelligent, privileged, or womanizers as invalid. However, the stereotypical views affected relationships with other students and faculty. There seemed to be additional stress associated with forming relationships with colleagues and faculty members whom they perceived as holding negative stereotypical views.

6.2.4 Ethnic Pride

In contrast to their scores on the public regard subscale on the MIBI, all of the student-athletes in the study, except for Kelly, responded in the 1 to 2 range for private regard. The private regard subscale refers to the extent that to which an individual personally regards his or her own racial group (Sellers et al., 1998). These scores indicated that the student-athletes internally had positive perceptions about being African American. When asked about racial and ethnic pride,

many of the student-athletes referred to historical figures from the Civil Rights Movement. They respected the sacrifice and struggle associated with leaders who helped change society. The student-athletes also mentioned that President Obama was a source of ethnic pride. They were proud that he was the first African American president of the United States. Some of the student-athletes mentioned that if an African American could be president, then the possibilities were limitless for future generations. The accomplishments of successful African Americans from past and current generations have helped to develop confidence among the student-athletes that they can accomplish their goals.

6.2.5 Escaping their Community

Utilizing the ecosystems perspective, when the social environment does not provide for the needs of its systems, the environment causes stress. Systems within a social environment naturally seek equilibrium. The systems interact with each other to achieve their goals. The systems within an environment may have a coping capacity and resilience, but if their needs are not met the systems are at risk of life stress (Lesser & Pope, 2011). The student-athletes in the study, who expressed a need to escape their community, demonstrated that the social environment was not providing for the systems within that community. As a result, the student-athletes felt stress. Although, they were able to display resilience and coping capacity to overcome obstacles presented in their community, the student-athletes believed that basketball could be used as a tool to escape.

6.2.6 Definition of Success

Strain theory describes how deviance results from particular social arrangements in society. The kind of deviance depends on whether society provides the means to achieve cultural goals. Often people believe that in the United States, the “success story” is someone who gains wealth and status through talent, education and hard work (Macionis, 2009). The student-athletes used basketball as a means to access education, potential wealth, status and success. Strain theory explains their actions as being innovation because they used an unconventional strategy to achieve cultural success (Macionis, 2009). However, they did not revert to crime or deviant behavior. The student-athletes used athletics to access higher education. They still implemented hard work and dedication to achieve their goals.

6.2.7 Career Development Tasks

Finally, there were multiple findings related to career development tasks. Children who establish secure attachment relationships with their caregivers are able to establish trust. They are prepared to trust themselves and others. This security enables children and adolescents the ability to explore working world. They are able to dream about how they will fit into the working world forming conceptions about their place in it (Savickas, 2002). The student-athletes who seemed to have developed secure attachment relationships with their primary caregivers had the confidence to explore new social environments and the working world. The student-athletes who did not develop secure attachment relationships demonstrated difficulties with trust. If a person does not feel safe, then surviving the present is their primary concern (Saviskas, 2002). The student-

athletes with insecure attachment relationships also seemed to form negative conceptions of others. However, they seemed to demonstrate confidence, particularly in their basketball skills.

Career confidence is designated by the anticipation of success in overcoming challenges. Career confidence derives from daydreaming about one's role in society and the working world to establishing goals and actualizing roles. Career confidence arises from solving problems encountered in daily activities. These activities can include household chores and school work. If career confidence is developed, adolescents are able to demonstrate behaviors related to task mastery (Savickas, 2002). The student-athletes in this study exhibited a range of behaviors related to career confidence. Some of the student-athletes demonstrated behaviors that indicated confidence in exploring careers outside of playing basketball or coaching. Other student-athletes in the study demonstrated the confidence to explore new environments, such as being engaged in a college environment, but did not have the confidence to explore careers outside of playing basketball professionally or coaching.

During the years of exploration, society expects youth to make decisions about whom and what they may become. The adolescent is expected to establish a vocational identity by making an occupational choice (Savickas, 2002). The majority of the student-athletes in the study identified playing basketball as a career choice. However, there was a range of occupational choices that were identified as an alternative choice once their playing career has concluded. While some of the student-athletes identified alternate careers, others had not established alternative careers. If the student-athlete developed a foreclosed athletic identity, the likelihood of exploring careers outside of playing basketball professionally decreased. The student-athletes who did not earn an athletic scholarship were good examples of establishing a vocational identity that was demonstrated through their occupational choice. However, some of the student-athletes

who earned an athletic scholarship also demonstrated the ability to establish an occupational choice outside of playing basketball professionally.

The student-athletes' scores on the CDI indicate that they are in need of support related to understanding the world of work. This category is designed to measure an individual's knowledge of types of occupations and ways to obtain and succeed in jobs (Savickas, 2000). Adrian, Chuck and Marcus scored the highest in the career planning category, which indicates that they have been involved with post-high school activities around planning. The majority of student-athletes seemed to have substantially higher scores in the career exploration category compared to the other categories. The exploration category is designed to measure the individual's willingness to find and utilize resources for career planning (Savickas, 2000). These responses indicate that the student-athletes are willing to utilize career resources when provided.

There did not seem to be a trend associated with year in school and scores in the four career categories. Bernard had the lowest scores in the four categories. His life experiences may have influenced his ability to complete tasks in the growth stage of career development. Although, he exhibited resilience to overcome obstacles in his social environment, it was difficult as a child to focus on his future as a worker when he was concerned about his basic physiological and safety needs. While Lonnie's scores were higher than some of his teammates on the CDI, his responses to the interview questions seemed to demonstrate that he did not explore or plan for a career outside of playing basketball. This observation raises the concern that the responses to the CDI may have been different if the student-athletes were asked to respond by reflecting on career aspirations other than a professional basketball career. Other figures provide descriptive data to complement the individual narratives of each student-athlete.

6.3 IMPLICATION FOR PRACTICE

6.3.1 Recent Report on African American Male Athletes

In a recent report focusing on the racial inequities in NCAA Division I college sports, black male student-athletes who play basketball and football were featured as a marginalized group. Specifically, the study described how there are racial inequities among black males who played basketball and football in the major conferences including the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Big East Conference, Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference, PAC 12 Conference, and the Southeastern Conference (SEC). These conferences were selected because every NCAA Division I football champion since 1989 and every basketball champion since 1991 came from one of these conferences. Football and basketball were selected because of the amount of revenue that is produced from these sports and the representation of African American males (Harper & Blackman, 2013). The results of the study highlighted the following statistics:

- Between 2007 and 2010, black men were 64.3% of basketball teams, while only comprising 2.8% of the full time degree-seeking undergraduates
- Across four cohorts, 50.2% of black male student-athletes graduated within six years, compared to 66.9% of student-athletes overall
- 97.4% of these institutions graduated black male student-athletes at rates lower than undergraduate students overall
- On 72.4% of the campuses, graduation rates for black male student-athletes were lower than rates for black undergraduate men overall

The researchers of the study emphasized that the primary aim of the study was to offer transparency; not shock value. They were interested in confirming that disparities still exist among black male student-athletes. The researchers noted that scholars who have studied

college football and men's basketball over the past 20 years will likely be unsurprised at the results of the study. However, the research group is astonished that it seems the American public has accepted as normal the widespread inequities that are reproduced through revenue generating collegiate sports (Harper & Blackman, 2013).

The report conducted by Harper and Blackman (2013) offers transparency regarding the statistics indicating racial disparities among black male collegiate athletes. As a result, they encourage institutional leaders, the NCAA, and athletics conference commissioners to seek ways to address these disparities. The research presented in this dissertation complements the study conducted by Harper and Blackman. Hopefully, it will provide a layer of voices and stories to help further understand the lived experiences of the student-athletes who are represented in the report conducted by Harper and Blackman. While it is imperative to recognize that disparities among black male student-athletes exist statistically, it is of equal importance to understand this population's stories and worldviews when coordinating interventions to address the disparities. This dissertation is not aimed at offering statistically valid data that is generalizable over an entire population. However, it offers a framework to help paint a picture to better understand this population.

In addition to understanding the statistical scope of the problem, it is of equal importance to understand the lived experiences and environmental factors that have helped to shape black male student-athletes' worldviews. Institutional leaders, the NCAA, and athletics administrators should also have interest in how the black male student-athletes have constructed their realities. The combination of statistical data and student-athlete narratives can help educators and administrators explore utilization of culturally relevant programming in addressing the disparities among black male student-athletes.

6.3.2 Scholar Identity Model

The student-athletes' construction of their worldview was heavily based on their experiences. Their conceptualization of their roles on a college campus was influenced by developmental conceptual factors and their identity development. Student affairs administrators, athletics administrators, coaches, and faculty members can make a concerted effort to understand how the student-athletes' social environment helps to shape their identity. The student-athlete's identity development is related to their career development attitudes.

Understanding these dynamics can help to build programs that engage the student-athletes and empower them. While pursuing an athletic career can be fulfilling, it is rational to also complete the career development tasks associated with the growth and exploration stages in regards to a career outside of playing basketball professionally. If the student-athlete does not complete tasks associated with this stage while having the opportunity to engage in college course work, they may have difficulties establishing and maintaining a non-athletic career once their basketball career has concluded. As a result, former student-athletes may find themselves participating in tasks related to the exploration stage when they are in their thirties and forties.

In particular, student affairs administrators and academic counselors can use information about how students view themselves as learners as an important consideration when trying to promote academic achievement or career development (Whiting, 2009). While the athletic identity may be salient among collegiate student-athletes, there is a need to emphasize the importance of balance between the athletic and student roles. As a result, programs exploring the promotion of a scholar identity may be advantageous when working with African American male collegiate athletes. Scholar identity involves an individual who views himself or herself as intelligent, competent, and studious (Whiting, 2009). The Scholar Identity Model (SIM) features

several characteristics, which include 1) self-efficacy, 2) future orientation, 3) willing to make sacrifices, 4) internal locus of control, 5) self-awareness, 6) strong need for achievement, 7) academic self-confidence, 8) racial pride and 9) masculinity.

6.3.3 Career Counseling

An academic counselor or life skills coordinator working with student-athletes could have used the Scholar Identity Model to engage Lonnie in embracing the student role while in college. Lonnie presented characteristics associated with an individual who has a foreclosed identity. A person with a scholar identity has confidence in their ability as a learner, which is related to self-efficacy. Using a strengths-based approach, Lonnie demonstrated that he had resilience to overcome his social environment of his neighborhood to attend college. This characteristic could be used to strengthen his academic skills to help build confidence in his abilities as a learner. The academic counselor or life skills coordinator could help Lonnie reflect on how his past and current behaviors can influence future achievements. Someone with a scholar identity is not overly concerned with instant gratification, but concerned about their future. Lonnie should be able to set realistic career goals outside of playing basketball professionally. As result, he could develop skills related to the future orientation characteristic.

Lonnie demonstrated through his athletic training that he had the capacity to make sacrifices to achieve long term and short term goals related to sports. The challenge for the academic counselor working with Lonnie would be to empower him to establish career related goals associated with a career outside of professional basketball. An extremely important characteristic of the Scholar Identity Model is self-awareness. Lonnie needed help identifying his strengths and limitations related to preparation for a career field of interests. Considering that

Lonnie did not explore career fields outside of playing basketball professionally, he would need to accept that major attention should be allotted for exploring the world of work. It would also have been beneficial for Lonnie to explore his racial or ethnic identity to understand how he has constructed his perception of his current situation.

It would be advantageous for Lonnie to understand how and why he has constructed his worldview about careers in such a manner. Particularly as an African American male collegiate athlete, it is important to understand how he has conceptualized the multitude of messages being sent by the public. As a result, he could have greater self-understanding and develop adaptive skills related to various social environments. Lastly, an academic counselor or life skills coordinator could help Lonnie explore the stereotypes and societal expectations of male athletes. Understanding stereotypical views could help to avoid feeling pressured to conform to these stereotypes.

Career counselors also have the opportunity to help oppose the risk of stereotype threat among African American males. There have been many historical figures who have demonstrated a balance between excelling in athletics and academics. Paul Roberson, John Edgar Wideman and Bonnie St. John are shining examples. Contemporary athletes such as Myron Rolle have demonstrated that there are African American male athletes who continue the legacy of balance between athletic and academic excellence. Myron was a Florida State University football standout. However, he was also named a Rhodes Scholar. He played in the NFL after graduating from Florida State University and subsequently the University of Oxford through the Rhodes scholarship. Recently he decided to retire from the NFL to attend medical school. Career counselors can educate African American collegiate athletes on how historical and current athletes do not fit the historical stereotypes of African American males being inferior

intellectually. If education and awareness of counter examples are not offered to African American male student-athletes, they may be at risk to implicit unconscious bias.

Similarly, career counselors and life skills coordinators can use culturally relevant discussions to bring awareness to the symbolic relationship between historical periods and the contemporary. For example, a common theme within this study was the need for student-athletes to escape their communities. Some of the participants viewed playing basketball as a resource to obtain an education, which could enhance their quality of life. Others viewed playing basketball professionally as the only way of enhancing their quality of life. Escaping their current environment and neighborhoods can symbolically align with the view from past generations of African Americans that one needs to obtain an education by whatever means to get out of their community.

During the 1800s Harriet Tubman would threaten to kill runaway slaves who made a decision to return to the plantation because this could jeopardize the lives of all slaves using the Underground Railroad. Returning home was deemed as unsafe. This connection can help student-athletes reflect on whether there are safe and effective ways to return home to build community capacity in their neighborhoods. Obviously, the contemporary context is completely different from the 1800's, but symbolism may promote reflection and critical thinking about the student-athletes' social environments. Other discussions around the function of sports in their communities and society can help promote personal reflection about their situations.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The challenge for student affairs administrators is to create programs that are strengths-based, empowering, engaging, and effective. Creating programs utilizing social theory and research can be difficult, but is necessary. The high percentage of African American male student-athletes who play basketball does not need to be a source of marginalization. They can have agency in college environments if they are mentored and nurtured to fulfill the appropriate career development tasks associated with the growth and exploration stages.

However, it will be difficult, if African American male student-athletes have been socialized for 18 years to only value education as a source of accessing a professional basketball career. Administrators should also be cognizant of the range of experiences and the diversity within the African American male student-athlete population. Programs and interventions should take into consideration the individual's background and life experiences when creating career development programs.

Further research is needed to help address the disparities among African American male collegiate athletes. Researchers can expand on this study by exploring how perceptions of career attitudes differ among African American student-athletes who participate in basketball programs at NCAA Division I, II, and III institutions. Additionally, researchers can conduct studies that seek perceptions about career decisions among former African American male collegiate student-athletes. Lastly, a limitation of this study was not having the resources to conduct a longitudinal study. If given the opportunity and funding, I would like to examine changes in career attitudes and identity over a period of time with the students reported in this study. It would be advantageous to conduct follow up studies that explore how career choice, family formation, civic involvement and related issues are related to their self-concept over time.

I appreciate you as the reader taking time to critically analyze this dissertation and deliberate on my claims. I am also grateful to the student-athletes in this study for expounding on their experiences and sharing worthwhile stories to help offer insight into their worldviews. Their stories are fascinating and exhibit how they are *Dream Chasers*. It is our responsibility as student affairs administrators, coaches, family, conference administrators, educators, community members, and the like to channel their positive energy to helping them maximize their college experience.

7.0 APPENDIX A

7.1 STUDENT-ATHLETE NARRATIVES

7.1.1 Introduction

Riessman (1993) describes how narratives involve the teller making a point for the listener by recapitulating the past. Utilizing narratives is advantageous because they help to reveal how reality is constructed by the teller. Although I could not completely remove myself from influencing the responses of the participants in the study, I made a concerted effort to predominately highlight the voices of the participants. As a result, I decided to feature narratives of the student-athletes as the main source of data within this study. The narratives offer insight on the uniqueness of each of the student-athlete's experiences, which have helped to shape their worldview. Each narrative has integrity as an individual passage.

The narratives are comprised of four sections including 1) background information, 2) developmental contextual factors, 3) identity development and 4) career development attitudes. These were the major themes used when drafting the interview questions for the study. After transcribing the interviews, the transcriptions were coded including line and stanza numbers. The line numbers are represented in the narratives so the reader can refer to original transcriptions, if interested. The beginning and ending of each line was decided based on changes in pitch of the

interviewee to determine the line breaks. Organizing the interview based on lines and stanzas creates a poetic structure and the stanzas within each narrative should read as such.

Overall, this chapter is designed to describe factors that have influenced the student-athletes' worldview and attitude toward career. All 13 narratives are featured in this section and are ordered alphabetically. The narratives describe a range of experiences, which influence their worldview and expectations of the college experience. Every student-athlete in the study presented a unique set of experiences which contributed to their outlook in life.

7.1.2 Adrian's Narrative

7.1.2.1 Background Information

Adrian's parents lived in a large city in the southern part of the United States before moving to a major city in the Midwestern part of the United States. Adrian was born in this city. The majority of Adrian's family lives in the same city, including his grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Adrian's mother and father were 27 years old when they gave birth to Adrian and 21 years old when they gave birth to Adrian's older sister. Adrian's parents are married. Adrian's father was a truck driver and Adrian's mother is an accountant. His grandfathers passed before Adrian became nine years old. However, he developed strong relationships with his grandmothers.

Adrian was introduced to basketball at very early age. He noted that his parents gave him a basketball and Fisher Price hoop at the age of one and he has been playing ever since. Adrian began playing in recreational leagues before entering Kindergarten. He earned numerous awards at an early age including all-star selections and championships. Adrian played in an AAU league and began traveling during the summers in the seventh grade. In the eighth grade, Adrian received his first athletic scholarship offer to a smaller university in his home state. Adrian

earned a position in the starting lineup of his high school varsity basketball team in the ninth grade. He maintained that role throughout his high school career. As a sophomore, he committed to a large university in his home state which had a tradition of winning and playing at a high level. As a junior in high school, he decided that he wanted to explore other options for universities.

As his high school career concluded, he was a three-time All-State selection and his high school's all-time leading scorer. He helped his high school to earn a state final four appearance. Adrian decided to commit to his current university where he an athletic scholarship to play basketball. He didn't play in any games during his first season. Since this is his first year competing in games, Adrian is considered a redshirt freshman athletically. He is taking the prerequisite courses to apply for a major in the undergraduate business program.

7.1.2.2 Developmental Conceptual Factors

Adrian was encouraged by his family to establish goals and aspirations by offering their support. He learned values including work ethic and sacrifice from his father, who is a truck driver. His mother is an accountant; his uncles are entrepreneurs, while grandfather owned a gas station. These factors influenced his socio-economic status in regards to family income, but also influenced Adrian to have aspirations to work professionally in a business field. Adrian's family income seemed to be associated with the middle class. There is also an emphasis on the importance of sports in Adrian's geographical community. Adrian noted that sports were very important in his community. Many people within the community attend high school basketball games. They also support the professional teams by attending the games.

Charles: 0313 So it's- is it real big for other people in your community?
 0314 Sports?

Adrian: 0315 Sports?
0316 Yeah. I would say so.
0317 A lot of people attend the high school events
0318 and you know the NBA games,
0319 and the NFL team,
0320 the NFL team is a huge sporting event.
0321 No matter how bad they are,
0322 everybody supports the NFL team.

An example of his geographical community's allegiance to their local sports teams includes their reaction to Adrian's college decision. When Adrian was in the tenth grade, he made a verbal commitment to attending a large university in his state. Later, he decided that attending that institution was not the best decision. As a result, he explored attending other institutions. Before deciding to attend a university outside of his home state, he received a lot of positive media coverage as a local talent. Once the local newspapers were notified that Adrian was not attending the state university, they published negative articles about his decision. Although Adrian was hurt by the articles, he had a support network which helped Adrian deal with the criticism. His parents served as his main support in this situation. This scenario provides an example of the importance of sports in Adrian's geographic community.

Adrian: 0255 Yeah I experienced that.
0256 I was committed to a big university in the state
0257 my sophomore year of high school
0258 and once I de-committed from there,
0259 it was like all negativity
0260 like I would never be able to get a high major offer again
0261 and all these names
0262 like the only reason I got the big university
0263 was because I was lived in that state
0264 and all these crazy remarks
0265 I guess.

Charles: 0266 Why did you de-commit from the original university?

Adrian: 0267 It was just a few reasons.

0268 The coach wasn't keeping in contact with me
0269 as much as he was in beginning
0270 and a lot guards had been getting to commit there too
0271 and I just wasn't feeling that for real.

Charles: 0272 You figured this school was a better fit for you?

Adrian: 0273 Oh yeah definitely.
0274 It opened up my options.
0275 And I had offers again from four schools from major conferences,
0276 a lot of schools,
0277 Another university from a major conference
0278 and University X
0279 and took a few visits and University X,
0280 I chose University X.

Charles: 0281 When you read the article
0282 when the writer bashed you
0283 about de-committing from the original university,
0284 how did that make you feel?

Adrian: 0285 Oh it hurts.
0286 You know it hurts.
0287 It hurt
0288 especially being I guess young,
0289 a few years younger than I am now,
0290 but I mean just I guess talking to my role models,
0291 my parents,
0292 they helped me to understand
0293 that you know my life is up to me
0294 how I want to live it
0295 and the decisions that I make
0296 and the opportunities that are handed to me
0297 are because of the decisions I make.

Adrian perceived that presence of multiple basketball courts in his geographical and ethnic communities as being a symbol of basketball's importance to African Americans. Aspects about his racial identity development will be explored in subsequent sections, but it is important to note that Adrian perceived the presence of basketball courts in communities as signaling some type of significance related to sports.

Adrian: 0438 I mean
0439 well playing basketball,
0440 basketball is a predominately black sport
0441 and I don't know.
0442 I feel like,
0443 you know in a lot of black communities,
0444 you always see a basketball court.
0445 That may be like a sign
0446 that I guess you could say
0447 black kids could fall back on basketball
0448 or the black community could be proud of basketball.
0449 Because you know a lot of things aren't predominately black
0450 nowadays

7.1.2.3 Identity Development

Adrian seemed to have developed a strong athletic identity. He was exposed to basketball at very young age. He was given a small basketball hoop and basketball at the age of one. During elementary school, Adrian received a lot of recognition for his basketball skills. He earned all-star team positions and won trophies for recreational league championships. Adrian began traveling for summer tournaments in middle school. During the ninth grade, he was featured in the starting lineup, which was a position held all four years. Playing basketball at a high level became an important part of how Adrian was identified.

Adrian: 0059 Well my mom, she said that
0060 when I was like I want to say one years old,
0061 she bought me like one of those Fisher Price hoops for Christmas
0062 and she said I made me first shot
0063 and ever since then I just been playing basketball.
0064 I could remember like playing in these rec leagues
0065 like it's vivid memories.
0066 I can remember like I want to say I was in kindergarten
0067 probably and I remember making the All-star team
0068 and that was like it and I got trophies from those even
0069 so it dates back to a long time.

Charles: 0070 So since you can remember.
0071 So you were playing in kind of a little league type teams

0072 and then what did you play in middle school?

Adrian: 0073 yeah I played my whole life since then.

Charles: 0074 Did you play like AAU?

Adrian: 0075 Yeah I played AAU basketball.
0076 I played with an AAU team
0077 and a NBA player was our sponsor
0078 and of course I played in high school
0079 and now I'm here at University X playing.

Charles: 0080 When did you start playing AAU?

Adrian: 0081 I played AAU-
0082 I was introduced to AAU
0083 I want to say-
0084 I want to say,
0085 I was playing travel league.
0086 I always played up an age growing up
0087 and then at AAU,
0089 I believe I started playing AAU when I was in seventh grade.

Charles: 0090 And then talk about when you played in high school.
0091 Did you play junior varsity, varsity?

Adrian: 0092 I played varsity all four years.
0093 I actually was blessed to start all four years too.
0094 I think I only didn't start what two games
0095 because of senior night.

Adrian received his first athletic scholarship offer in the eighth grade. Adrian played for an elite AAU team that was sponsored by a NBA superstar. He received recognition nationally through the high school prospect ranking publications. The recognition was a part of his routine experience. When he received the athletic scholarship offer in the eighth grade, he did not understand the rarity of a middle school Adrian being able to solidify funding for school.

Adrian: 0152 I remember when-
0153 it was AAU-
0154 you know you get introduced to the-
0155 you get introduced to the public

0156 I guess
0157 you could say and national rankings fall into place.
0158 And I remember going on to all the elite camps,
0159 the elite camp sponsored by a university in my state,
0160 Jamboree, a skills academy sponsored by a NBA player,
0161 things like that.
0162 And you get put on a national scale
0163 and you know I was blessed with the opportunity to have University X
0164 look at me and you know
0165 a lot of other schools.

Charles: 0166 When did you start getting letters?

Adrian: 0167 I had my first offer in 7th grade.
0168 a mid-major university in my state

Charles: 0169 Who was the coach at University Y at the time?

Adrian: 0171 Coach Jenkins

Charles: 0172 Jerry Jenkins, yeah.
0173 He actually is from Detroit.
0174 That's where I know him from.
0175 So that was in the 7th grade.

Adrian: 0176 I know it was middle school.
0177 You can say 8th grade to be safe, but.

Charles: 0178 And how did that make you feel

Adrian: 0179 Well I mean it was my hometown.
0180 I might have took it for granted,
0181 for real.
0182 And being that young
0183 I just and I mean I always dreamed of going to a bigger school
0184 even though this university is on the high scale right now,
0185 due to all the good guards that they're getting,
0186 and coach Jerry Jenkins,
0187 but I don't know.
0188 I might have took it for granted honestly,
0189 being that young and not really
0190 you know knowing how much of a big deal a full scholarship
really was.

Adrian grew up in a city that emphasized the importance of sports. The community members supported the professional teams and also followed high school sports. As a result, Adrian was encouraged to embrace the importance of sports.

- Adrian: 0304 Sports is you know almost everything.
0305 Sports is pretty much everything to me
0306 and my whole life,
0307 growing up
0308 and even now.
0309 Whatever I can do,
0310 I always want to be able to give back to the community.
0311 That's like my number one goal
0312 is to be able to try to do that.
- Charles: 0313 So it's- is it real big for other people in your community?
0314 Sports?
- Adrian: 0315 Sports?
0316 Yeah. I would say so.
0317 A lot of people attend the high school events
0318 and you know the NBA games,
0319 and the NFL team,
0320 The NFL team is a huge sporting event.
0321 No matter how bad they are,
0322 everybody supports the NFL team

Adrian considered race when conceptualizing symbols in his world. Adrian considered basketball to be a predominately African American sport as it relates to the representation of athletes who play in college and professionally. Adrian noted that typically there are multiple basketball courts in predominately African American communities. Adrian viewed the presence of basketball courts in these communities as representing a symbol that African Americans should view basketball as being important. Specifically, basketball should be viewed as something that African American kids can "fall back on". Adrian believed that the presence of basketball courts send the message that African Americans should be proud that they are predominately represented as players in college and the NBA. Adrian believed that there should

be pride in the African American representation in basketball because there is lack of representation in other fields. However, he also acknowledged that there was a lack of representation of African American owners in professional sports.

Adrian: 0438 I mean
0439 well playing basketball,
0440 basketball is a predominately black sport
0441 and I don't know.
0442 I feel like,
0443 you know in a lot of black communities,
0444 you always see a basketball court.
0445 That may be like a sign
0446 that I guess you could say
0447 black kids could fall back on basketball
0448 or the black community could be proud of basketball.
0449 Because you know a lot of things aren't predominately black
0450 nowadays.

Charles: 0451 So this is kind of one area that is
0452 predominately black
0453 and athletes are excelling at it.

Adrian: 0454 I mean we're not predominately black as owners yet,
0455 but far as the players go.
0456 That's something that I feel like our community
0457 can be proud of.

Adrian was proud of African Americans that have positively impacted society throughout history. He acknowledged the contributions of Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman to the Civil Rights movements and demanding social justice. He highlighted that he was proud of Michael Jordan as an icon. He also noted that seeing an African American president is of significance.

Charles: 0458 Describe what makes you proud of your race
0459 or ethnic background.

Adrian: 0460 Just seeing like the Martin Luther King videos,
0461 Malcolm X videos,

0462 just to name the most popular things.
0463 You know watching Michael Jordan,
0464 the icons.
0465 Rosa Parks,
0466 Harriet Tubman,
0467 standing up you know to the white community,
0468 fighting for our rights is huge.
0469 Now seeing Barack as president
0470 is extremely huge.

Adrian was aware of subtle forms of prejudice that potentially impact his interactions with people of other races. Adrian specifically mentioned that college professors can also discriminate against African American student-athletes. The professors may not be empathetic to student-athletes' travel schedule due to athletic commitments. Adrian did not view the lack of empathy as being blatantly racist behavior, but considered their actions biased.

Adrian: 0401 I mean you can,
0402 I think I see signs of racism
0403 at least a few time throughout the week
0404 in my everyday life.
0405 It can be anything.
0406 Something just simple.
0407 I can be just driving down the road
0408 and a Caucasian person just crosses the street in front of your car,
0409 I feel like that's racist sometimes.
0410 I think- I don't know.
0411 I think the littlest things can be racist
0412 so I don't know.
0413 Not saying thank you to me when I let you go,
0414 like I don't know.
0415 I guess I get upset about the little things in life.

Charles: 0416 So you're saying that makes you upset?

Adrian: 0417 I mean not necessarily upset
0418 like damn like you know.
0419 I don't know.
0420 I feel like some-
0421 some teachers or professors in this college
0422 can discriminate against black athletes sometimes.
0423 With our schedules sometimes

0424 it can prohibit us from taking a quiz or something.
0425 I've known a few professors to like
0426 not even care to take into consideration
0427 that effect and just throw the retake out the window.

Charles: 0428 So you think that might be a little bit of racial bias.

Adrian: 0429 Yeah I definitely think it could be.

Adrian was conscious of the public's perceptions of African American male athletes. Adrian believed that a common stereotype associated with African American male student-athletes is that they are unintelligence. Adrian was not bothered by the stereotype because he was confident in his academic abilities. Adrian's mother and grandmother have reinforced the importance of academic performance throughout his life. His grandmother and mother expected Adrian to maintain a 3.0 GPA throughout high school and college.

Charles: 0471 What stereotypes
0472 are associated with being a black male
0473 collegiate athlete?

Adrian: 0474 Not being smart.
0475 Not a lot of people think we aren't smart.
0476 That's probably the major one.

Charles: 0477 And how does that make you feel?

Adrian: 0478 I mean it doesn't make me feel any type of way
0479 because I know I'm smart.
0480 And you know when you tell people your grades,
0481 when you tell adults your grades
0482 sometimes they ask you say how is your GPA?
0483 And I say like a 3.0 a little better.
0484 Oh you do!
0485 It's kind of I mean you didn't have to say all of that
0486 but yeah I do.

Charles: 0487 Sometimes their reaction is being surprised

Adrian: 0488 Like unexpected

Charles: 0489 That you have a 3.0
0490 at a university like this.
0491 Does that make you feel a certain type of way?

Adrian: 0492 I think it makes me feel you know
0493 better about myself.
0494 And even better about where I come from.

Charles: 0495 So when you came to college,
0496 did you come in expecting to get 3.0's,
0497 excelling academically?

Adrian: 0498 Yeah.
0499 My whole life my mom
0500 and my grandmother especially
0501 stressed grades
0502 and my whole life my mom and my grandmother
0503 wanted me over 3.0
0504 so school is getting tough right now
0505 but I'm still striving hard to get that 3.0.

Adrian was encouraged by his grandmother to prepare for life once his basketball career has concluded. His grandmother advised Adrian to capitalize on the academic opportunities associated with an athletic scholarship.

Charles: 0506 How did they stress grades?

Adrian: 0507 They just you know
0508 just tell me basketball one day comes to an end
0509 and a back-up plan,
0510 although no one really wants to hear it,
0511 it is realistic.
0512 And my grandmother she just,
0513 she tells me to take the scholarship to my full advantage.
0514 These free courses get the most out of them.

Adrian also indicated that spirituality may influence his identity. He noted that his relationship with God is his first priority. Adrian valued faith and considered it an important aspect of his life. His second priority is his family and basketball.

Charles: 0637 Rank your top three priorities or roles in life

0638 and explain why.

0639 Adrian: Priorities?

0640 I would say God,

0641 family,

0642 school

0643 and basketball.

Charles: 0644 Why that order?

Adrian: 0645 God definitely number one

0646 because you know my faith is everything

0647 and my family is the next thing closest

0648 or most important to me next to God

0649 and school and basketball fall right under that.

7.1.2.4 Career Development Tasks

Adrian developed secure attachment relationships with his mother, father and grandmothers. Adrian seemed confident in exploring the work world at a young age. He always wanted to play basketball professionally in the NBA. He was exposed to playing organized basketball at an early age, developed exceptional basketball skills, and had a support network to help in feeling secure to daydream about the possibility of playing basketball professionally. As a result, Adrian demonstrated that he was concerned about his future as a worker.

Adrian's father was a truck driver. His mother was an accountant. Additionally, his grandfather owned a gas station and his uncles owned clothing stores in his home state. Having access to people in variety of business related fields influenced Adrian to develop an interest in majoring in business in college. He developed this interest in high school. Specifically, Adrian is interested in the marketing field.

Adrian: 0529 I always wanted to be an NBA player,

0530 an athlete in the NBA,

0531 and that hasn't changed.

0532 I guess when I got in high school

0533 I was,
0534 I started thinking about being a business major in college
0535 and that still hasn't changed either.

Charles: 0536 So you've pretty much known
0537 kind of what you've wanted to do
0538 or what kind of plan you've had
0539 and you stuck with it even when you got to college.

Adrian: 0540 Yeah my whole,
0541 like a lot of my family members are entrepreneurs
0542 you know and like have their own type of business
0543 or what not so I always want to be my own boss
0544 I guess.

Charles: 0545 And so what's your major right now?

Adrian: 0546 I'm undeclared right now,
0547 but I'm applying to the business school
0548 as we speak.

Charles: 0549 What type of business are you thinking about?

Adrian: 0550 I think I want to go into marketing,
0551 the marketing field.

Charles: 0552 And who kind of influenced
0553 your aspirations in terms of wanting to play in the NBA,
0554 but then also kind of going the business route.

Adrian: 0555 I think I did.
0556 I just had a set mind
0557 and just determined to get there.

Charles: 0558 You said your family is entrepreneurs.
0559 What type of businesses
0560 or entrepreneurship ventures have they

Adrian: 0561 My mom, she told me her father used to own a gas station
0562 and my uncle he owns like a clothing store
0563 and a few things.

Charles: 0564 And is this in your home state?

Adrian: 0565 Yeah.

Adrian depended on his parents and grandmother to make decisions about a professional career. Adrian's parents and grandmother encouraged him to establish goals and work hard to achieve his goals. They emphasize that anything is possible.

Charles: 0566 Currently,
0567 who do you depend on
0568 to make decisions about a professional career
0569 in terms of basketball,
0570 but also outside of playing basketball?

Adrian: 0571 I think I go to my parents
0572 and to my grandmother.

Charles: 0573 Does your grandmother live
0574 on her own?

Adrian: 0575 Yeah she lives by herself.

Charles: 0576 What advice have they given to you?

Adrian: 0577 You know just
0578 anything is possible really.
0579 Just work hard in anything that you do
0580 and make it possible for yourself
0581 to achieve your goal.

As a result, Adrian decided to focus on excelling at playing basketball professionally. Adrian was also dedicated to maintaining a 3.0 GPA while possibly pursuing a marketing degree. Adrian viewed basketball and course work as being of equal importance at this point in his life. Adrian believed that excelling in basketball presented opportunities professionally and was a way of financing his college education. He also had career aspirations outside of playing basketball professionally; specifically the marketing field.

Charles: 0616 Currently,
0617 what's more important to you
0618 in life right now:
0619 Basketball or school?

Adrian: 0620 I would say
0621 both of them are equally
0622 as important as the other one is.

Charles: 0623 Okay why?

Adrian: 0624 Because you can't get anywhere in life without sch-
0625 I mean I can't get anywhere with basketball
0626 if I had no school.
0627 If I'm not eligible,
0628 I can't play.
0629 But to achieve my goals,
0630 I need basketball.

Charles: 0631 So right now basketball
0632 is kind of a way for you
0633 to achieve your goals.

Adrian: 0634 Yeah definitely,
0635 but without school
0636 I wouldn't be able to play basketball.

While Adrian had career aspirations of pursuing a profession in the marketing field, he had not held a job outside of playing basketball. Additionally, he had not held an internship in high school or middle school. He worked as a caddy for a month in high school, but had not had any other work experience.

Charles: 0590 When you were growing up,
0591 did you have any jobs?

Adrian: 0592 No,
0593 I was a caddy for a month in the summer
0594 but I never had time to have a job,
0595 do the AAU and school.

7.1.3 Ben's Narrative

7.1.3.1 Background Information

Ben's family was born in an urban city in the northeastern region of the United State. His grandfather and grandmother gave birth to his mother in this city. He mentioned that the majority of his family was born in the same city and continues to live their; including cousins, aunts and uncles. His mother was a single parent and Ben is the oldest child. They lived in multiple neighborhoods throughout the city due to his mother's housing situations. The majority of his family attended the local high school. His cousins attended the local high school and played for the basketball team. One of his cousins eventually played basketball at a NCAA Division II institution. As a child, Ben admired his cousins who played for the local high school and aspired to be like his cousins. As a result, he played basketball at the local playgrounds as a child.

When Ben was eight years old, he began playing for the little league within his community. This league was organized for local youth ages eight to twelve who lived in the city to be involved with sports. After playing for the "little" league, youth can continue playing organized sports for their middle school teams and eventually play for the local high school. When the youth are young, the teams for the little league are randomly selected. Eventually as the youth get older, teams are selected by utilizing a draft system. The little league also selects an all-star team for the various age groups. These teams compete against other youth league all-star teams from neighboring communities and cities. Ben made the all-star team every year in which he competed.

When Ben was in the eighth grade, he was offered a scholarship to a private Christian high school in the area. As a result, he attended the private school during his ninth and tenth grade year. He eventually transferred to the local public high school to complete his eleventh and

twelfth grade. He wanted the opportunity to play with his family and friends at the local public high school. He eventually earned an athletic scholarship to University X. During the study, Ben was a senior and majoring in social sciences. He was interested in coaching after his playing career ends.

7.1.3.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Living in Ben's geographical community is a major factor which has helped shaped Ben's development. The community emphasizes the importance of sports at an early age through their recreational leagues, including the local little league. The importance of sports is also reinforced through the community's pride in the local high school sports. Although, there seemed to be resources for developing youth through sports, there were obstacles that could impede on youth educational, social and psychological development. There seemed to be a perception that participation in sports is one of the few avenues for youth to use to escape and create better living situations.

- Ben: 0127 My role models influenced me a lot
0128 because my city is tough growing up.
0129 They say only way you make it from my city is if you play basketball
0130 and I was blessed with that talent to play.
0131 And they was a lot of good people that played.
0132 There's a whole lot of people from my city that didn't make it
0133 so I was blessed with the talent and the ability to come to college
0134 on a full scholarship and play.
0135 a NBA player/, from my city,
0136 he went to the NBA
0137 so I looked up to him
0138 and there's a lot of other guys that like played for the local high school
0139 and went to other schools.
- Charles: 0140 When was the first time you heard that saying that the only way to make it
out
was to play ball?
- Ben: 0141 When I was around fourteen
0142 because that's what it was like

0143 it was summer leagues and basketball everywhere.
0144 Outside of /killings/ and everything
0145 that's what you did, played basketball.
0146 I mean out of the violence and stuff you played basketball
0147 so I was blessed to make it

Ben initially heard the saying that the only way to making it out of his city was through participation in sports when he was fourteen. Although, there were bad influences in his environment, he demonstrated the ability to make good decisions and avoid potentially harmful situations. When he transferred to the local high school, some of his peers encourage Ben to ride in a stolen car. Ben demonstrated good judgment and decided that this was a potentially harmful situation. It seemed like he was placed in similar situations multiple times.

Ben: 0337 In high school my /boys/ had a car- my /boys/ had a car.
0338 It was a stolen car at the school
0339 and he asked me if I wanted a ride home
0340 and I backed out once I found out it was a stolen car
0341 because I knew the consequences
0342 if we got pulled over or anything
0343 and crazy thing about it is they got like in trouble that day.
0344 Got in trouble that day.
0345 And something just told me like nah I'll walk rather than
get in the car.
0346 A couple hours later they were locked up.
Charles: 0347 What year was that?
Ben: 0348 I was in the beginning of 11th grade.
Charles: 0349 So you just got to your new high school.
Ben: 0350 Yeah like just got to there.
Charles: 0351 Was there kind of talk like /you were/ going to help the
basketball team?
Ben: 0352 Yeah. That was big.
0353 Yeah it was like I was a little highlight at that time.
0354 Something told me not to do that.
Charles: 0355 How would that have changed your life?
Ben: 0356 It would've.
0357 /There's a lot of situations/
0358 I was in and got out of I think /on the strength of God/
0359 a lot of things that I did and I should have been in trouble
0360 and I didn't.

Ben participated in the local little league and eventually played for the local high school. Youth viewed the local high school players as role models. For Ben the pride of playing for the local high school was also embedded because his family members played for the same school.

Ben: 0060 It influenced me
 0061 because there were a lot of good players that came through there
 0062 and everybody knows you.
 0063 You go to one high school,
 0064 everybody knows you.
 0065 Teachers know your parents,
 0066 your background,
 0067 your grandmothers,
 0068 your aunts, everyone.
 0069 It was a lot of players
 0070 /that means/ every game is packed
 0071 because it's one high school and everybody comes out to support the local
 High school basketball.
 0072 Growing up in this city,
 0073 you played basketball as a kid,
 0074 one of your dreams is going to be playing for the local high school
 0075 and that's what I did.

Ben earned a scholarship to attend a local private Christian school. He attended this school during his ninth and tenth grade years. However, he decided to transfer during his eleventh and twelfth grade years. He wanted to have the opportunity to play for the local high school and be among his friends and family.

Ben: 0167 It influenced it big.
 0168 It really opened my eyes and I realized
 0169 I had the talent to play.
 0170 When I was in 8th grade,
 0171 I had got a scholarship to a Christian school,
 0172 a Christian high school.
 0173 I had played in this summer league and a guy came over to me and told me
 0174 I had a scholarship to this high school and I went home,
 0175 told my mom and everything.
 0176 It felt good and
 0177 I just- just motivated me to keep playing and keep getting better.
Charles: 0178 And you ended up going to that
Ben: 0179 Yeah I ended up going there 9th and 10th grade,

0180 then I transferred to the local high school my 11th and 12th grade year.
Charles: 0181 What made you transfer?
Ben: 0182 I just wanted to go back and play for-
0183 I said growing up I wanted to play for the local high school
0184 so I just figured my last two years
0185 I wanted to play with my friends and family.

Ben's socioeconomic status is an environmental factor that affects his development. He was raised in a single parent household with a low family income. As the oldest child, he accepted the responsibility of helping to provide for the house while in high school.

Ben: 0452 It helped me like
0453 mature.
0454 It made me be tough like
0455 I'm the oldest so it was like when my mom couldn't be
0456 there or do something
0457 I always had to do it for my little brother.
0458 I /used to/ see my mom crying
0459 and my brothers cry and
0460 I always the one just bring us together.
0461 Just I was like be tough and like move on.
0462 I always was the tough one.

He will also be the first in his family to graduate from college. This accomplishment is a great source of pride for Ben.

Ben: 0418 It felt good.
0419 I knew if I just stuck with it
0420 people say you can do anything you put your mind to
0421 and I think I did.
0422 And it- like I said it felt good to come to college.
0423 The first one in my family to come to a college
0424 and graduate and stuff so it feels good.

7.1.3.3 Identity Development

Ben seemed to have developed a strong athletic identity. Growing up in his home city plays a tremendous role in his development of a strong athletic identity. He was introduced and had access to sports at an early age. He played in the local little leagues at eight years old. Every

year, he was selected to be a member on the all-star team through the little league. The all-star traveled to compete against neighboring cities and towns.

Charles: 0055 Talk about that a little bit,
0056 in terms of there only being one high school in your city,
0057 how did that influence you in terms of watching people
0058 play ball
0059 and stuff like that.

Ben: 0060 It influenced me
0061 because there were a lot of good players that came through there
0062 and everybody knows you.
0063 You go to one high school,
0064 everybody knows you.
0065 Teachers know your parents,
0066 your background,
0067 your grandmothers,
0068 your aunts, everyone.
0069 It was a lot of players
0070 /that means/ every game is packed
0071 because it's one high school and everybody comes out to support the local
high school basketball.
0072 Growing up in my neighborhood,
0073 you played basketball as a kid,
0074 one of your dreams is going to be playing for the local high school
0075 and that's what I did.

Charles: 0076 When did you know you really wanted to play high
school ball and /college/

Ben: 0077 When you're little,
0078 there's a league called the Bitty League.
0079 You can start that when you're eight.
0080 It's like once you play- from eight to twelve-
0081 once you play that from eight to twelve you go to middle school
0082 and after middle school it's high school
0083 and once I started playing Bitty League at eight,
0084 I just been (?) ever since playing.

Charles: 0085 So that Bitty League is just in your city so how do
they select teams and stuff?

Ben: 0086 It's like- they bring- hundreds of kids come
0087 and they just pick teams.
0088 Once you get older,
0089 I think they like draft;
0090 it's like a draft once you get to nine or tens.
0091 Six, seven, eights,
0092 you go play like they just put kids on teams,

0093 but once you get older, they draft players.
 Charles: 0094 So they're kind of like rivalries in the Biddy.
 Ben: 0095 Yeah most definitely
 0096 most definitely /like rivals/
 0097 and like once- if you're good enough
 0098 you made the all-star team
 0099 you played like other cities around
 0100 like a little town called /Eddystone/
 0101 different other town
 0102 that got the same league,
 0103 you just go against them.

Receiving social recognition for his skills in basketball helped to further his development of strong athletic identity. Ben immersed himself into developing his basketball skills. His hard work is reflected in the accolades of being named to the all-star teams through the Bitty League.

Charles: 0104 Did you ever make the all-star team?
 Ben: 0105 Yeah I made it every year
 0106 matter of fact.
 0107 When I was eleven,
 0108 I played on the /12-As/
 0109 so I got a chance to play up.
 0110 I made it every year though.
 Charles: 0110 So when you went out and played other communities,
 0111 other cities,
 0112 how did-
 0113 talk about that experience representing your community.
 Ben: 0114 It was good.
 0115 It was good
 0116 because you played other teams
 0117 and other teams got good players too
 0118 and they're cities that got one high school too
 0119 so they play for them.
 0120 It's like you've been playing against them since you're little
 0121 so it was good.
 0122 People know you.
 0123 There was good competition;
 0124 it was good.

Ben also earned a scholarship to attend a private Christian High School. He was proud of this accomplishment. It also helped to engrain the idea that playing basketball can be used as a resource to obtain his life goals; specifically a quality education.

Charles: 0164 When you were younger,
 0165 how had being recognized for your athletic accomplishments
 0166 influenced your life?
 Ben: 0167 It influenced it big.
 0168 It really opened my eyes and I realized
 0169 I had the talent to play.
 0170 When I was in 8th grade,
 0171 I had got a scholarship to a Christian school,
 0172 a Christian high school.
 0173 I had played in this summer league and a guy came over to me and told me
 0174 I had a scholarship to this high school and I went home,
 0175 told my mom and everything.
 0176 It felt good and
 0177 I just- just motivated me to keep playing and keep getting better.

Ben began to relate to athletes as role models. He admired his older cousin who played at the local high school. His cousin earned an athletic scholarship to a NCAA Division II institution. He also viewed a current NBA player and alum of the local high school as a role model. He earned a scholarship to a NCAA division I university and currently is in the starting line up for a NBA team.

Ben: 0127 My role models influenced me a lot
 0128 because my city is tough growing up.
 0129 They say only way you make it from my city is if you play basketball
 0130 and I was blessed with that talent to play.
 0131 And they was a lot of good people that played.
 0132 There's a whole lot of people from my city that didn't make it
 0133 so I was blessed with the talent and the ability to come to college
 0134 on a full scholarship and play.
 0135 a NBA player/, from my city,
 0136 he went to the NBA
 0137 so I looked up to him
 0138 and there's a lot of other guys that like played for the local high school
 0139 and went to other schools.

Seeing his role models excel in basketball motivated Ben to work harder in developing his basketball skills. His mother also emphasized the importance of staying involved in sports.

Charles: 0148 Did that inspire you at all to work harder in sport?
 Ben: 0149 It definitely inspired me.
 0150 My mom always kept me playing,

0151 taking me to my games,
 0152 me and my brothers to our games
 0153 so we wouldn't get in trouble,
 0154 always kept me busy,
 0155 used to go to the boys club and play,
 0156 always kept me active.

Charles: 0157 Then you said a NBA player was one of your role models
 0158 because you watched him come out of my city
 0159 you had any other role models growing up?

Ben: 0160 Yeah, I had a cousin who played.
 0161 He went to a D-II/D-III school
 0162 a little small college
 0163 and played so I looked up to him too.

Ben's home city is a predominately African American community. When asked about making the transition to a predominately White institution, he noted that he was able to make the transition. He attributed his ability to relate to other ethnic groups due to his experiences with White athletes while playing AAU basketball.

Charles: 0273 Okay. Is your community predominately black?
 Ben: 0274 Yeah it's predominately black.
 0275 It's got some whites in there,
 0276 but it's predominately black.

Charles: 0277 Was that experience different when you came to University X,
 0278 which is more predominately white?
 Ben: 0279 It wasn't different because I played AAU
 0280 so it traveled throughout the country and played in different states,
 0281 played against white people,
 0282 met white people,
 0283 different kinds of people, different races,
 0284 so I was somewhat adjusted to different races.

Ben believed that African American athletes are held to different standards in comparison to other college students. He believed that people view African American athletes as having access to more resources. He also believed that a stereotype associated with African American athletes is that they are arrogant.

Charles: 0285 Tell me story of how being
 0286 a black male athlete has affected your life.
 Ben: 0287 It affected a lot.

0288 My history,
0289 not just basketball,
0290 all different sports,
0291 how people what they went through back in the day
0292 what they faced against different races.
0293 Being a black athlete
0294 I guess /has affected my life/.
0295 You got a lot of
0296 standards and stuff being an athlete.
0297 There's a lot of things that come with being an athlete.
0298 People think you got it not matter what level you're at,
0299 people think that you're (?)
0300 you're just the same person as them, but just have the ability,
0301 talent to do things.
0302 There's a lot of stuff that comes with being an athlete.
Charles: 0303 And that kind of goes into my other question
0304 about what stereotypes are associated with being a Black male collegiate
athlete.
Ben: 0305 Like I said
0306 just people are assuming stuff
0307 and like having their own impression
0308 that we like well people saying that you're,
0309 you think you're better than other people,
0310 like if you got new sneakers or new clothes first.
0311 People like get jealous of you.
0312 They see you having success.
0313 They get jealous of you.

When asked about his ethnic pride, Ben highlighted that he was proud of going to college. He mentioned that he was proud to be able to become successful. He didn't want to be in a situation where he resorted to illegal behavior to attempt to take care of his family.

Charles: 0320 What makes you proud of your racial background?
Ben: 0321 Just being, a lot of people different races say
0322 Black people can't do this and can't do that,
0323 I'm just blessed to have the opportunity,
0324 blessed with the opportunity
0325 and the talent to come out of college,
0326 make it out of my hood
0327 and just be successful.
Charles: 0328 And how do you view being successful?
0329 How do you define success?
Ben: 0330 Just doing something with my life.
0331 I could have been easily-

- 0332 been on the streets or in jail somewhere or hospital somewhere.
- 0333 I just kept my head on the right track
- 0334 and separated myself from all the negativity.

7.1.3.4 Career Development Tasks

Ben seemed to develop a secure attachment relationship with his mother during early childhood. As a result, he trusted himself and his mother. At an early age, his mother placed an emphasis on the importance of participating in sports. His mother recognized the utility having her child involved in sports as a constructive activity. Ben's community offered opportunities through organized sports for children ages eight through twelve.

- Ben:
- 0149 It definitely inspired me.
 - 0150 My mom always kept me playing,
 - 0151 taking me to my games,
 - 0152 me and my brothers to our games
 - 0153 so we wouldn't get in trouble,
 - 0154 always kept me busy,
 - 0155 used to go to the boys club and play,
 - 0156 always kept me active.

Many of the youth living in this community respected the athletes who played sports for the local high school. There is only one public high school in the area and the community offered its support. Ben admired a current NBA player, who attended the local high school. He also admired his older cousin, who eventually played for a NCAA Division II institution. The emphasis on playing sports as an avenue to success, seemed to be embedded deeply into Ben's mind. At the age of fourteen, he was told that the only way to escape his city was to play sports.

- Charles:
- 0125 Tell me the story about how your role models
 - 0126 influenced your life when you were younger.
- Ben:
- 0127 My role models influenced me a lot
 - 0128 because my city is tough growing up.
 - 0129 They say only way you make it from my city is if you play basketball
 - 0130 and I was blessed with that talent to play.
 - 0131 And they was a lot of good people that played.
 - 0132 There's a whole lot of people from my city that didn't make it

0133 so I was blessed with the talent and the ability to come to college
 0134 on a full scholarship and play.
 0135 There is a NBA player from my city,
 0136 he went to the NBA
 0137 so I looked up to him
 0138 and there's a lot of other guys that like played for the local high school
 0139 and went to other schools.
 Charles: 0140 When was the first time you heard that saying that
 the only way to make it out was to play ball?
 Ben: 0141 When I was around fourteen
 0142 because that's what it was like
 0143 it was summer leagues and basketball everywhere.
 0144 Outside of /killings/ and everything
 0145 that's what you did, played basketball.
 0146 I mean out of the violence and stuff you played basketball
 0147 so I was blessed to make it

The emphasis on sports by his mother at an early age helped to engrain that sports was a viable resource to help obtain his career goals. His role models were associated with the local high school basketball. In addition, he earned a scholarship to a private high school based on his basketball skills. Once again, there was a message being sent that basketball can be used as a tool to access certain schools and obtain success.

Charles: 0164 When you were younger,
 0165 how had being recognized for your athletic accomplishments
 0166 influenced your life?
 Ben: 0167 It influenced it big.
 0168 It really opened my eyes and I realized
 0169 I had the talent to play.
 0170 When I was in 8th grade,
 0171 I had got a scholarship to a Christian school,
 0172 a Christian high school.
 0173 I had played in this summer league and a guy came over to me and told me
 0174 I had a scholarship to this high school and I went home,
 0175 told my mom and everything.
 0176 It felt good and
 0177 I just- just motivated me to keep playing and keep getting better.

Ben was able to demonstrate skills related to career control. He was able to display personal agency and delay gratification when he was able to avoid potentially harmful social situations.

Ben: 0337 In high school my /boys/ had a car- my /boys/ had a car.

0338 It was a stolen car at the school
 0339 and he asked me if I wanted a ride home
 0340 and I backed out once I found out it was a stolen car
 0341 because I knew the consequences
 0342 if we got pulled over or anything
 0343 and crazy thing about it is they got like in trouble that day.
 0344 Got in trouble that day.
 0345 And something just told me like nah I'll walk rather than
 get in the car.
 0346 A couple hours later they were locked up.
 Charles: 0347 What year was that?
 Ben: 0348 I was in the beginning of 11th grade.
 Charles: 0349 So you just got to your high school.
 Ben: 0350 Yeah like just got there.
 Charles: 0351 Was there kind of talk like /you were/ going to help the
 basketball team?
 Ben: 0352 Yeah. That was big.
 0353 Yeah it was like I was a little highlight at that time.
 0354 Something told me not to do that.
 Charles: 0355 How would that have changed your life?
 Ben: 0356 It would've.
 0357 /There's a lot of situations/
 0358 I was in and got out of I think /on the strength of God/
 0359 a lot of things that I did and I should have been in trouble
 0360 and I didn't.

He also demonstrated being able to take on household responsibilities as the oldest child. Ben embraced the role being able to help provide for the family in high school. He helped his mother with his younger siblings.

Charles: 0450 And describe how the jobs you had growing up
 0451 helped you develop.
 Ben: 0452 It helped me like
 0453 mature.
 0454 It made me be tough like
 0455 I'm the oldest so it was like when my mom couldn't be
 0456 there or do something
 0457 I always had to do it for my little brother.
 0458 I /used to/ see my mom crying
 0459 and my brothers cry and
 0460 I always the one just bring us together.
 0461 Just I was like be tough and like move on.
 0462 I always was the tough one.

Ben mentioned that he always knew that he wanted to play basketball professionally.

Charles: 0406 And when you were in elementary, what did you want to do professionally?

Ben: 0407 I always wanted- knew I was going to play basketball
0408 so throughout elementary to high school,
0409 that's what I did.
0410 Like I said I started when I was eight so ever since then I
knew I wanted to play basketball
0411 and that's what I put my mind to
0412 and I stuck to it.

Charles: 0413 Cool so you knew from day one.

Ben: 0414 Yeah

After earning a basketball scholarship, he decided to major in social sciences. He believed that this major will help his preparation for a coaching career, once his basketball playing career has concluded. He mentioned that his education is a more important priority than basketball at this point in his life because he wants to be prepared once his playing career has ended.

Charles: 0514 Currently,
0515 what's more important to you at this point in your life,
0516 basketball or school
0517 and explain why.

Ben: 0518 Right now,
0519 I'm going to say I've been focusing on my school work
0520 because I know at the end of the day
0521 when I can't play,
0522 /this is something/.
0523 My education's going to be big.
0524 When I can't play,
0525 like I can't play forever
0526 and I just know like that's going to be the –
0527 there for me to support my family.

Charles: 0528 And what's your major?

Ben: 0529 Social Science

Charles: 0530 And why did you pick Social Science?

Ben: 0531 Probably like
0532 I learned like the different things you could do in Social Science.
0533 I plan on going into coaching.

7.1.4 Bernard's Narrative

7.1.4.1 Background Information

Bernard's grandmother on his father's side of the family was born in a southern state. She moved to an urban city in northeastern region of the United States to raise her children (Bernard's father, uncles and aunts). Bernard's grandmother lived in the urban city for over 40 years before moving back to the southern region of the United States to help care for her mother (Bernard's great-grandmother). Both Bernard's great-grandmother and grandmother eventually passed. Bernard's grandmother on his mother's side of the family also lived in the northeastern region of the United States where she raised Bernard's mother. Bernard's parents met while participating in a jobs corps program together in the eastern region of the United States. Job corps programs are designed to help people earn a GED and prepare to enter the workforce. After completing the jobs corps program, they gave birth to Bernard and moved back to an urban city in the northeastern region of the United States.

Bernard lived in an urban city for 13 years. His older cousin, introduced Bernard to basketball at the age of nine. Bernard would follow his cousin to the park to play. His cousin taught Bernard basic basketball tips and fundamentals. When his cousin passed it inspired Bernard to continue to play basketball in the park and develop his skills. Bernard began playing organized basketball on teams in the fifth grade. He played in the Police Athletic League (PAL) and in leagues sponsored by the Jackie Robinson after-school program.

When he was 13 years old, his parents separated. As a result, Bernard moved to a different northeastern urban city with his mother. In the seventh grade, Bernard began living with his best friend's family. His best friend's parents became parent-like figures. Bernard excelled on his middle school basketball team. He eventually earned a starting role on the varsity basketball

team in the ninth grade. During Bernard’s senior year his team won the state championship and completed the year ranked number one nationally in basketball among all US high schools by the USA Today. During his high school career, Bernard played in multiple national invitational basketball camps and tournaments.

Bernard earned a basketball scholarship to University X in 2008. Bernard has appeared in multiple games and was included in the starting lineup on a regular basis. He ranked among the school leaders in assists and assists to turnover ratio. He returned as a fifth-year senior athletically because he did not play the entire year as a freshman due to a knee injury. During the study, Bernard was completing a social science bachelor degree and aspires to be a basketball coach after playing basketball professionally.

7.1.4.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Bernard’s experiences in childhood and adolescence were influenced by his family’s socioeconomic status and educational background. Until Bernard entered the eighth grade he was living in a single-family household and there are indications that his family had financial difficulties. Bernard was raised by his mother until he entered the eighth grade. Bernard’s parents completed a job corps program so his father’s and mother’s formal level of education are equivalent to a high school education. Lack of financial stability and his parents’ level of educational attainment may have affected Bernard’s future aspirations during childhood. When asked about his career aspirations in elementary school, Bernard mentioned that he was concerned with “just getting by”.

- Charles: 0502 Let’s transition and talk about career a little bit.
 0503 Describe your career aspirations when you were in elementary.
 0504 And kind of take me through elementary, to middle school, to high school, to where you’re at now.
- Bernard: 0505 I mean when I was younger

0506 what I want to be,
0507 I don't know.
0508 When I was younger, I didn't really have aspirations about what I wanted
to be.
0509 I mean I was just getting by.

Later in the interview, I asked for clarification about what he meant by "I was just getting by" and the following conversation developed.

Charles: 0524 So when you were younger,
0525 you said you were kind of just straight on just getting by
0526 so you didn't think a whole lot about career.
0527 Your mind was focused on other things.
Bernard: 0528 yeah,
0529 I mean, I was focused of survival.
0530 It was me and my sister at the time

Bernard was concerned with his physiological needs of food, shelter and safety. As a result, self-actualization was not a priority at the time. Due to his living situation, it was decided that it was in Bernard's best interest to live with his best friend's father and mother.

Charles: 0561 You lived with Jorge and he took care of you?
Bernard: 0562 mhmm.
0563 I met him in sixth grade,
0564 but he started taking care of me late seventh grade.
Charles: 0565 And how did he end up starting to take care of you?
Bernard: 0566 I mean,
0567 actually,
0568 I was best friends with his son and I used to stay weekends,
0569 and weekends turned into taking me to school one day
0570 and me staying a couple more days
0571 and me coming to the house sometime like bruises on my face or
something.
0572 I mean, I guess that kind of opened his eyes
0573 like "why don't you stay with me".

Playing basketball served as a constructive leisure activity during childhood, which eventually becomes an avenue to gain access to higher education. Bernard was introduced to basketball

through his older cousin. After his cousin passed away, Bernard was inspired to continue to develop his basketball skills in the local parks in his Brooklyn neighborhood.

Bernard: 0028 I was introduced to basketball;
0029 I forget what age.
0030 It was a young age.
0031 My cousin he was one of the guys that just played basketball in the park
0032 in the projects and just always used to bring me to the park with him
0033 and /I/ always would just walk to the park and just see him play
0034 and he uh one day he just threw the ball in my hands
0035 and just I just started shooting it.
0036 And he was showing me little tips on how to play basketball.
0037 Growing up, my cousin, my other cousin his brother played basketball
also.
0038 I just wanted to play basketball and then my cousin passed away.
0039 And that's what strived me to keep playing basketball.
Charles: 0042 And that kind of inspired you to keep playing
Bernard: 0043 mhmm

Access to neighborhood parks and basketball courts served as a crucial resource for Bernard to develop skills related to basketball. In addition, the community provided basketball leagues including the Police Athletic League (PAL) and the Jackie Robinson after-school program. When Bernard relocated to a different city, he excelled at basketball. Basketball provided an opportunity to transition with a new peer group. Although relocating was difficult, playing basketball aided in the transition.

Bernard: 0661 when I moved to a different.
0662 That probably was the biggest transition.
0663 Moving to a different,
0664 leaving all my friends,
0665 leaving all my family,
0666 leaving the school into a whole new world.
0667 You know the two cities are not,
0668 where we moved down in the new city is not different.
0669 I mean as far as the way people act and everything,
0670 but learning,
0671 getting to know new people in a different hood.
0672 Where I come from,
0673 if you're not a familiar face, it's going down.

0674 If you're not a familiar face
0675 and I know it's part of the same everywhere
0676 but that was a big transition.
0677 Whether or not people like you, like how you are,
0678 it's just different.
Charles: 0679 And what did you do to kind of make that transition?

Bernard: 0680 I mean, playing basketball.
0681 I mean everybody speak that language.
0682 Basketball is a game, everybody speak that
0683 so if you just go out there and play ball,
0684 or I just went out there and played ball
0685 or played my game and got better and obviously a lot of people start liking
me because of it.

More importantly, participating in organized basketball provided Bernard the opportunity to begin a relationship with Jorge who filled the father role in Bernard's life. Bernard began living with Joseph and his family in the seventh grade. As a result, Bernard was able to receive the support needed to live a healthy life. Jorge has continued to serve in this role for Bernard; particularly with helping Bernard in making important decisions.

Bernard: 0539 My godfather, Joseph.
0540 Basically, I mean,
0541 I can't even say my guardians
0542 because I never was legally adopted.
Charles: 0543 And he's like a father figure?
Bernard: 0544 mmhmm
Charles: 0545 So talk about him a little bit,
0546 what role has he played in his life?
Bernard: 0547 Father.
0548 I mean everything a father is definitely supposed to do for his child.
0549 I mean, took me to school,
0550 provide me a roof over my head, clothes on my back, food, mentor me.
0551 Basically taught me all life lessons about being a man.
0552 Things that could happen to you like punishments
0553 as far as going to jail and consequences
0554 for your actions.
0555 And he knew first hand,
0556 everything I've thought of doing,
0557 everything I've done and consequences didn't come against me,
0558 he already done and consequences went against him.

Bernard was also exposed and interacted with youth from different economic backgrounds when playing on a summer basketball team. His teammates lived in households where their parents had affluent careers such as doctors and lawyers. He noticed differences in their perception of wasting food and also their interaction with their parents. Bernard used this exposure to people with wealth as motivation to obtain similar quality of life. However, he valued his experiences of not having wealth because it helped him to appreciate what he current has.

- Bernard: 0414 I mean the first time I went to their crib,
0415 I was, I said to myself, I need this.
0416 Like, I want to work for this.
0417 I mean they got land, they got a basketball court in their house,
0418 they got a tennis court.
0419 Everything that I,
0420 land that I could make a like a football field.
0421 I mean so I used to as like motivation
0422 at a young age like man I got to get this.
0423 I don't care what it takes,
0424 whether it's going to school or going to the league,
0425 whatever, I just got to get that.
- Charles: 0426 So it motivated you to get where they were financially
0427 and have that type of wealth
- Bernard: 0428 But I looked at it in the same way,
0429 like I'm thankful to have the things that I do have,
0430 and I'm glad that I'm grateful for it because I don't think that they realized
that it all
0431 could be taken from them.
0432 I mean I don't think they know what it's like to not have all those things
you know.

7.1.4.3 Identity Development

Bernard was very conscious of self-image and people's perception of his image. During the interview, Bernard mentioned that he wants to portray a positive image; particularly to the media. He views his name as being a "brand". He was interested in being viewed as a leader in a positive manner.

Bernard: 0350 A lot of decisions.
0351 As far as going out, my image.
0352 I mean, basketball is a big thing
0353 and you know and I think image is everything.
0354 And I was talking to a reporter, the other day,
0355 talking about my name being a brand.
0356 You know when I think when people talk,
0357 talk about my name,
0358 you know, I want them to have a bunch of positive things to say.
0359 Nothing negative,
0360 you know.
0361 I've already had a lot of negative things in my past.
0362 I just don't want it to arise again
0363 and people be like I didn't change.
0364 You know you should always leave room for more positives
0365 and not for people to go back and bring any negatives about your name.
0366 And I know basketball,
0367 it put me in a different sport like
0368 so you know when I'm around I know I got a target on my back or
0369 a star on my back
0370 so. I make sure wherever I'm going I want people to say positive things
about me.

Charles: 0371 Can you talk about your name being a brand,
0372 what would you say your brand is, right now?

Bernard: 0373 A leader.
0374 Regardless of anything I'm doing.
0375 You never got to worry about me following anybody or
0376 anything I'm doing or I'm just being a leader and being,
0377 making sure everything is positive.
0378 Because I'm already four steps or three steps ahead of people.
0379 I'm already thinking ahead.

Bernard developed a strong athletic identity. The role of athlete seemed to be a part of Bernard's self-concept. It has influenced his social relationships and activities. He was exposed to basketball at a young age. Bernard was introduced to basketball through his older cousin. After his cousin passed away, Bernard was inspired to continue to develop his basketball skills in the local parks in his neighborhood.

Bernard: 0028 I was introduced to basketball;
0029 I forget what age.

0030 It was a young age.
0031 My cousin was one of the guys that just played basketball in the park
0032 in the projects and just always used to bring me to the park with him
0033 and /I/ always would just walk to the park and just see him play
0034 and he uh one day he just threw the ball in my hands
0035 and just I just started shooting it.
0036 And he was showing me little tips on how to play basketball.
0037 Growing up, my cousin, my other cousin brother played basketball also.
0038 I just wanted to play basketball and then my cousin passed away.
0039 And that's what strived me to keep playing basketball.

Basketball was important in the communities in which Bernard lived. As a child, Bernard viewed athletes who came back to his community as role models for attaining the American Dream. Particularly, he looked up to a former student-athlete who played at Rutgers University, who earned a basketball scholarship. This athlete lived in Bernard's neighborhood and served as a role model for Bernard. As a result, he believed that it is his responsibility to return to his community to encourage youth.

Bernard: 0288 You know and in my community, I'm one of the guys that made it out.
0289 You know.
0290 I think a lot of kids don't realize that
0291 just playing basketball, going to school,
0292 that could definitely help you make it out.
0293 And at the same time when they see you on tv,
0294 they're like "damn, I want to be on tv too."
0295 You know, I want to be, just keep playing basketball in the park.
0296 You know and when guys that played basketball come back to the
community,
0297 come back to where they're from, and play in the park, play pickup games,
0298 come back talk to the kids of whatever,
0299 or even have a relationship with the kids still talk to them,
0300 you know it definitely gives them a lot of hope.
0301 And I mean,
0302 you got to go back,
0303 you know,
0304 because that's where it all started.

Charles: 0305 Did anybody, when you were playing and you were younger,
0306 did people come back and talk to you when you were younger?

Bernard: 0310 That was one of the guys who lived down the block from me

0311 and was one of those dudes;
0312 I almost went to the same university as my role model because of him.
0313 He was one of those dudes that always came back,
0314 always played pick-up,
0315 always hit me up, make sure I was alright.
0316 And I played AAU with a bunch of those guys
0317 and then you know my AAU team,
0318 we got a lot of guys who's in the pros and everything
0319 so at the same time we got pro guys that we always communicate with,
0320 make sure we always talk to each other.
0321 Like one guys is like three years older than me
0322 and he's in the League.
0323 We still talk all the time like nothing changed.
0324 I mean he's just one of those guys and that's you looks at,
0325 came from a similar background and you know he's like 6'9, 6'10 or
whatever,
0326 you know,
0327 he was gifted;
0328 God blessed him with the height.
0329 But he's still one of those guys you look at and are like "Damn, I could
make it."

Charles: 0332 So they all came back and kind of mentored you
0333 and that kind of gave you hope.

Bernard: 0334 Now do you feel like you need to go back and /help kids/
0335 Yeah definitely, definitely do.
0336 That's. I still talk to kids on the younger AAU team
0337 and I mean you can when you go to my city, playing in little city leagues
and stuff like that
0338 so it's a lot of kids that looked up to me back then, you know, that I still
keep in contact with now.
0339 I mean I still keep that opportunity;
0340 I don't know why I did this,
0341 but I always was, no that's why I did it because I mean,
0342 I was older than them and I know they look up to me,
0343 and I'm thinking about it, I'm talking to all of them now like I'm
recruiting them to come to University X type stuff.
0344 And I'm not realizing that back then or even earlier in the years,
0345 but you know what I mean,
0346 I still talk to them, keep in contact with them, text them, critique their
game,
0347 and everything like that.

In return, Bernard used basketball to gain access to college which he viewed as being a gateway to achieving his dreams. Basketball provided public recognition which fed his appetite for achievement.

- Charles: 0110 how had being recognized for your athletic accomplishments influenced your life?
Bernard: 0111 I gave me,
0112 I made me realize that I may keep going
0113 and do something with it.
0114 Use it as an advantage to better my education.
0115 Just once I got one trophy,
0116 knowing that I may want another trophy.
0117 And maybe want more and more
0118 and just want to compete against the best players to accomplish my greatest goal.
0119 Which is going to college.
Charles: 0120 That was your greatest goal?
Bernard: 0121 going to college.
0122 Well at first I mean
0123 I wasn't thinking about college
0124 but that was my goal.
0125 That was my big goal.
0126 I mean once I got to college obviously my goal was expanded.

Bernard was conscious of class and racial differences. Bernard described his experiences in the eighth grade as a member of a summer basketball when he was one of two Black players on the team. He noted that this was the first time that he interacted with people who were considerably wealthier than his family. The experience motivated Bernard to want to eventually be in a situation to have similar resources and wealth.

- Bernard: 0397 They didn't really act too different against us,
0398 but you could tell like I got money.
0399 I mean like I got money; I can do this.
0400 And certain things like they'll have food, they'll buy food like "I don't want that"
0401 and we like "man, you better eat that"
0402 /may be the last time you eat/.
0403 I mean that and like they took care of their stuff,

0404 took care of their clothes and stuff like that but like food and stuff they
like don't really want.

0405 And then when we around them,
0406 like I went to they house and played basketball with them,
0407 they treat they parents different like.
0408 I mean it was like snob, not snobby
0409 but, it was just the way they treat their parents
0410 we probably would have got smacked for it.

Charles: 0411 And so, with that experience,
0412 how did, what was kind of going through your mind,
0413 or how did you interpret that?

Bernard: 0414 I mean the first time I went to they crib,
0415 I was, I said to myself, I need this.
0416 Like, I want to work for this.
0417 I mean they got land, they got a basketball court in their house,
0418 they got a tennis court.
0419 Everything that I,
0420 land that I could make a like a football field.
0421 I mean so I used to as like motivation
0422 at a young age like man I got to get this.
0423 I don't care what it takes,
0424 whether it's going to school or going to the league,
0425 whatever, I just got to get that.

When asked about how being a black male athlete has affected his life, he described the negative stereotypes that are associated with his experiences. Some of the negative stereotypes he noted were black athletes being viewed as arrogant, flashy and having sense of entitlement to special treatment. Bernard believes that these stereotypes are not valid and devalues black athletes work ethic.

Charles: 0433 So tell me the story of how being a black male athlete has
affected your life.

Bernard: 0434 I mean, for one instance,
0435 you know the stereotype of being an athlete,
0436 well you know most athletes,
0437 you know, but I think a lot of stereotypes that I hear are black athletes,
0438 you know that we arrogant.
0439 Cause you know a lot of people don't even say "jocks."
0440 You know like a lot of white people,

0441 they say jocks but they call us cocky.
0442 I mean and then they think that we that we walk around with that thing
like we're owed something.
0443 but I mean we don't think that at all.
0444 A lot of athletes,
0445 black athletes want to work for everything
0446 we got because we had to work to get to where we are right now.
0447 We're still nowhere yet.
0448 I mean we're happy to be in college, still working now.
0449 I think even a lot of teachers, they think when we use excuses we
0450 just trying to get over or /we even think of excuses/.
0451 But in reality, it was like we were out of town.
0452 I mean so we missed class because obviously we're out of town or
0453 we got shoot around and they think we're just trying to get over.
0454 I think that a lot of people just think that we just trying to get over.

Bernard was particularly proud of successful African Americans who defines as “making it”. He highlighted the accomplishments of President Barack Obama and Michael Jordan. Bernard viewed President Obama's and Michael Jordan's accomplishments as providing hope for many people that anything is possible.

Charles: 0465 Describe what makes you proud of your racial or ethnic
background.
Bernard: 0466 Obama.
0467 I mean Obama.
0468 Jordan.
0469 All the Black figures that actually made it
0470 and are doing something still.
0471 They don't realize how they are actually changing life;
0472 they're changing the history.
0473 They're giving a lot of people hope
0474 and those are the things that make me keep going.
0475 That make me keep going
0476 and make me want to go back to my community
0477 and show all the kids that it can easily be done
0478 with hard work and dedication.
0479 Now when your parents really tell you
0480 whatever you put your mind to it you can achieve,
0481 those are example of how it can happen.
0482 Because a lot people growing up,
0483 my sister always used to say that my mom would just tell her
0484 whatever you put your mind to you can do it,

0485 “but not be president”.
0486 But now anything is possible.

Additionally, Bernard related to hip-hop culture. He enjoyed listening to hip-hop music. Particularly, he believed that he could relate to artists that make songs with lyrics about their life experiences. He was interested in stories that he defines as being “relevant”. For example, he respected the artist Kanye West because he tells his life story, entails his quest of progressing professionally. Bernard also respected how Kanye West was not afraid to express his opinion about society. Although, Bernard came from a different background, he believed that he can relate to Kanye’s life story. He believed that Kanye’s struggles in life are different from his own. However, Bernard believed that there is a commonality that people can relate to experiencing struggle.

Charles: 0180 So you can relate obviously to his music
Bernard: 0181 I mean we that’s the crazy thing.
0182 that’s one of the people I look up to
0183 and we don’t, we didn’t come from the same background.
0184 I mean we don’t have to come from the same background.
0185 He didn’t have to go through the same sh-things I went through.
0186 At the end of the day,
0187 everybody got their own story,
0188 their own struggle but at the same time everybody’s struggle’s different
0189 but for themselves,
0190 they the extent of their struggle is the way they were brought up.
0191 You know cause,
0192 just as somebody not having just having five dollars in they pocket,
0193 you know, that could be the hardest thing in the world,
0194 but opposed to someone who don’t have any money.
0195 There’s both struggle;
0196 they just don’t know what exactly the extent of they struggle is.
0197 But that’s just they all struggling.
0198 Everybody got their different story.

Bernard believed that many athletes want to be hip-hop artists. Reciprocally, he believed that hip-hop artists want to be athletes. He believed that successful hip-hop artists and athletes can

relate to the shared experience of overcoming tremendous odds to be at the top of their profession when so many people aspire to do so.

- Charles: 0203 do you think a lot of athletes can relate to hip hop culture, music?
Bernard: 0204 Definitely Definitely.
0205 I think the crazy thing, athletes want to be rappers and rappers want to be athletes.
0206 You know that's just the way it is.
0207 You know cause a lot of people
0208 and in hip hop,
0209 it was a struggle for them to get to the position they're in.
0210 You know, it's like one in every one in every hundred thousand people become rap artists
0211 or you know hip hop star and this is the same amount of people that go to the NBA.
0212 You know,
0213 so I think they can understand, they can relate to what it takes to succeed.

7.1.4.4 Bernard's Career Developmental Tasks

Bernard did not develop a concern about his future as a worker until the eighth grade. When Bernard was in elementary school, he was focused on taking care of his basic physiological needs. He describes focus being on "survival" and "just getting by".

- Charles: 0501 Okay
0502 let's transition and talk about career a little bit.
0503 Describe your career aspirations when you were in elementary.
0504 And kind of take me through elementary, to middle school, to school, to where you're at now.
Bernard: 0505 I mean when I was younger
0506 what I want to be,
0507 I don't know.
0508 When I was younger, I didn't really have aspirations about what I wanted to be.
0509 I mean I was just getting by.
0510 I didn't have dreams about being a doctor or nothing like that.

During the growth stage of career development, youth are dependent on their primary care givers or parents to help develop this concern. Bernard seemed to have struggled with

developing secure attachment relationships with his parents during while in elementary. He mentioned that he was independent when he was focused on “survival” in elementary. He noted that it was just Bernard and his older sister. As a result, he may not have had the feeling of security to explore the world of work during elementary school. It seemed to have been more compelling to focus on surviving the present than planning for the future.

Charles: 0524 So when you were younger,
0525 you said you were kind of just straight on just getting by
0526 so you didn't think a whole lot about career.
0527 Your mind was focused on other things.
Bernard: 0528 yeah,
0529 I mean, it was focused of survival.
0530 It was me and my sister at the time
Charles: 0531 And your sister,
0532 how old, how much older is she?
0533 Three?
Bernard: 0534 three years

Once Bernard began living with Joseph, he seemed to have developed secure attachment relationships. As a result, he began to develop confidence to encounter future career related challenges. He began to have career aspirations such as being a lawyer, doctor, social worker or basketball coach.

Bernard: 0512 I was thinking like I wanted to be a lawyer,
0513 maybe being a lawyer, or even a doctor.
0514 But then as I got through high school, coming to college,
0515 I liked working with kids,
0516 I realized I'd like to go back to my high school or going back to my
grammar school
0517 and talking to kids,
0518 so I wanted to be a social worker.
Charles: 0519 And that was in high school you wanted to be a social worker?
Bernard: 0520 And by the time I got to college,
0521 I wanted to be a social worker.
0522 I still like working with kids and everything,
0523 but now I think I want to be a college coach.

Bernard viewed Joseph as a father-like figure. As a result, Bernard was able to fulfill basic physiological needs such as safety, food and housing and can begin to focus on his future.

Charles: 0543 And he's like a father figure?

Bernard: 0544 mmhmm

Charles: 0545 So talk about him a little bit,
0546 what role has he played in his life?

Bernard: 0547 Father.

0548 I mean everything a father is definitely supposed to do for his child.

0549 I mean, took me to school,

0550 provide me a roof over my head, clothes on my back, food, mentor me.

0551 Basically taught me all life lessons about being a man.

0552 Things that could happen to you like punishments

0553 as far as going to jail and consequences

0554 for your actions.

0555 And he knew first hand,

0556 everything I've thought of doing,

0557 everything I've done and consequences didn't come against me,

0558 he already done and consequences went against him.

Bernard seemed to also gain confidence related to exploring future career aspirations when he received his first college recruiting letter from a division I university. He began to view going to college as his greatest goal.

Charles: 0127 At what point did
0128 going to college become a goal for you?

Bernard: 0129 When I first got my first college letter.

0130 When I was going into my freshman year.

0131 No when I was in eighth grade going into my freshman year.

0132 A letter from a Division I college in a major conference.

Once Bernard enrolled in college, he continued to depend on Joseph to help make decisions about a professional career. While in college, Bernard seemed to begin to address some of the tasks associated with the exploration stage of career development. He attempted to use information about the self to find a career match. Experiences with basketball have played a tremendous role in Bernard's career choice. During the interview, he aspired to be a college

coach after playing career has concluded. He viewed his education as being an important to give himself the skills needed to survive the working world once his playing career has concluded.

Bernard: 0630 Next is basketball.
0631 Because of my cousin put the basketball in my hand,
0632 and inspire me to play this game,
0633 I want to sit in here and better my life through basketball.
0634 And better my life in basketball,
0635 basketball opened the door for my education
0636 so education is the third.
0637 With my education,
0638 I want to make sure after basketball, after I'm done playing basketball,
0639 I have something to fall back on,
0640 I have the tools I need to succeed in life outside of basketball.

Charles: 0641 And when you say fall back on,
0642 what do you mean by that in terms of education?

Bernard: 0643 Being able to survive in the working world.
0644 Make sure I have to right education
0645 and tools to understand what I need to do in life
0646 or wherever I work.

The major strategy that Bernard has decided to employ to help in accomplishing his career outside of playing basketball professionally is networking. He is interested in meeting different people through university and athletic sponsored functions. He recognized that he will encounter many people who have a variety of skills sets and come from different backgrounds.

7.1.5 Chuck's Narrative

7.1.5.1 Background Information

Chuck's mother was born in an urban city in the eastern part of the United States. His mother also attended high school in the same city. She eventually moved to another urban city in a different state to attend college. His grandparents on his mother's side of the family still reside in the state in which his mother was born. Chuck's father was born in a nonwestern country. His father moved to the United States to attend college in the same city as Chuck's mother. Chuck

has never met his grandparents on his father's side of the family. Chuck began playing organized baseball in elementary school. Chuck's mother used sports as a way to engage Chuck in constructive activities at an early age. In elementary, Chuck was interested in becoming a doctor. He mentioned that he even enjoyed watching the Health Channel in elementary school.

As Chuck entered middle school, he developed an interest in playing organized basketball. Chuck did not make his middle school team in the seventh grade, but eventually made the team in the eighth grade. He played junior varsity in ninth and tenth grade and was promoted to the varsity team during the state playoffs of his tenth grade year. In high school, he played in summer tournaments that also emphasized the importance of life skills development and SAT testing preparation; including the Mayor's Academy tournament in his home city. While in high school, he reached out to the Director of Basketball operations at University X and informed the basketball staff that he was interested in playing for the team. Chuck eventually met the head basketball coach of University X at a summer basketball tournament. Chuck was informed that he would be able to be a member of the team if he decided to attend University X. Chuck earned an academic merit scholarship to University X. He is currently pursuing a pre-medicine academic track.

7.1.5.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Chuck had the expectation that he would attend college at a young age. Both of his parents attended college. As a result, there seemed to be an emphasis on the value of higher education. More importantly, there was an expectation by his parents and Chuck that he would attend college. His mother served as a role model and instilled certain values. In addition to the importance of education, these values included honesty, integrity and work ethic.

Chuck: 0073 My main role models were
0074 my mom,
0075 you know some historical figures like
0076 Dr. Martin Luther King and stuff like that.
0077 Especially just my mom overall,
0078 she influenced my decision making
0079 because she always is like
0080 instilling in me stuff like work hard,
0081 honesty,
0082 education is important.
0083 So she really just you know influenced a lot of the way I acted
0084 so I was always hard working,
0085 like I worked hard in school.
0086 I just tried to do my best in everything that I did,
0087 sports and school so she really influenced
0088 stuff like that.

Chuck was encouraged to stay involved in organized sports by his mother. She used sports as a resource for keeping Chuck engaged in constructive activities, which kept Chuck out of trouble. Chuck mentioned that youth can get involved in unhealthy and dangerous activities if they do not have constructive outlets. He played baseball in elementary school and eventually played organized basketball in middle school.

Chuck: 0231 In my community,
0232 sports was real important.
0233 And cause-
0234 I think that's the reason my mom wanted me to play sports
0235 because like in my home city
0236 and I know other cities,
0237 like there's a lot of stuff that kids can get into that they shouldn't
get into
0238 so it was always good for a kid to be in sports
0239 because it took up there time,
0240 and they were around other kids just doing a good thing,
0241 and they had adults like coaches
0242 and that could guide them through life.
0243 You just pick up on a lot of stuff
0244 like a lot good values from playing sports.
0245 Instead of just sitting around,
0246 wandering the streets and doing stuff like
0247 that's what my mom always told me

0248 like I don't want you to be out there just wandering the streets
0249 doing nothing so I feel like that's the important part of sports in the
community
0250 to give kids something to do
0251 and teach them stuff.
Charles: 0252 So it was important in your city
0253 because I gave you all something constructive to do,
0254 keep you out of trouble.
0255 And do you feel like the majority of people in your community felt
that way
0256 in terms of using sports?
Chuck: 0257 Yeah
0258 definitely yeah.
0259 Generally like the most successful or better kids in the community
0260 were involved in sports.

When Chuck played for his high school basketball team, he was exposed to life skills development workshops and SAT testing preparation. The city offered a Mayor's Academy for high school students playing basketball. The academy shared strategies for gaining acceptance into colleges and universities. In addition, Chuck's high school hosted a summer basketball league that offered programming on professional etiquette. The programs emphasized the importance of development socially and academically in addition to athletic skills. The community used sports as a tool for engaging youth in productive activities.

Chuck: 0267 Yeah
0268 I know in my home city,
0269 high school sports was really important.
0270 Everybody talked about them.
0271 If you were-
0272 if you played sports in high school
0273 you were definitely known,
0274 but you were like also expected to do certain stuff,
0275 like- especially my school because I went to a school that was you
0276 know they put focus on academics
0277 so- they would want you to keep a certain behavior
0278 or keep a certain grades.
0279 In my home city, there was a tournament the mayor's academy
0280 and all the high school teams that were playing in it
0281 would come to

0282 - before we actually played,
0283 we would have a day where we came
0284 and they would tell us about how to get into college
0285 and do SAT stuff
0286 and stuff like that
0287 and also in my high school,
0288 we did a summer league before
0289 where also taught us stuff like how to test take
0290 and even etiquette and stuff so-
0291 they tried to make us better people in general with like through
sports.

Chuck was also enrolled in a summer camp during elementary school. The camp recruited youth from Chuck's school. One of the program's priorities for that year was increasing participation of ethnic minorities within the program. Traditionally, the participants in the program were predominately white students. Chuck was nominated by his teacher nominated. As a result, he earned a scholarship to participate in the summer program.

Chuck: 0346 I say my earliest memory was when
0347 after 5th grade
0348 I had this like summer camp program-
0349 at first they came to my elementary school to recruit kids because
0350 it was like a predominately white camp
0351 and they went to city school to try to like –
0352 and it was expensive to so they gave
0353 like I guess like minority city students
0354 a chance to get a scholarship or to go to the camp or whatever.
0355 And they came to my elementary school
0356 and my teachers elected me as a candidate.
0357 And I went through the whole process and won the whole thing,
0358 so I got to go to the camp.
0359 And then when I went to the camp it was 90 or whatever percent
white.
0360 And it was like the way you interacted with the kids at the camp
was like
0361 a lot different
0362 than the kids I interacted with at home.
0363 I got in trouble the first few weeks
0364 or whatever for just stuff like language
0365 and just-
0366 I don't know-

0367 just little stuff
0368 and like it was an adjustment
0369 because it was like coming from different worlds
0370 and not being used to being around a lot of white kids for the most
part.
0371 I feel like that was my first experience with different culture.

7.1.5.3 Identity Development

Chuck seemed to have a strong athletic identity. However, his student role seemed to be more salient. His parents emphasized the importance of education at an early age. Both of his parents attended college. It seemed that they had clear expectations that Chuck also pursue a college degree. Chuck's career aspirations eventually translated into his vocational identity. In elementary school, he aspired to be a medical doctor. His professional interests had been consistent. During the study, he was following a pre-medical school track.

Chuck: 0575 When I was little I always wanted for some reason to be a doctor.
0576 I used to watch like
0577 the health channel
0578 and stuff like that,
0579 so even when I was in elementary school,
0580 I told when teachers would ask you what you wanted to be
0581 when you grow up,
0582 I would say a doctor so-
0583 even though I didn't really know
0584 what that involved so that's probably what my career aspirations
0585 were when I was a little kid.

Chuck noted that school was more important than basketball. He mentioned that he was more focused on his achievement in school. He perceived being successful academically and in a profession outside of playing basketball as more realistic. He earned an academic scholarship to his University X. Chuck seemed determined to achieve his academic goals and gain acceptance to a medical school.

Chuck: 0686 Me, specifically,

0687 I would have to say school
0688 because one I wasn't,
0689 you know didn't come here on an athletic scholarship
0690 and don't play much
0691 so my chances of course going to the NBA are slim,
0692 even playing overseas or something
0693 I don't have a big chance of that so
0694 I mean I have to focus on my education
0695 and getting my degree
0696 and getting a career outside of basketball
0697 you know.
0698 I would love to play basketball
0699 as long as I could,
0700 but you got to be realistic
0701 and know what you're going to do when you leave college
0702 so I have to focus on education to be able to get my degree
0703 and go to graduate school,
0704 medical school
0705 or whatever
0706 so I can get my career and continue my life.

Chuck acknowledged that his athletic role is also very important. His participation in sports has influenced many decisions. In particular, his participation has influenced decisions he made about the high school and college that he decided to attend.

Charles: 0308 Tell me story about basketball influenced major decisions in your
life.
Chuck: 0309 well it definitely
0310 influenced a lot of my decisions about school
0311 because even when going to my high school,
0312 I felt that since I wanted to play basketball
0313 the school I went to was-
0314 because I had a couple choices and I-
0315 but the school I went to was good for academics-
0316 I it- I definitely chose that school over other school
0317 because of basketball.
Charles: 0318 Your high school?
Chuck: 0319 Yeah,
0320 and then again with college,
0321 there's a lot of other schools
0322 I could have went to
0323 that either were looking at me for basketball
0324 or even just like academics,

0325 but I chose University X also because
0326 I had an opportunity to keep playing basketball
0327 the way I wanted to so,
0328 that's like that's-
0329 in terms of the schools I went to
0330 like basketball really influenced the decisions I made.
0331 And then just regular-
0332 stuff in life, like being- playing basketball you don't want that to
be taken away from you
0333 so you make- so you're more conscience of the stuff
0334 you do so you won't ruin that opportunity.

Chuck emphasized that he was motivated by basketball to make responsible decisions, so he would continue to have the opportunity to play on certain teams. Chuck had also embraced the responsibility to positively represent his athletic teams in high school and in college. His sense of responsibility to positively represent his team increased as he gained more public recognition for playing basketball.

Chuck: 0093 When I was younger,
0094 you know
0095 I mean
0096 it wasn't that big of deal because I was playing you know baseball
0097 and Little League.
0098 You know when you play sports in the community,
0099 you get known by a few more people.
0100 And you get recognized a little bit.
0101 You have friends from school
0102 and you have friends from the sports you play,
0103 so you just get a little more known
0104 and then in middle school and especially in high school,
0105 being known as the basketball team,
0106 it just it just made you just a little more known
0107 and also for me it influenced me as just I knew everyone knew that
0108 I played basketball
0109 so I had to represent my team in a good way in high school
0110 and stuff like that
0111 in middle school and also that so

Chuck seemed very conscious about how race impacted his worldview and perception of his experiences. Race seemed to be salient as an identity. Chuck identified as an African American. His mother is African American and his father is Nigerian. However, he identified as African American. During childhood and adolescence, Chuck had more interaction with his mother's side of the family and consequently identifies less with his Nigerian heritage.

Chuck: 0026 I identify mostly as black.
0027 When people ask me,
0028 I tell them "yeah my dad's Nigerian.
0029 I'm half-Nigerian,"
0030 but I was never really around the culture that much,
0031 like most of- the only family I know from his side is
0032 he has three or four brothers that live over here
0033 so they're my uncles and
0034 but I'm closer to my mom's side of the family.
0035 I grew up with them. And I grew up in a city in the northeastern
region of the US so

Chuck's mother emphasized the importance of recognizing the significance of being knowledgeable about historical African American figures. As a result, these figures served as a role model for Chuck. Specifically, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X are historical figures that have served as roles models.

Charles: 0136 So to take a step back,
0137 when you said role models,
0138 and obviously your mom is your biggest role model;
0139 she instilled hard work,
0140 things of that nature.
0141 You also mentioned historical figures.
0142 What, and you threw out Dr. King,
0143 what kind of things played a role in whether or not a historical
figure was a role model?
0144 What were some examples?
Chuck: 0145 What played a role in why they were?
Charles: 0146 Yeah
Chuck: 0147 I'd have to say again, my mom.
0148 She would always like you know,
0149 tell me how important history was

0150 and look back at the things people before me did.
 0151 She- she really like- she try to give me /history/ about Dr. Martin
 Luther King and Malcolm X
 0152 and people like that
 0153 so I picked up how important they were in the things they did for
 0154 you know the African Americans in America
 0155 so I just- I just thought they were important
 0156 and I tried to look at the things they tried to teach people to do.
 Charles: 0157 So she had you reading about those historical figures
 Chuck: 0158 Yeah, she wanted me to know that was important.

Chuck was proud that many African American had overcome adversity including racism to become successful.

Chuck: 0437 what makes me proud of my racial background
 0438 I would say would have to be
 0439 just the fact that
 0440 the history
 0441 you know of black people in America,
 0442 everything like we went through,
 0443 and how much of us are successful today,
 0444 and like are doing great things.
 0445 And I feel like the majority race,
 0446 which is white people,
 0447 I feel like most of them are,
 0448 you know just given stuff in life
 0449 and have a set or easy path
 0450 or not easy
 0451 but just a lot more advantages
 0452 and it just makes me proud the fact
 0453 that a lot of black people do-
 0454 are just able to come out of circumstances
 0455 and make ways in life in a society
 0456 that's not really favored for them.
 0457 So that's what makes me proud a lot.
 0458 And then looking back at history,
 0459 big figure like Dr. Martin Luther King
 0460 and stuff like that it makes me proud.

Chuck recognized forms of institutionalized racism and classism that have affected African American communities. Chuck provided an example of how these dynamics influenced disparities many urban communities in comparison to suburban areas.

Charles: 0461 So how are black people disadvantaged?

Chuck: 0462 Well looking at where I'm from
 0463 like in the city,
 0464 which is predominately black,
 0465 like I know my city has one of the worst public school
 system in the country,
 0466 and like the city is predominately black
 0467 and they have poor funding and the worst public school system,
 0468 but if you go to certain counties,
 0469 like they have great school and great funding
 0470 so that's automatically starting off,
 0471 if parents don't have the resources
 0472 to put their child in a good school
 0473 and have to go to city schools,
 0474 they're going to get a disadvantaged education
 0475 and start from the start in life.
 Charles: 0476 So it's a different starting point.
 Chuck: 0477 Yeah.

Chuck's earliest memory of racial differences involved his participation in a summer camp. Chuck was nominated by his teachers and he earned a scholarship to attend the camp. The camp was predominately composed of white children. The program seemed to be focused on increasing the participation of recruit ethnic minority students living in urban areas to attend the camp. Chuck noticed the cultural differences. However, he was able to adapt and adjust to the cultural differences.

Chuck: 0346 I say my earliest memory was when
 0347 after 5th grade
 0348 I had this like summer camp program-
 0349 at first they came to my elementary school to recruit kids because
 0350 it was like a predominately white camp
 0351 and they went to city school to try to like –
 0352 and it was expensive to so they gave
 0353 like I guess like minority city students
 0354 a chance to get a scholarship or to go to the camp or whatever.
 0355 And they came to my elementary school
 0356 and my teachers elected me as a candidate.
 0357 And I went through the whole process and won the whole thing,
 0358 so I got to go to the camp.
 0359 And then when I went to the camp it was 90 or whatever percent
 white.

0360 And it was like the way you interacted with the kids at the camp
was like
0361 a lot different
0362 than the kids I interacted with at home.
0363 I got in trouble the first few weeks
0364 or whatever for just stuff like language
0365 and just-
0366 I don't know-
0367 just little stuff
0368 and like it was an adjustment
0369 because it was like coming from different worlds
0370 and not being used to being around a lot of white kids for the most
part.
0371 I feel like that was my first experience with different culture.
Charles: 0372 How did you handle that?
Chuck: 0373 I think I handled it pretty good.
0374 I got used to it
0375 and like there was always some stuff that would bother you
0376 because they acted-
0377 like a lot of them were cool,
0378 but some of them were weird sometimes,
0379 but got used to it and I think I handled it good,
0380 adapted to being around different people
0381 and how to act around them so

Chuck mentioned that the experience was frustrating because at times other kids would avoid him.

Chuck: 0493 Yeah I wouldn't really like say nothing specific
0494 because like I –
0495 you know-
0496 just been around mostly Black people my whole life
0497 and I never had –
0498 like I would say something that's difficult for me
0499 was like
0500 when I was transitioning,
0501 like being around when white people
0502 like when I went to that camp,
0503 the way that some of them acted towards me
0504 like it was frustrating sometimes it was like I was like-
0505 I don't want to scared of me
0506 but shy away from me some of them would,
0507 act like I was way different.
0508 I wouldn't say it was a big deal,

0509 but that was just something I noticed.

Chuck described similar interactions throughout his life as “small experiences” where he made adjustments or adapted. He also provided the example of his observation of law enforcement in his home city. Chuck described how police officers may use excessive force when interacting with young African Americans.

Chuck: 0510 But other than that I don't feel like
0511 I had any too painful experiences
0512 just like I feel like you just notice stuff in life when you be around
0513 a lot of white people like how they act differently,
0514 like I feel like a lot of cops
0515 just like definitely treat blacks in a different way,
0516 like I felt like back home in my city
0517 like if you know you were at a party
0518 of something or downtown of something
0519 and something happened where cops had to be involved,
0520 you know it seems to me that they would just use excessive
0521 you know just like even with language
0522 just the way they acted.
0523 I mean nothing in particular just little,
0524 small experiences,
0525 stuff like that so.

Chuck was also conscious of stereotypes associated with African American athletes. He believed that predominate stereotypes of African American male collegiate athletes are they have poor work ethic and are not intelligent.

Charles: 0526 Okay.
0527 What stereotypes are associated with being a Black, male,
0528 collegiate athlete?
Chuck: 0529 I think the main one would definitely be
0530 lack of intelligence,
0531 just because you're a male athlete in college
0532 you don't do your work,
0533 you're not good with books or whatever.

Chuck was annoyed by the stereotypes because he does not agree with this perspective. He was bothered by this perception specifically because he earned an academic scholarship. When people were informed that he earned an academic merit scholarship, they were surprised. Additionally, they viewed Chuck as the exception on the team. He informed people that this perspective is not accurate. Actually, his teammates are intelligent.

Chuck: 0534 Some people that don't know that I'm on academic scholarship
0535 and like
0536 I tell them I'm premed or something like that
0537 they be like, and they find out I'm actually smart,
0538 they act surprised like
0539 "wow you're smart.
0540 That's amazing.
0541 And you play basketball."
0542 And I don't see why it's so amazing.
0543 On the other hand
0544 the ones that do know I'm on academic scholarship,
0545 they're like you're the only smart on one the team or whatever
0546 or some stuff like that.
0547 I'm like "nah, a lot of my teammates are actually very smart."
0548 And that's one of the biggest stereotypes
0549 of black athletes in college.
Charles: 0550 And how does that make you feel?
Chuck: 0551 Mostly it just annoys me
0552 and I feel like it's ignorant
0553 for people to think that
0554 and it's like
0555 what I was saying about part of the little stuff you experience
0556 like they think that just because you're a black athlete
0557 you can't be as smart
0558 as other people in college.
0559 It's just mostly like annoying
0560 and it's a little amusing to me too
0561 because I know what's true
0562 and I know like they really think
0563 that about us and it's not really true at all.

Lastly, when asked about hip hop culture and celebrity culture, he mentioned that his identity was minimally influenced. He enjoyed listening to rap and R&B. Chuck believed that

hip hop culture affects his preference of dress in social settings, but does not influence the majority of his behaviors.

Chuck: 0162 Hip hop music and culture,
0163 it's mostly influenced me like
0164 they way I dress,
0165 maybe the way I talk a little bit.
0166 I say that's the greatest way it influences me.
0167 It doesn't really like too much influence the way I act.
0168 I feel like I determine how I act.
0169 But yeah it definitely influence like my style,
0170 the way I carry myself a little bit.
0171 That's about it I would say.

Chuck acknowledged that the media and celebrity culture can influence the public's perception of athletes. He mentioned that the media adds to the popularity of athletes when they are engaged in positive behaviors. Contrarily, the media can exaggerate the negativity of athletes when they are engaged in negative behaviors.

Charles: 0195 Alright.
0196 How has the media influenced your perception of athletes?
Chuck: 0197 Well I feel like the media
0198 it just-well I feel like the media the media makes me look up to
athletes
0199 because you seem them on tv
0200 and you see them like you know in positions of power
0201 and like you know you see like
0202 the like commercials and stuff and like the stuff they have
0203 and like the money
0204 and- just makes me perceive them-
0205 but I feel like the media for the most part,
0206 they show athletes in a good light
0207 unless they do something to do otherwise
0208 so I feel like the media makes me see a lot of athletes as like
0209 good people for the most part.
0210 When they have commercials,
0211 NBA /cares/ and stuff,
0212 it seems like most athletes like are like good down to earth people
0213 that try to give back,
0214 expect for the exceptions when they show athletes that do

something wrong so
 Charles: 0215 So you feel like they positively represent athletes
 Chuck: 0216 Yeah, unless the athletes do something.
 0217 But I feel like when the athletes do
 0218 do something wrong,
 0219 then sometimes the media can blow it out of proportion
 0220 and make some stuff seem worse than it is.
 0221 So I feel like it's extreme cases.
 0222 Either make them look really good
 0223 or if they do something bad,
 0224 it-they make them look really bad.

7.1.5.4 Career Development

Chuck developed career concern from his parents. In addition to instilling values of hard work and integrity, his parents emphasized the importance of valuing education.

Chuck: 0073 My main role models were
 0074 my mom,
 0075 you know some historical figures like
 0076 Dr. Martin Luther King and stuff like that.
 0077 Especially just my mom overall,
 0078 she influenced my decision making
 0079 because she always is like
 0080 instilling in me stuff like work hard,
 0081 honesty,
 0082 education is important.
 0083 So she really just you know influenced a lot of the way I acted
 0084 so I was always hard working,
 0085 like I worked hard in school.
 0086 I just tried to do my best in everything that I did,
 0087 sports and school so she really influenced
 0088 stuff like that.

As result, Chuck developed a concern about his future as a worker. He mentioned that he always wanted to be a medical doctor. He remembered watching the Health Channel in elementary school. As an infant and child, Chuck seemed to have developed secure attachment

relationships with his parents. His security allowed Chuck to daydream about his place in the world of work at a young age.

Chuck: 0575 When I was little I always wanted for some reason to be a doctor.
0576 I used to watch like
0577 the health channel
0578 and stuff like that,
0579 so even when I was in elementary school,
0580 I told when teachers would ask you what you wanted to be
0581 when you grow up,
0582 I would say a doctor so-
0583 even though I didn't really know
0584 what that involved so that's probably what my career aspirations
0585 were when I was a little kid.

As a result, of the secure attachment with his parents, Chuck was comfortable exploring new social environments and gaining a concern about his future as a worker. Examples of exploring new environments included participating in the fifth grade summer camp. The experience with the fifth grade summer camp was his first experience with different ethnic cultures.

Chuck: 0346 I say my earliest memory was when
0347 after 5th grade
0348 I had this like summer camp program-
0349 at first they came to my elementary school to recruit kids because
0350 it was like a predominately white camp
0351 and they went to city school to try to like –
0352 and it was expensive to so they gave
0353 like I guess like minority city students
0354 a chance to get a scholarship or to go to the camp or whatever.
0355 And they came to my elementary school
0356 and my teachers elected me as a candidate.
0357 And I went through the whole process and won the whole thing,
0358 so I got to go to the camp.
0359 And then when I went to the camp it was 90 or whatever percent
white.
0360 And it was like the way you interacted with the kids at the camp
was like
0361 a lot different
0362 than the kids I interacted with at home.

0363 I got in trouble the first few weeks
0364 or whatever for just stuff like language
0365 and just-
0366 I don't know-
0367 just little stuff
0368 and like it was an adjustment
0369 because it was like coming from different worlds
0370 and not being used to being around a lot of white kids for the most
part.
0371 I feel like that was my first experience with different culture.

His experience with the summer camp, allowed Chuck to gain confidence to later explore new social environments. These social environments included participating on sports teams. Later as an adolescent, Chuck also felt comfortable attending a predominately white university in a different state than where he lived. Chuck demonstrated the career confidence to pursue a pre-medical school academic track. He built momentum by having academic and athletic success in high school and earning an academic merit scholarship to college. It is difficult to gauge, whether Chuck explored broadly to form tentative ideas about where he fits into society professionally. Throughout his life, he consistently mentioned wanting to be a medical doctor. It is evident that Chuck developed a support network to help explore other career options outside being a medical doctor. This network includes his mother and academic advisors in college.

Chuck: 0601 Well I look to
0602 my mom when I make decisions about
0603 career choice
0604 like you know I always tell her that I want to be a doctor
0605 but she makes me-
0606 she asks me like
0607 you know
0608 if not that,
0609 what else would you want to do,
0610 and I talk to her about that sometimes.
0611 And then just like people at University X,
0612 resources like
0613 my advisors and stuff

0614 telling me other classes I have to take other than my pre-med
classes
0615 just in case for a different major
0616 and stuff like that.

Chuck demonstrated that he reflected on whether playing basketball was realistic or attainable. He decided that focusing more on his academic pursuits would be more advantageous than pursuing a professional basketball career.

Charles: 0681 Currently,
0682 what would you say is more important to you at this point
0683 in your life:
0684 Basketball or school?
0685 And explain why.

Chuck: 0686 Me, specifically,
0687 I would have to say school
0688 because one I wasn't,
0689 you know didn't come here on an athletic scholarship
0690 and don't play much
0691 so my chances of course going to the NBA are slim,
0692 even playing overseas or something
0693 I don't have a big chance of that so
0694 I mean I have to focus on my education
0695 and getting my degree
0696 and getting a career outside of basketball
0697 you know.
0698 I would love to play basketball
0699 as long as I could,
0700 but you got to be realistic
0701 and know what you're going to do when you leave college
0702 so I have to focus on education to be able to get my degree
0703 and go to graduate school,
0704 medical school
0705 or whatever
0706 so I can get my career and continue my life.

However, Chuck acknowledges that his experiences with sports provided an opportunity to develop transferable skills and professional characteristics. These skills and characteristics include work ethic, determination, consistency and being able to work as a team. Chuck believed

that his experience with sport will assist with his development of leadership skills that will be beneficial in his professional career.

- Chuck: 0646 I guess just a lot of life lessons and skills you learn from sports.
0647 I'm still learning them today like
0648 of course hard work.
0649 You can't
0650 succeed in sports without hard work.
0651 Determination.
0652 A lot of stuff.
0653 You have to be consistent with sports.
0654 You have to practice everyday
0655 and you know you can't get lazy
0656 and you know working with others is important in life.
0657 Every sport I played
0658 you can't really succeed on your own,
0659 you have to rely on other people
0660 and so that influences stuff.
0661 You can't- it's hard to have an ego
0662 or be selfish in sports.
0663 You got to learn how to become like a humble person.
0664 Just a lot.
0665 A lot of life lessons.
- Charles: 0666 Alright, how will your experience with sports help once your
0667 basketball career has concluded?
- Chuck: 0668 Well I think the things you learn in sports
0669 can definitely transfer over to your regular life.
0670 When you have a career
0671 or when you have a career you're going to have to-
0672 in order to succeed
0673 if you worked hard in sports you can –
0674 it will definitely help you succeed better than a person
0675 who didn't really have-
0676 didn't really know the experience of how to work hard.
0677 And you'll be able to work with your co-workers
0678 and just make you like an overall-
0679 you'll be a good leader
0680 and things like that.

Chuck seemed to be at a pivotal point in his career development. He demonstrated that he could address tasks related to crystallization with the exploration stage. Chuck seemed to be encountering tasks associated with the specification in the exploration stage of development. He

had clearly indicated that he is interested in the health profession. He needed to solidify if the pre-medical school track was appropriate. Actualizing an occupational choice includes converting his actions to actually obtain a job in the field of choice. Chuck was learning to make adjustments to his study regimen to balance basketball and his rigor academic demands. In addition, he participated in internship opportunities with medical labs.

Charles: 0827 And I know you're going pre-med route,
0828 you talk about this transition,
0829 so coming into college
0830 you knew exactly what you wanted to do,
0831 professionally,
0832 so you got into that track,
0833 in terms of taking those science classes,
0834 and it was more of learning
0835 how to study for those particular classes

Chuck: 0836 Yeah

Charles: 0837 And you feel like from last year to this year,
0838 you have some different types of strategies
0839 or study habits that are helping you out?

Chuck: 0840 yeah
0841 because I use to wait until the last minute to do a lot of my
studying
0842 but now I'm trying to do it earlier
0843 and just stay on top of it more.

Charles: 0844 Kind of going with that,
0845 but a little bit differently,
0846 describe the strategies you have considered for accomplishing your
career goals
0847 outside of playing basketball.

Chuck: 0848 Some things
0849 that people have told me I got to do
0850 and I know now is a lot of like
0851 you got to explore the career that I'm doing.
0852 So like I know before going to med school
0853 and part of going pre-med
0854 is I got to do a lot of- try to get internships

0855 and like do research and shadowing people at hospitals
0856 so it's good to get experience outside of class
0857 and to see what the profession actually involves.
0858 And I know that's an important strategy
0859 in being successful in what I'm trying to do,
0860 so I try to-
0861 I started looking for internships
0862 and stuff like that
0863 and I got one this summer,
0864 a little lab job so
0865 and then but later I also want to do shadowing
0866 and stuff
0867 so I know that's important
0868 so I'm trying to start with that.

7.1.6 Corey's Narrative

7.1.6.1 Background Information

Corey grew up in an urban city in the northeastern region of the United States. The majority of his family also lived in this city. Corey's five uncles lived in the same house with Corey, his mother, sister and grandmother. Members of his family had issues with using drugs and alcohol. Negative experiences with this environment inspired Corey to be committed to not using drugs and alcohol. Corey played basketball in the parks of his neighborhood for fun when Corey was in elementary school. While in elementary school, Corey was interested in being a lawyer. Corey felt that he was good at forming arguments.

During the sixth and seventh grades Corey began playing in local tournaments. Corey played really well in these tournaments, averaging 25 points per game. As a result, college basketball coaches encouraged Corey to continue to develop his skills because he had the potential to earn a basketball scholarship. Going to college has always been a goal of Corey because no one in his family has completed college. When Corey was in the sixth grade, his father was murdered through gun violence.

When Corey was entering the eighth grade, he moved to a different urban city in the northeastern region of the country with his mother and sister. Due to the death of his father, Corey lost his interest in playing basketball seriously. The experience caused Corey to develop trust issues with family members. He also wanted to focus on doing well in school. Many of his peers pressured Corey into continuing to play basketball because he was really good. He decided to play on an AAU team during the summers in high school. The coach of this team helped Corey skills and style associated with organized basketball.

During the ninth grade, Corey played on his high school's junior varsity team. During the tenth grade, Corey began playing on the varsity team. During the summer of Corey's tenth grade year, the coach of Corey's AAU team encouraged Corey to play for a more recognizable AAU team so he could get more exposure to college coaches. As a result, Corey played for a different team. This team played in the more prestigious summer tournaments. Corey was recognized in the national high school ranking publications.

Corey earned an athletic scholarship to University X. When Corey initially arrived at the university, his sole focus was on playing basketball professionally in the NBA. Eventually, he realized that other former student-athletes were returning after their basketball career to complete their degree. As a result, he was inspired to complete his degree before leaving the university. During the study, Corey was majoring in communications and aspired to be a basketball coach or a sports analysis on television.

7.1.6.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Corey's five uncles lived in the same house with Corey, his mother, sister and grandmother. Members of his family had issues with using drugs and alcohol. Negative experiences with this environment inspired Corey to be committed to not using drugs and alcohol. Corey made a

commitment to not use drugs so that he could live a different life than his relatives. Specifically, he was committed to never drink alcohol or smoke marijuana. Corey's geographical community also seemed to have negative influences associated with drug use and selling in his neighborhood. Corey viewed playing basketball as a constructive activity that had the potential to have a positive influence on his life. This was a way to distinguish Corey from the negative factors that surrounded Corey.

Corey: 0016 and it's a tough neighborhood.
 0017 My mom always tried to tell me to stay out of trouble
 0018 and stuff like that
 0019 because when I was young,
 0020 it wasn't just basketball.
 0021 I literally like hung out with the wrong people,
 0022 but my uncles and stuff.
 0023 I have five uncles that live with me, my mother, my sister, my
 grandmother,
 0024 and they was all doing drugs and stuff,
 0025 drinking,
 0026 so when I seen that
 0027 it like made me separate myself from them,
 0028 kind of like made me grow up
 0029 and I made a choice to not ever drink and ever smoke
 0030 and I've been committed to that since I was a baby.
 0031 I never did it still.
 0032 And my uncle pushed me towards basketball
 0033 and as I started playing basketball,
 0034 I started realizing this is the sport that I want to play
 0035 and I think is going to separate me from everybody else in the hood
 0036 and stuff like that
 0037 and I didn't want to be there.
 0038 So when I started playing basketball,
 0039 I moved to Jersey with my mother
 0040 and I played basketball for three years out there
 0041 and it got me known in the nation and stuff like that
 0042 and then that's when I started taking basketball serious.

During elementary school Corey began playing basketball at local parks. During the sixth and seventh grades, Corey began playing in local recreational leagues. He excelled in the league. He averaged 25 points. As a result, he was encouraged by college coaches to continue to develop

his skills because he had the potential to earn an athletic scholarship in the future. Corey was inspired because he wanted to attend college. Corey wanted to be the first person in his family to graduate from college.

Corey: 0066 I would my 6th and 7th grade,
0067 I used to just play basketball just for fun,
0068 but I started playing like in tournaments.
0071 And when I started playing in there I was averaging like 25 points
0072 just from you know playing as the game being fun for me.
0073 I didn't really take it serious,
0074 but then like a lot of coaches came up to me and
0075 in Basketball City,
0076 not national coaches like college basketball coaches,
0077 like regular coaches,
0078 they came up to me
0079 and was you 'you're a great player.'
0080 You should take it more serious.
0081 I like your game.
0082 I think you got the talent to become a better player'
0083 and I was just telling my mom and my uncles that
0084 and they were like we've seen it in you.
0085 You should take this game more serious.
0086 It could get you places,
0087 you know what I'm saying.
0088 It could get you a free scholarship to a college
0089 and stuff like that,
0090 so that was my big thing too when I was younger.
0091 I always wanted to make sure I go to college
0092 because all my family members didn't finish college,
0093 so I wanted to be the first person to finish college.

When Corey was in the sixth grade, his father was murdered through gun violence. After the death of his father, Corey lost interest in playing basketball. Although Corey did not have a great relationship with his father, he was affected to point where he was disinterested in playing basketball. Corey did not have a good relationship with his father because his father was not consistently in Corey's life. His father was also involved with selling and using drugs. However, when Corey spent time with his father, they played basketball. Family members encouraged

Corey to continue to play basketball. They emphasized that playing basketball would make his father proud. Corey decided to continue to play basketball.

- Corey: 0191 Well let me start off when I was like I think it was 6th grade,
0192 yeah.
0193 My father he got shot
0194 so when that happened like
0195 that's when I was like in the middle of playing basketball
0196 so he had got shot and that's when I kind of like stopped.
0197 I was like I'm not doing this.
0198 I don't want to play basketball
0199 and people was trying to-
0200 not forcing me,
0201 but telling me your father would be proud if you did this
0202 and I was just like I don't want to do it,
0203 but there was like one day where I really thought about it.
0204 He probably would be happy if I like continued playing basketball
0205 because that's the sport he wanted me to play
0206 so I kind of just like committed myself to just working hard,
0207 getting better.
- Charles: 0208 So up until-
0209 so up until that time you had a good relationship
0210 with your father-
0211 do you have a good relationship?
- Corey: 0212 Nah
0213 I didn't have a good relationship.
0214 I didn't-
0215 I knew him.
0216 He lived with me multiple times,
0217 but like he was like doing drugs and stuff like that selling drugs
0218 and all that
0219 so he wasn't really around all the time,
0220 but when he was around
0221 he would like play around with me,
0222 play basketball,
0223 stuff like that.

While in elementary and middle school, Corey played basketball at the local parks. However, the courts were not a safe environment. People would go to the local parks and gamble on the basketball games. In addition to gambling, there were fights.

- Charles: 0272 So like-
0273 let's just start off with your neighborhood that you grew up in,
0274 right?

0275 Was sports, and basketball in particular,
0276 was that important growing up in your neighborhood
0277 to your community?
Corey: 0278 It was a little bit.
0279 It wasn't-
0280 it wasn't really a lot.
0281 Sometimes I had to play basketball outside of that place
0282 because it wasn't really a good place to play basketball at.
0283 People either played for money
0284 or they was either going to fight or something afterwards
0285 so that just wasn't the place for me to play basketball at.
Charles: 0286 So there were other things that were bigger
0287 than just sports
Corey: 0288 Bigger than basketball

7.1.6.3 Identity Development

Corey seemed to value education. He was determined to be the first person in his family to graduate from college. Although basketball became very important in Corey's life, it wasn't major priority until high school. Corey was very talented but did not take basketball seriously until high school. Corey's major focus was on how to escape his environment, which included adults using and selling drugs. Corey's top priorities were not using drugs or alcohol, being surrounded by positive people and completing school.

Charles: 0721 A couple more questions.
0722 Rank your top three priorities
0723 or roles in life.
0724 And explain why.
Corey: 0725 Mine was always
0726 no smoking,
0727 no drinking,
0728 and not hanging out with the wrong crowd.
0729 The third one would be and finish school.
0730 I would say
0731 the reason why I have those
0732 is no drinking and smoking,
0733 I had a bad like experience
0734 with that just watching my uncles and them do that,
0735 how they became,
0736 and I never wanted to become like them

0737 so I always thought smoking and drinking would make me
0738 like them so I told myself if I never do that,
0739 I would be a better person or
0740 and it actually worked like
0741 I'm not like them.
0742 I'm actually living a better life
0743 and it feels good to you know have that commitment of not doing that
0744 and actually doing it.
0745 What else.
0746 Hanging out with the wrong crowd is
0747 that can also get you locked up too
0748 because you cannot be doing nothing
0749 and you with the wrong crowd at the wrong time,
0750 you could get locked up for just being with that with those people.
0751 That's what my mom always told me.
0752 And why I say finish school is
0753 because that can also keep you out of trouble
0754 and it can also take you far places too.

Corey seemed to have developed a strong athletic identity when he moved to a different city in the eighth grade year. Corey realized that basketball could be used as a tool to help escape his environment.

Corey: 0032 And my uncle pushed me towards basketball
0033 and as I started playing basketball,
0034 I started realizing this is the sport that I want to play
0035 and I think is going to separate me from everybody else in the hood
0036 and stuff like that
0037 and I didn't want to be there.
0038 So when I started playing basketball,
0039 I moved to Jersey with my mother
0040 and I played basketball for three years out there
0041 and it got me known in the nation and stuff like that
0042 and then that's when I started taking basketball serious.

Corey began to play on the varsity basketball team during the tenth grade year. Corey played with a different AAU team during the summer of his junior year. Playing for this team gave the player more exposure to college coaches because this team competed in prestigious

tournaments across the country. As a result, Corey was featured in national rankings publications.

Corey: 0118 and I played JV my 9th grade year
0119 and I started playing varsity my tenth grade year
0120 and then after that my tenth grade year towards the end
0121 in the summertime
0122 my AAU coach,
0123 he told me he was like I taught you everything you know,
0124 now I want you to play for a bigger AAU team.
0125 That's when they had- made me play for a different team.
0128 After I played-
0129 After I started playing with them,
0130 that's when I started getting ranked
0131 and University X started looking at me
0132 and from there when I met current coach
0133 it was just like I'm going straight to University X
0134 because he was like a father,
0135 friend, father figure in my life and stuff like that.

Another indicator that Corey had developed a strong athletic identity is his career aspirations during his freshman year of college. He was primarily interested in playing basketball professionally in the NBA.

Charles: 0679 And going in-
0680 when you came into school as a freshman,
0681 you kind of felt the same way?
0682 You've always had that view that basketball and school
0683 were just as important?
Corey: 0684 No.
0685 When I first came here,
0686 I was-
0687 I'm like man
0688 I'm about to go to the League.

His career aspirations and interests eventually expanded. This development will be explored further in the subsequent section. However, it is important to emphasize the significance of the athletic role in shaping Corey's identity during this phase of his life.

Corey was conscious of stereotypes associated with being an African American male student-athlete. The main stereotype described by Corey is that African American male athletes are afforded special privileges regarding academic responsibilities and expectations in college courses. Corey described an example in a college math class. Another student in the class became frustrated when student-athletes were talking during the lecture. The frustrated student made the comment that she actually paid for the class and believed that student-athletes were not taking the class seriously. The frustrated student's comment indicated that she perceives that student-athletes are given a "free" education. Additionally, student-athletes are not serious about their education. Corey believed that this perception was invalid and biased. He notes that although student-athletes missed multiple classes due to athletic commitments, they were excelling the course. Corey mentioned that they put forth effort outside of the class to keep up with the course requirements. They participated in tutoring in the academic center on campus, study sessions in hotels and studied on buses.

Corey: 0446 I don't know what say.
 0447 Stereotypes about being black.
 0448 Oh I got one.
 0449 A lot of kids now,
 0450 they'll say like you know
 0451 it's not fair that you know
 0452 basketball players get away with anything
 0453 as far as classrooms
 0454 and stuff like that.
 0455 Like they feel as though they paid to come here
 0456 so you know.
 0457 As a matter of fact,
 0458 let me give you a situation that happened on time-
 0459 A bunch of us was in a class,
 0460 basketball players in Math class.
 0461 This was last year.
 0462 We were kind of like,
 0463 I wouldn't say-
 0464 yeah we was like talking or whatever
 0465 and there was an older lady in the class

0466 who like kind of like came at us
 0467 like “you need to be quiet
 0468 like you didn’t pay to come to this class.
 0469 I paid to come to this class
 0470 and I feel as though you’re not taking it serious”
 0471 and we were just like wow
 0472 like we’re not the only people that’s talking in this class
 0473 you know.
 0474 You are talking too so
 0475 I felt like she was kind of upset of the fact
 0476 that we’re getting good grades
 0477 and we’re not in the class at all sometimes
 0478 like we away on games and stuff
 0479 and we come back and we got A’s and stuff,
 0480 but what a lot of people don’t know is that
 0481 when we away,
 0482 we’re actually working on it.
 0483 At hotels or on a bus or –
 0484 we have tutors that help us out.
 0485 That’s what a lot of people don’t know.
 Charles: 0486 So a stereotype is that
 0487 you’re getting extra grades
 0488 and you’re getting away with stuff
 0489 but they don’t see what you’re doing on the road
 0490 and the time you have to put in like in the airport, hotel.
 0491 That’s a big stereotype.
 0492 So that’s the main one that you?
 Corey: 0493 Yeah

Corey’s perception and interpretation of the math class incident was influenced by past experiences. Corey’s earliest experience of race differences occurred when he was nine years old. Corey and his sister participated in a summer program. The program involved Corey and his sister living with a host family in Canada. Corey and his sister attempted to play soccer with white children in the park. The other children refused to play with Corey and his sister because they were black. The white children mentioned that they were not allowed to play with black children. The white children’s parents confirmed that they were not allowed to play with black children. Corey and his sister were shocked at the actions of the white children and their parents.

Corey: 0313 I remember-

0314 I remember when my mom she used to send me and my sister away to
0316 It's like-
0317 it's like a thing that parents send their kids away
0318 so they can see the world
0319 and stuff like that.
0320 They go to different parents and stuff like that.
0321 So I remember me and my sister we went to Canada.
0322 So we was with this family,
0323 you know,
0324 that wanted kids
0325 but they couldn't have kids or something like that
0326 so they had me and my sister in Canada.
0327 It was like a Caucasian family so
0328 they took us to the park one time
0329 and me and my sister wanted to play soccer with the kids
0330 and one of the kids was like
0331 we can't play with you because you're Black.
Charles: 0332 Really?
Corey: 0333 Yeah
0334 so me and my sister were just like shocked
0335 like we didn't know what to say or nothing.
0336 We just turned around and walked back to the parents
0337 and was just like they said
0338 that they can't play with us because we're black
0339 whatever
0340 so the parents went to the kids and was just
0341 like "don't worry about what color they are.
0342 You can play with them.
0343 It's not a- it's not a big issue.
0344 They're not going to hurt you.
0345 They just want to play."
0346 And the other parents came
0347 and was just like no,
0348 they can't play with them.

Corey was proud of historical African American figures who served as leaders in the Civil Rights Movement. Some of the people noted were Martin Luther King Jr. and Harriet Tubman.

Charles: 0415 Anything like
0416 just in general
0417 about being an African American,
0418 is there anything about your history

0419 that you're proud of,
 0420 is there anything going on currently
 0421 that you're proud of,
 0422 or is there anything that you're not proud of?
 Corey: 0423 I would say history.
 0424 Like people who fought for
 0425 you know black and whites to be
 0426 you know become united,
 0427 like Martin Luther King.
 0428 Slavery time,
 0429 Harriet Tubman,
 0430 people like that.
 Charles: 0431 So just kind of history
 Corey: 0432 Yeah
 Charles: 0433 Is there anything that makes you ashamed
 0434 or anything that's hurtful about being black?
 Corey: 0435 Just basically the history.
 0436 How we were treated
 0437 and stuff like that.

7.1.6.4 Career Development Tasks

Corey seemed to have difficulties developing secure attachment relationships with his parents and other relatives. Children who establish secure attachments to parents or caregivers learn to trust others. Corey was raised in an environment where the adults in his life were involved with drugs and alcohol. Experiences during childhood influenced Corey to be committed to not drinking or using drugs. However, the experiences may have also negatively affected Corey's willingness to form secure attachment relationships with his parents.

Corey: 0016 and it's a tough neighborhood.
 0017 My mom always tried to tell me to stay out of trouble
 0018 and stuff like that
 0019 because when I was young,
 0020 it wasn't just basketball.
 0021 I literally like hung out with the wrong people,
 0022 but my uncles and stuff.
 0023 I have five uncles that live with me, my mother, my sister, my
 grandmother,
 0024 and they was all doing drugs and stuff,
 0025 drinking,
 0026 so when I seen that

0027 it like made me separate myself from them,
0028 kind of like made me grow up
0029 and I made a choice to not ever drink and ever smoke
0030 and I've been committed to that since I was a baby.
0031 I never did it still.

Corey struggled with trusting the adult family members in his life. In particular, Corey had issues trusting his mother. Corey felt that his mother should have notified Corey about his father's death sooner. Corey believed that his father's death affected Corey emotionally. As a result, there was also a period of time where Corey didn't want trust himself to play basketball.

Corey: 0793 My father when he died.
0794 When I had to make that transition to
0795 like just I say just trusting people
0796 like trusting people
0797 and just going outside and playing basketball again.
0798 Like that was hard for me to do like
0799 because just seeing that happen kind of messed up my head,
0800 you know what I'm saying.
0801 So I didn't trust a lot of people,
0802 especially my mom
0803 because she kind of told me like late,
0804 so I was kind of upset about that.
0805 And like trusting myself to play basketball again
0806 because I didn't want to do it no more.
0807 I felt like I couldn't do it if he wasn't here,
0808 but that's about it.

Corey eventually developed the confidence to continue to play basketball when he moved to a different city. Corey also developed confidence related to dreaming about possibilities professionally. During elementary school, Corey wanted to be a lawyer. He highlighted that he was confident in his ability to catch people in lies during elementary school.

Corey: 0531 In elementary school
0532 I always wanted to be like a lawyer.
0533 I don't know why.
0534 It was just something about being a lawyer.
0535 I felt like I was always right.
0536 I could catch people in lies and everything.

0537 I just wanted be a lawyer.
0538 And that's what everyone wanted to be at that time too,
0539 like when I went to school,
0540 was just a lawyer.

Corey described how he earned very good grades in the first through the third grade. He began to struggle academically in the fourth and fifth grade. In particular, math became difficult. Corey began to improve his performance academically in high school. Eventually, Corey developed an interest in becoming a sports analyst in high school or basketball coach. As result, he decided to major in communications in college.

Corey: 0541 When I went into 1st or 2nd grade and stuff,
0542 I still wanted to be a lawyer.
0543 I was actually good really good at school my 1st and 2nd grade year
0544 and like I got like all A's, all B's,
0546 I don't think I ever seen a C around that time,
0547 but I think like 4th and 5th grade,
0548 it just started getting hard.
0549 I hated Math
0550 and I used to love Math.
0551 I started hating Math.
0552 I started slacking in school,
0553 but 7th and 8th grade year,
0554 I started picking my grades back up,
0555 taking it more serious
0556 and my whole high school year I did good too.
0557 When I came to college,
0558 I wanted to-
0559 I started changing-
0560 because I wanted to be like on ESPN or something
0561 and talk about basketball
0562 so I wanted to major-
0563 I started a major in Communications.
0564 Have my own talk show or something like that one day.
0565 How to change people's lives
0566 and you know make them a better person.
0567 So right now I'm just majoring in Communications.

When Corey entered college, he was focused on playing professional basketball in the NBA. However, Corey observed that other former student-athletes from the university did not

make a team for the NBA. Additionally, these former student-athletes were returning to campus to complete their degree. Corey was motivated to not leave campus before completing his degree.

Charles: 0679 And going in-
0680 when you came into school as a freshman,
0681 you kind of felt the same way?
0682 You've always had that view that basketball and school
0683 were just as important?

Corey: 0684 No.
0685 When I first came here,
0686 I was-
0687 I'm like man
0688 I'm about to go to the League.
0689 But then you know as the-
0690 as days and months
0691 and all that started going by, I just-
0692 I just found out that school is like really important.
0693 Just looking at the history here
0694 like a lot of people who not playing in the league right now,
0695 they still trying to come back here you know
0696 what I'm saying,
0697 for help and stuff like that.
0698 And I don't want to be that type of person.
0699 I want to be done.

Charles: 0700 So you want to get it done as soon as-
0701 so when your career's over at University X,
0702 you're also done with your degree.
0703 And kind of talk about when you start seeing guys coming back
0704 trying to finish up their degree,
0705 like what was going through your head?

Corey: 0706 I know it's tough for them.
0707 It's hard
0708 because some of them can't even finish it
0709 like you know
0710 because they have like you know let me see like,
0711 they probably got kicked off their team
0712 and they trying to come back here
0713 and try to get help and can't do that or like
0714 they not good at school or whatever
0715 and it's just a lot.
0716 That's why I say I-
0717 my advice would be finish early,
0718 get that over with first,

0719 and then worry about your basketball career.

Although, Corey was faced with living in an adverse environment, Corey demonstrated tremendous resilience. He valued education and was determined to be successful. He made a commitment to not use drugs and alcohol. He was determined to “escape” his neighborhood. Corey was determined to drink alcohol or use drugs. He is dedicated to being the first member of his family to graduate from college.

Corey: 0725 Mine was always
0726 no smoking,
0727 no drinking,
0728 and not hanging out with the wrong crowd.
0729 The third one would be and finish school.
0730 I would say
0731 the reason why I have those
0732 is no drinking and smoking,
0733 I had a bad like experience
0734 with that just watching my uncles and them do that,
0735 how they became,
0736 and I never wanted to become like them
0737 so I always thought smoking and drinking would make me
0738 like them so I told myself if I never do that,
0739 I would be a better person or
0740 and it actually worked like
0741 I’m not like them.
0742 I’m actually living a better life
0743 and it feels good to you know have that commitment of not doing that
0744 and actually doing it.
0745 What else.
0746 Hanging out with the wrong crowd is
0747 that can also get you locked up too
0748 because you cannot be doing nothing
0749 and you with the wrong crowd at the wrong time,
0750 you could get locked up for just being with that with those people.
0751 That’s what my mom always told me.
0752 And why I say finish school is
0753 because that can also keep you out of trouble
0754 and it can also take you far places too.

Corey may benefit from exploring other professions outside of being a sports analyst or coach. Throughout the interview Corey discussed how he was opposed to drug and alcohol abuse. Corey also advocated for his friend to make responsible decisions. If he increased his knowledge on the world of work and the range of professions, he may find interest in a profession related to a social service field. He seemed passionate about youth making responsible decisions and empowering vulnerable populations.

Charles: 0494 Okay.
0495 Was there ever a time
0496 that you spoke out or fought against some type of wrongdoing
0497 or injustice
0498 to yourself or someone else?
Corey: 0499 I would say
0500 to my best friend.
0502 He's basically-
0503 he's a good basketball player
0504 and lately he's been like
0505 smoking and drinking and stuff
0506 and I told him
0507 like me and you grew up with good parents
0508 and stuff who taught us not to do none of that stuff
0509 and to just stay off the streets basically play basketball
0510 whatever and I was just like we know better than that.
0511 We shouldn't be doing that.
0512 When I told him that,
0513 he kind of like stopped doing all that.
0514 He started doing his work and stay committed to basketball
0515 and now he's actually he's playing basketball in New York
0516 right now
0517 for a DII college.

7.1.7 James' Narrative

7.1.7.1 Background Information

James's parents lived in an urban city in the northeastern part of the United States until James was in the sixth grade. They moved to a suburban area in the same state after James's mother

earned a promotion at her place of employment. His grandparents grew up in the same state as well. James's father's side of the family lived in an urban city in the same state as James' mother. James's father is a former football student-athlete at a NCAA division I university but did not complete his degree. His mother earned a degree from college in the northeastern part of the United States. James's father did electrical work, while his mother was a human resources manager. James's father coached his basketball and football teams through elementary and middle school when they moved to the suburban area. His father began teams in the Police Athletic League (PAL) in that city.

James attended the same high school in which his father attended and eventually earned a basketball scholarship to University X. During the interview, James was completing his senior year as a member of the University X men's basketball team. Entering his senior year, he earned multiple conference awards for his athletic and academic accomplishments entered his name into the NBA draft without an agent. After working out for selected teams, decided to return for his senior year. At the conclusion of his senior year, James graduated with a bachelor degree majoring in communication.

7.1.7.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Parents' and main caregivers' socioeconomic level can play a tremendous role in shaping an individual's career pattern. Both of James's parents attended college. His father did not complete his undergraduate degree, but attended as a student-athlete who played football at a NCAA division I institution. His mother earned an undergraduate degree. Both parents worked to provide for the family. His mother provided the primary income as a human resources manager, while his father worked as an electrician. At an early age, James's mother emphasized the

importance of education. His mother ensured that homework and school related responsibilities were completed each night:

James: 0155 yeah it was a regiment.
0156 Honestly, my mom was more of the homework person.
0157 My mom was more of the homework person.
0158 She coordinated all of that,
0159 but the problem was
0160 the thing was
0161 she ain't get home until late.
0162 She ain't get home until real late
0163 and uh so we would go workout first.
0164 We would go work out
0165 and just come back and do our homework late.
Charles: 0166 So he let her handle that part of
James: 0167 and he let her handle that. He wasn't really the homework guy.
Charles: 0168 that was kind of your mom that emphasized that
James: 0169 yeah she emphasized that all the way.
0170 She emphasized that.

When James was in high school, his mother also emphasized that it was important for him to graduate from college considering he would be the third person in his family to accomplish this goal. Being the third person to graduate from college served as a motivator.

Charles: 0597 When you say you're one of three to get a degree, how did that influence whether or not you wanted to go to college?
James: 0598 It definitely influenced it,
0599 definitely influenced.
0600 Especially when my mom told me.
0601 She didn't tell me until late in my high school
0602 about my junior year.
0603 She told me,
0604 because my father he dropped out,
0605 So
0606 it was more so
0607 once she told me that
0608 I knew that was a goal,
0609 and even last year
0610 when I declared for the draft that was one of the things I was actually thinking about.
0611 I knew I wanted to get my degree.

0612 If there was one thing I was going to do it was get.

At an early age, athlete and student were core roles for James. He began playing basketball and football at the age of nine. His father was his coach until he entered high school. His father helped him develop his basketball skills through his coaching but also structuring a daily workout routine. This daily interaction and commitment to the sport helped to build a strong father-son relationship.

Charles: 0130 How did that affect your relationship?
James: 0131 It strengthened it,
0132 it definitely did.
0133 Definitely strengthened it.
0134 It was it was always good.
0135 It was good to a certain extent,
0136 but the whole basketball, seeing them everyday
0137 it took it to another level.
0138 It wasn't always good.
0139 It wasn't always good cause there were times like every single day
0140 after school sixth/seventh grade, middle school,
0141 he would pick me up from school,
0142 and I'm I wanna go to friends' house or I wanna chill some days
0143 and uh he wouldn't let me do it.
0144 I'd do homework and then I had to well I had to do something
0145 every single day.
0146 Had to.
0147 Whether it was only for twenty minutes
0148 or for an hour and a half I had to do some /boring/ drills
0149 or I had to shoot for a half hour.
0150 Something was done every single day
0151 and that's how I progressed, kept getting better.

His father did not play basketball in college, so he decided to read books and attend coaches' clinics to learn more about basketball to be an effective basketball coach.

James: 0081 Yeah.
0082 He was my coach at basketball.
0083 Definitely wouldn't be at this level without him.
0084 The crazy thing is he doesn't know too much about basketball.
0085 He didn't know too much about basketball

0086 and then as I started growing and I started getting better
0087 um it was actually like different coaches,
0088 different high school coaches,
0089 different college coaches that used to invite him to different coaches
clinics
0090 that like different college coaches used to have in the northeastern region
of the US.
0091 He was going there.
0092 He was reading different books
0093 and eventually picked it up
0094 and just started coaching
0095 and now he knows he knows a lot about it.
Charles: 0096 So he was reading books?
James: 0097 Reading books about it,
0098 going to different clinics.
0099 As I was getting recruited too
0100 um it was different college coaches,
0101 Division I colleges that was um inviting him to different clinics
0102 cause they knew he was my coach.
0103 And um he just learned from that too.

James and father had a close bond, which was strengthened around sports. When James won the Most Valuable Player award at a local basketball tournament in his home city at the age of nine, his father was extremely proud. This was an award that his father aspired to earn as a youngster.

James: 0236 I actually got MVP of
0237 it's called Little Lad tournament,
0238 it's called the Little Lad tournament
0239 and it's like one of the best tournaments at like 9, 10 years old
0240 and I got MVP of it
0241 and it was something my father always wanted to get when he was
younger.
Charles: 0242 oh okay
James: 0243 so it was something that he was like
0244 real emotional about and stuff.
Charles: 0245 That's pretty cool. Did he tell you?
James: 0246 He didn't really tell me.
0247 He told my mom.
0248 He wasn't going to tell me.
0249 He wasn't going to tell me,
0250 but he was like she told me
0251 he was emotional about it
0252 and she told me a couple years after, this is not even when I was young.

0253 She was, she told me a couple years after.
 0254 We got a rule.
 0255 We don't cry or nothing and all that.
 Charles: 0256 How did that make you feel when your mom told you about that?
 James: 0257 It was good definitely.
 0258 I was definitely good.
 0259 It was just more so a credit to hard work
 0260 and he pushed me.
 0261 He always wanted it
 0262 so bad basically we both got what we wanted.

James's family made an important decision about which high school to attend based on the factors of quality of education and the opportunity to play varsity basketball as a freshman. These factors highlight how athlete and student were core social roles for James. This is another example of how his parents also valued sports and education.

Charles: 0515 Now why did you go to that school?
 James: 0516 Better basketball tradition than the other high school.
 0517 My father also went there,
 0518 and I knew I had a chance to play varsity as a freshman.
 0519 And it was good academically so my mom was sold.
 Charles: 0520 So as a family, did you all kind of make that decision together?
 James: 0521 yeah,
 0522 definitely made it together.
 0523 My mom was she was big on academics
 0524 so that sold her.
 0525 And then since my father went there
 0526 he loved the school already,
 0527 and they had a good tradition.
 0528 And then we talked to the coach
 0529 and he said I had a chance to play varsity,
 0530 it was just up to me.

Growing up in his home city and playing organized sports seemed to be important aspects of these communities. He was aware that other youth in his community were excelling at high level in basketball. He recognized that there were players who earned McDonald's All-American accolades and aspired to play basketball professionally.

Charles: 0447 And how did that influence your experience, you know playing at a high level in high school, knowing that it was important in your community?

James: 0448 It definitely influenced me,
0449 just because it was
0450 the competitive nature,
0451 just going to the /park/,
0452 got me better,
0453 knowing that it was other players from my area that was,
0454 that were
0455 McDonald's All-Americans.
0456 I had guys who are now playing in the NBA from my area.
0457 It wasn't a lot,
0458 but they had they had a lot of hype.
0459 It was two players in general
0460 that had a lot of hype,
0461 so we used to always go to the park together.
0462 I actually played on their team and so
0463 it only made me better as a person too.

7.1.7.3 Identity Development

As mentioned in the previous section, James was exposed to basketball and football at a young age. He also spent time bonding with his father through sports. Since James viewed his father and mother as role models, he imitated desirable qualities that they displayed. One of the desirable qualities exhibited by his father was a commitment to athletics. His father was a former student-athlete at a division I university. Additionally, he served as James's football and basketball coach in elementary and middle school.

James: 0172 Probably my mom.
0173 Just seeing her
0174 going to work every day,
0175 coming home late
0176 and uh still being able to cook,
0177 clean.
0178 Still coordinate the house basically.
0179 She's definitely my role model.
0180 My father too as well.
0181 They both went to work,
0182 coordinated the house.
0183 There was time we weren't home,
0184 well I was home for a long time like by myself

0185 so I had to almost raise my brothers a little bit
0186 just because they got home so late
0187 at times
0188 So
0189 um but the fact that they just stuck with their job,
0190 and she got promoted and she came from she came from an urban city
0191 She came from the bottom
0192 and she uh she went to /Science/ High school,
0193 which isn't a big time high school, it was a public school in an urban city
0194 and ended up going to Wellesley.
0195 So she came from the bottom to the top basically.

James seemed to be particularly impressed with his mother's success professionally considering she grew up in a poor environment. Throughout the interview James noted that he respects people who can overcome adversity. He is particularly impressed with his mother's path to success. While his family encouraged James to participate in sports, recognition for his performance in the community also influenced James to value sports. James mentioned that sport is an essential part of his geographical community. He viewed sports as serving the role of bringing the community together.

James: 0426 In Jersey the importance of it,
0427 at least where I live is very big.
0428 It just brings the community together.
0429 And something that when
0430 when your high school team
0431 or when your area
0432 or when you know somebody is doing well,
0433 everybody comes together,
0434 goes to the game.
0435 Everybody's more,
0436 everybody's positive about it so.

James also mentioned that sport impacts cohesion within the African American community of his home city. He also mentioned that participation in sports may also be related to lowering crime within the African American communities in his home city.

James: 0437 Especially in the black communities as well,
0438 so when you know somebody's doing well,
0439 local high school team's doing well,
0440 everybody comes together and joins as one.
0441 It's more positive than negative I think.
0442 It's probably, there's probably less crime too.
0443 I don't know the numbers on it,
0444 but I would think
0445 there's probably less crime,
0446 especially in the black community.

James formed perceptions related to racial factors that have influenced his life. When asked how the media influences people's perception of athletes, he immediately described how the media influenced the public's perception of African American athletes. Although the question was framed around athletes in general, he described the media's perception of African American athletes. He later mentioned that the media also influences stereotypes of athletes in general regardless of race, but his initial response was to associate the media's perception of African American athletes.

James: 0362 Well since I'm an athlete,
0363 I think they definitely try,
0364 especially black athletes,
0365 in my opinion,
0366 they try to downgrade some of the things you do.
0367 If a black athlete does it
0368 compared to a white athlete
0369 does anything negative,
0370 whether it be a DUI,
0371 whether it's a sexual assault case,
0372 I think it's more scrutinized than a white athlete
0373 and um
0374 I'm not sure why they do it
0375 but
0376 I think it's uh
0377 I think it's noticeable in my opinion

James believed that there are also stereotypical views of African American athletes. These stereotypes include African American athletes being sexually promiscuous, not intelligent and being given everything.

James: 0647 First, is
0648 women's stereotype
0649 that you
0650 have sex with every woman on campus.
0651 And then second is that you're not smart.
0652 You don't go to class,
0653 and
0654 you just
0655 you're spoiled.
0656 You're given everything,
0657 and people don't realize.
Charles: 0658 And what don't they realize?
James: 0659 That you have to maintain a GPA
0660 to play.
0661 And um
0662 we're working
0663 as hard as they are academically,
0664 but we have to manage our time even more than a regular student,
0665 just because basketball itself is a job.
0666 And then when you include academics,
0667 it takes on a higher process.
0668 When you're on the road,
0669 you got to do work; you got to email a teacher;
0670 you got to stay in contact with your teachers,
0671 and at the same time you got to be prepared for that game
0672 today or the next day
0673 or whenever it is.

Although, there have been times when people's negative views have angered James, he believed that his actions help to refute these stereotypes. James mentioned that he carries a high grade point average, is in the process of obtaining an undergraduate degree and excels athletically.

Charles: 0674 So how does it make you feel when people hold these stereotypes?
James: 0675 I was one to get
0676 angry,
0677 when I first got here.

0678 But at the end of the day,
0679 they're on the outside looking in
0680 so they don't really know too much about it
0681 and it's no need to really explain myself.
0682 I think actions speak louder than words
0683 so if you go and get your degree,
0684 have a high GPA,
0685 do well on the court and off the court,
0686 you don't really have to explain too much to them.

He viewed these negative stereotypes as social injustice and chose to speak out against it. He was confident in his academic background when entering college. He also highlighted that he needed to demonstrate outstanding time management skills because of his athletic travel and practice regiment.

James: 0690 Probably the um
0691 the college athlete,
0692 my freshman year,
0693 was a girl who said,
0694 I forget exactly what she said.
0695 But, she said a slick comment in class
0696 that we had people to do our work for us
0697 and I just bugged out
0698 and I just told her.
0699 First,
0670 I went to a good high school
0671 so I knew I was already smart
0672 and I had to work hard to just get here.
0673 Then,
0674 once you get here,
0675 it's even harder
0676 because the time management of
0677 of uh
0678 separating both,
0679 when to go out,
0680 when to work out,
0681 when to do your work
0682 so just I gave her a piece of my mind.
0683 Took it from there.

One of his more complex transitions in life was when he moved to a suburban community to from an urban area. He mentioned that it was a different socioeconomic situation and he was one of five African Americans in his class.

Charles: 0539 Talk about your experience,
0540 when you say the experience was different
0541 being one of only five black kids in school,
0542 how like were there any experiences that kind of stand out to you?
0543 Or just kind of talk about that experience a little bit.

James: 0544 Nah,
0545 just like little slick comments that you
0546 that little
0547 that white kids would say.
0548 Nothing really that racist.
0549 It was nothing blatant,
0550 that was really that racist,
0551 but it was you knew you knew you were in an all-white school
0552 that everybody was white:
0553 the teachers,
0554 the students.
0555 It was more so that the black kids stick together,
0556 in lunch,
0557 and then the white kids were over there too.

James highlighted that basketball served as a way to overcome the barrier of cultural differences but often people are more comfortable with people from similar ethnic backgrounds.

James: 0558 There was some mixing a little bit,
0559 just because we played basketball,
0560 a couple of us played basketball
0561 so a couple of us
0562 eat at the same lunch table,
0563 but majority of the time
0564 it was the Black kids over here
0565 and the white kids over there.

James noted that he is proud that the United States elected an African American president. He mentioned that African Americans acknowledge when other African Americans are successful, which serves a way demonstrating community unity.

James: 0618 what makes me proud,
0619 first, we got a black president.
0620 That's one of the things that definitely makes me proud.
0621 And good thing about African Americans
0622 is when we see each other doing well,
0623 we acknowledge it.
0624 And we all stick together and
0625 that's something
0626 that I love and
0627 we're definitely doing big things now.
0628 I think when you have different black owners of businesses,
0629 of teams now,
0630 once you see people doing that, and now
0631 you think the sky's the limit for yourself.
0632 It gives you a mindset,
0633 like I can do it too.

The success of other African Americans in business, politics and sports promoted a sense of confidence that he could also achieve his dreams and aspirations. Another factor that influenced James's identity is his interest in hip hop culture. He listened to hip hop music every day. In the morning it was a component of his daily routine. He mentioned that the lyrics of the songs motivate him.

James: 0265 It's definitely influenced me.
0266 It's something I listen to everyday.
0267 Wake up to
0268 and uh it's something that uh
0269 I definitely
0270 that uh motivates me a lot.
0271 Especially now.

In particular, he enjoyed listening to an artist named Meek Mills' album entitled "Dream Chasing". James compared the stories in the songs to his personal life. James was chasing his dreams of playing basketball professionally in the NBA.

James: 0272 And I think that one thing that motivates me is probably
0273 any of my teammates would tell you is Meek Mill.

0274 Meek new dream chasing album
0275 is something that I listen to every single day when I wake up.
0276 And it's just like just because I'm chasing a dream right now.
0277 As far as getting into the League
0278 So. I wake up,
0279 I play it and I'm good.
0280 I wake up,
0281 whatever time it is,
0282 six/seven in the morning,
0283 come work out in the morning,
0284 um so it definitely motivates me to get up.

His favorite song on the "Dream Chasing" album is entitled "Get This Money". The chorus of the song include the first thing being on Meek Mills mind when he awakes is increasing his money and that he needs to continue to "stay on his grind" to get it. James related to the entire album because the artists describes how he enduring a difficult time in his life. However he was willing to work hard to be successful and accomplish his dreams. James related to how relationships with friends change when going through difficult times. He entered into the basketball season with high expectations. The media also projected that he would have a tremendous season statistically. Entering the season, he named conference Pre-season Player of the Year. However, he did not earn the conference player of the year award.

James: 0292 yeah kind of where he's at
0293 because uh
0294 especially with this season going on
0295 he's more so talking about
0296 how he's bout
0297 he's bout twenty-three
0298 and more so how everything went downhill.
0299 Everything went downhill in a span of
0300 a couple months.
0301 Everything went downhill in a span of months
0302 and he was he had to work for it,
0303 and he had to chase his dream
0304 and he was,
0305 he's actually telling a story how a lot of his friends,
0306 a bunch of girls
0307 they talk to him when his dream was crumbling,

0308 when his dream was going down the drain
 0309 and now that he making it,
 0310 he doing his thing,
 0311 everybody changing.
 0312 You got some haters.
 0313 You got some people that on the new bandwagon.
 Charles: 0314 And how do you feel that relates to your life?
 James: 0315 Just because
 0316 my past three years, I was basically the man,
 0317 basically the man
 0318 and now it's more so of
 0319 well you're not exceeding expectations.
 0320 People's opinions change.
 0321 People's opinion change
 0322 so
 0323 now
 0324 and that's as a team
 0325 and individually too,
 0326 so they love you when you up,
 0327 hate you when you down.

7.1.7.4 Career Development Tasks

As a youth, James seemed to develop secure attachment relationships with his parents. He had admiration for his mother's ability to excel professionally and take care of many of the responsibilities related to being a supportive and caring mother. He developed a strong relationship with his father; particularly using sport as an avenue to bond. His father served as his football and basketball coach during elementary and middle school. As a result, during childhood and early adolescence James felt comfortable exploring the world of work and his place in it. His security in exploring his place in the world of work is demonstrated by conversations about his early career aspirations.

Charles: 0701 Describe your career aspirations when you were in elementary school.
 0702 What did you want to do?
 James: 0703 Oh my elementary school.
 0704 I wanted to be a garbage truck driver.
 Charles: 0705 Okay
 James: 0706 When I was young

0707 because one of my friends,
0708 his father was a garbage truck driver,
0709 and he made a lot of money.
0710 And I knew it.
0711 I knew he made a lot of money.
0712 So I told my mom,
0713 I told my mom, I'm going to be a garbage truck driver
0714 if I don't do anything.
0715 And then as I grew,
0716 I grew out of it.
Charles: 0717 What did she say?
James: 0718 Just started laughing.
0719 She didn't necessarily say I couldn't do it.
0720 But she just laughed about it
0721 and kept going.

James's felt secure in daydreaming about possible careers during his childhood. He also seemed optimistic about the future. Subsequently, he developed an interest in playing basketball professionally and coaching. He interacted with many coaches; including his father.

Charles: 0722 And did that, how did that change over time?
James: 0723 I think it was more so the basketball thing.
0724 As I
0725 became into sports,
0726 football and basketball,
0727 I started to realize what I wanted to do
0728 and just because I was always around sports
0729 and I seen so many coaches,
0730 seen so many coaches,
0731 and I related to them a little bit,
0732 I felt like I wanted to be a coach
0733 growing up.

Eventually in high school, he became interested in the broadcasting profession and coaching.

James: 0735 Yeah.
0736 One of the things I want to do,
0737 but I'm more into.
0738 Coaching is one of the things I want to do,
0739 but broadcasting,
0740 commentating as well.
0741 It's something I'd want to do too.

0742 That's why I majored in communications.
Charles: 0743 When did you know you want to go into broadcasting or
being an analyst?
James: 0744 Probably in high school.
0745 That's when I really looked at it.
0746 When I was watching NBA games
0747 and I would actually analyze what the analyst was saying,
0748 and watch NBA on TNT and I would actually really watch it and
0749 analyze the whole thing
0750 and go from there.

During the growth stage of career development, James demonstrated the confidence to set career goals and actualizing those roles. He gained this confidence from success playing basketball and the disciplined associated with practicing his skills. Often times, he sacrificed spending time with friends to develop his basketball skills.

James: 0135 It was good to a certain extent,
0136 but the whole basketball, seeing them everyday
0137 it took it to another level.
0138 It wasn't always good.
0139 It wasn't always good cause there were times like every single day
0140 after school sixth/seventh grade, middle school,
0141 he would pick me up from school,
0142 and I'm I wanna go to friends' house or I wanna chill some days
0143 and uh he wouldn't let me do it.
0144 I'd do homework and then I had to well I had to do something
0145 every single day.
0146 Had to.
0147 Whether it was only for twenty minutes
0148 or for an hour and a half I had to do some /boring/ drills
0149 or I had to shoot for a half hour.
0150 Something was done every single day
0151 and that's how I progressed, kept getting better.

In addition to shadowing his father while he did electrical work, James also embraced having household responsibilities because he was the oldest child.

James: 0183 There was time we weren't home,
0184 well I was home for a long time like by myself
0185 so I had to almost raise my brothers a little bit

0186 just because they got home so late
0187 at times

When asked if he was not as success in basketball, would he place a higher priority on academics than playing basketball, James mentioned that academics would be more important. He noted that he would realize that playing professionally may not have been a realistic option and he would aspire to obtain a master's degree in business administration. However, since playing basketball professionally is a realistic and obtainable goal, he chooses to make sure he devotes enough time to developing his basketball skills.

James: 0835 yeah. It would just be,
0836 I would just start to realize it
0837 because I would try to get my MBA,
0838 try to go to a Master's program.
0839 Now that I have the chance of playing professionally,
0840 it's more so I can't really do it.
0841 Can't really do it yet at least.
0842 So if I wasn't playing as much,
0843 and it was a slight chance I was going to play professionally,
0844 then I probably would have took school to a whole different level.

In order to accomplish his career goals, James implemented strategies that have worked in the past; including sticking to a regiment and working hard. Similar strategies were implemented to achieve his career goals related to playing basketball professionally and becoming a broadcaster.

James: 0924 Basically
0925 right now,
0926 basketball wise, is just
0927 like no days off.
0928 That's the motto I'm using right now
0929 that um don't take any days off because somebody else is working to try to
take my spot.
0930 And that spot is in a draft pick.
0931 And that's a spot on an NBA roster so
0932 something I think about when I first wake up.

0933 And more so
0934 academically or just being a coach or broadcaster,
0935 just reading different books,
0936 in part,
0937 reading different books first,
0938 and then
0939 analyzing the game more.
0940 Analyzing the game more.
0941 I think it's a little easier for me,
0942 just because I'm always around it, every day.
0943 And I'm always watching it
0944 and it's something I always do.
0945 But uh the people,
0946 the people you know get you into it,
0947 but it's what you know that makes you stay.
0948 I think.

James successfully accomplished the tasks associated with the growth stage of career development including 1) increasing his concern about his future; 2) increasing personal control over his vocational activities; 3) forming conceptions about how to make educational choices and 4) acquiring the confidence to make and implement these career choices. As result, he was in a good position to complete tasks associated with the exploration stage of development. As he continued to develop clarity about his self-concept, he also gained clarity about his vocational preferences.

He selected his group of occupations based on experiences that served as gauges for the attainability of careers of interest. After earning a scholarship to play basketball at a very high level in college, he was a major contributor for four years. As a result, his aspirations to play professionally seem very realistic. He also majored in communications which is aligned with being a sports broadcaster. These factors indicate that he also has successfully fulfilled the task associated with crystallization in the exploration stage.

7.1.8 Kelly's Narrative

7.1.8.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Kelly's parents were born in a nonwestern country. His father was born in the northern area of the country, while his mother was born in the eastern part of the country. Similarly, Kelly's grandparents (on his father's side of the family) are also from different parts of the country. His grandfather was born in the northern part of the country, while his grandmother was born in the southern part of the country. Kelly mentioned that it is uncommon for people in his native country to marry people from different areas within the country. Kelly grew up in the northern area of the country where his father was elected a king of his community. Their family owned a petroleum gas company. Kelly has five siblings; he was the fourth child to be born. Kelly interacted with people from different geographic communities and learned to speak five different languages.

Before the age of nine, Kelly was interested in playing soccer. His father loved soccer, while his mother wanted Kelly to run track. When Kelly was nine years old, he was invited by his oldest brother watch his basketball club practice. His brother was 20 years old at the time. One of the coaches encouraged Kelly's brother to have Kelly continue to go to the basketball club. Kelly became interested in playing basketball and began going to the basketball club on a regular basis. When Kelly was 12 years old, he was invited to a basketball camp where coaches from the United States attended to offer suggestions on improving skills to the participants. The coaches would come back in two years to evaluate the participants.

Kelly's native country does not have middle school teams, so Kelly played for a team based in his geographical community. He referred to this team as a "street team." When Kelly

was 16 years old, he was invited to play on his country's national team. This team traveled to compete against teams representing other countries across the continent. During this time Kelly also participated in a national basketball camp. As a result, he was invited to play basketball at a high school in the United States.

While living in the United States, Kelly was assigned a host family. His adoptive parents were very supportive and emphasized the importance of valuing education. Kelly's father died during his senior year of high school. Kelly did not see his father for three years prior to his father passing. Eventually, Kelly earned an athletic scholarship to University X. Kelly is majoring in economics and wants to work in the marketing field. He was influenced to select a career in business because his father owned a petroleum gas company and other members of his family owned other companies, such as clothing stores and glass companies.

7.1.8.2 DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

Kelly was influenced by his geographic community. He was raised in a nonwestern country. Kelly described how many youth seek sport as a way for upward mobility. Kelly noted that many children in his native country play soccer at an early age and migrate to other countries to have an opportunity to develop their skills. They make this decision with the hopes of playing soccer professionally. Many children in his native country cannot afford to pay for a quality education. As a result, sports are considered to be very important in various geographic communities as a way for social mobility.

Charles: 0430 So kind of talk about
 0431 like your communities
 0432 that you grew up in
 0433 and talk about whether or not
 0434 sports was in important to your community.

Kelly: 0435 Yeah
0436 I think sport
0437 I think is the most important thing in my community
0438 because that's the only opportunity for the kids in my community
0439 use to be successful
0440 because one they can't afford-
0441 their parents can't afford schools
0442 and you know
0443 some people don't even know what school is.
0444 All they do is just /get up/
0445 and try to look for jobs
0446 and just business
0447 so they can have some money in their pocket.
0448 But sport is really big in my country
0449 because especially soccer
0450 that's the number one sport
0451 so a lot of kids growing up playing soccer
0452 you know every kid want to play soccer,
0453 want to be a soccer player.
0454 And then I think for me,
0455 being a basketball player in my community
0456 and coming over here,
0457 is like I think inspires a lot of kids right now
0458 just because they saw me here
0459 and they want to
0460 /just say/
0461 they want to be like me so

Charles: 0462 And you said that's kind of the only way for them
0463 to be successful?

Kelly: 0464 Yeah because that's the only opportunity
0465 we have right now
0466 because they don't go to school
0467 or their parents can't afford school
0468 so it's just

Kelly decided to play basketball because it would offer an opportunity to live in the United States. Kelly noted that there were limited opportunities to be successful in his native country due to corruption.

Charles: 0180 And why did you decide to go,
0181 why did you decide to leave your native country

0182 to play basketball in the United States?

Kelly: 0183 It's just because I have so much love for the game
0184 and I wanted-
0185 I just wanted- It's a lot of opportunity here in the States
0186 and so it's like not a lot going on back home
0187 in my country
0188 it's just-
0189 you to be successful there your parents have to be kind of
0190 wealthy and have money
0191 because it's corrupt
0192 and it's just so much corruption over there
0193 and I just chose to come here
0194 just because there's a lot of opportunity for me to be successful in life
0195 so that's why I'm here.

Although Kelly decided to migrate to the United States for better opportunities, he noted that his father was respected in the community. His father seemed to have high social status within northern part of their country. He was elected a king in his community, and he owned a petroleum gas company. As a result, Kelly was able to focus on playing basketball as a youth. He did not feel that he needed to have a traditional job during middle school or high school. His socioeconomic status allowed Kelly to make this decision.

Charles: 0839 Did you have any jobs
0840 when you were growing up?

Kelly: 0841 I never had no jobs.

Charles: 0842 So you kind of just focused on
0843 playing basketball?

Kelly: 0844 Yeah because
0845 I never needed one
0846 because my dad,
0847 my dad was-
0848 I mean he was-
0849 he was kind of wealthy
0850 then he fell off and then he-
0851 they gave him a loyalty,
0852 he was a king
0853 and he came back up.

0854 I mean
0855 I came here when
0856 he was a king
0857 and when I left back home,
0858 I never seen him
0859 before he passed away.

7.1.8.3 IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Kelly's athletic identity seemed to be salient. He was exposed to sports at an early age. Sports were deemed as being important to members of his geographic community. Many of the youth in his native country played soccer and decided to migrate to other countries to develop their skills. Kelly's primary role models are Kevin Garnett and his parents. Garnett is a professional basketball player in the NBA, who Kelly respects for his passion for the game. Kelly's parents encouraged him to play sports. His mother wanted Kelly to run track, while his father wanted to Kelly to play soccer. Kelly was encouraged by his oldest brother to play basketball. Kelly's oldest brother played basketball professionally in Spain.

Charles: 0217 Okay so tell me a story about how
0218 role models influenced your life.

Kelly: 0219 you mean like any role model?

Charles: 0220 yeah any role models
0221 that you may have had in your life.

Kelly: 0222 I'm going to say like Kevin Garnett.
0223 He just shows so-
0224 when he plays-
0225 he shows passion and dedication
0226 and just the love he has for the game.
0227 Just the feelings every time
0228 he steps on the court like
0229 he shows how much he cares.
0230 He wants to win.
0231 How much,
0232 how much he really like,
0233 when he puts so much effort-
0234 he wants it,

0235 he want-
 0236 he always be like successful
 0237 and I just love the way he played
 0238 and you know
 0239 and how he represent himself,
 0240 where he come from.

Charles: 0241 Okay.
 0242 So Kevin Garnett.
 0243 Any other role models?
 0244 Or people that you look up to?

Kelly: 0245 I'm going to say probably-
 0246 I don't think I have (?)

Charles: 0247 That's fine.
 0248 And then how did Kevin Garnett
 0249 being a role model,
 0250 how did that influence your life?

Kelly: 0251 I mean it really influenced my life
 0252 in that a lot of,
 0253 especially in the basketball part
 0254 just you know you got to keep working hard,
 0255 pushing and

Charles: 0256 And did you have role models
 0257 when you were younger?

Kelly: 0258 I mean I would say
 0259 yeah.
 0260 I mean my dad and my mom
 0261 are my number one role models
 0262 just because if it wasn't for them,
 0263 I would never be here.
 0264 They're my number one role models
 0265 and I really look up to them and

Charles: 0266 When you were younger,
 0267 how had being recognized
 0268 for your athletic accomplishments,
 0269 how did that influence your life?

Kelly: 0270 I mean
 0271 when I was younger-
 0272 mean my mom used to run track

0273 when she was in high school
0274 and then when I was in school
0275 she always trying to make me run track
0276 but I never liked running track
0277 because it was just too much,
0278 just too much stuff
0279 and then my dad loves soccer.
0280 And he wanted me to play soccer
0281 so that's how I started playing soccer
0282 and so one I just came home
0283 and I told my dad
0284 and then my brother wanted me to play basketball
0285 so it's three,
0286 I had three stuff going on,
0287 so one day I told my dad
0288 you know I have love for basketball
0289 and I want to be a basketball player
0290 and he was like just go for it.
0291 Whatever you want to do
0292 in life just go after it
0293 so I was like alright
0294 and that's why I stick to basketball and

Kelly is also proud of his nationality and ethnicity. Kelly was connected with a variety of cultures within his community. He is able to speak five different languages due to his exposure to various ethnic groups within his native country.

Kelly: 0199 I speak four languages, plus English.

Charles: 0200 Five including English?

Kelly: 0201 Including English

Charles: 0202 And when you were in your native country,
0203 is that common for people to speak multiple languages?

Kelly: 0204 Yeah I mean it's common
0205 because you stay around people who are from different ethnic groups
0206 so you just pick some dialects from you know
0207 like French or maybe
0208 (?) or business people.

Charles: 0209 What languages do you speak?

Kelly: 0210 I speak Hausa, /Kanuri/,
0211 I speak French
0212 but it's /not like good not fluent/,
0213 and I speak /Edo/

Charles: 0214 And then English

Kelly: 0215 Yeah English

Kelly believed that he is viewed as a role model for youth in his country. Since Kelly plays basketball in the United States, he inspires youth from his community. Some of the youth watch Kelly on television. Other kids, who do not have access to television, hear stories about Kelly through discussions with community members. He is dedicated to returning to his country to help people in his community. Kelly wants to encourage the youth of his community.

Kelly: 0306 Yeah like people really look up to me
0307 right now
0308 just because I'm here playing basketball
0309 representing my country
0310 and my family,
0311 my community,
0312 and just because
0313 /I help/ a lot of people back home.
0314 I'm just trying to be successful
0315 so I can go back home
0316 and just give back to my community
0317 and then try to encourage the younger ones coming up
0318 whatever you do in life,
0319 make sure you're real positive
0320 and don't-
0321 don't try to /shortcut/
0322 or do something different.

Charles: 0323 Now are they able to see your games on TV?

Kelly: 0324 Some of them watch my games on TV,
0325 some of them I think they don't have a TV
0326 so they just hear stories and stuff.

Kelly appreciated traditions from his native country. In particular, he was fond of cultural music from his home country. He did not listen to a lot of American music until he arrived in the United States in high school. His older brother exposed Kelly to hip hop music because his older brother traveled to play basketball internationally, but his exposure was not consistent. Kelly began listening to hip hop music once he arrived in the United States. However, he continues to listen to cultural music from his native country when he wants to be reminded of home.

Charles: 0327 How has hip-hop music and culture
0328 influenced your life?

Kelly: 0329 Not that much.
0330 I mean
0331 I know when
0332 I was back when I was younger,
0333 when I was growing up,
0334 I never experienced hip-hop music,
0335 whatever,
0336 but I know I listened to a couple
0337 because my brother he was kind of traveled,
0338 because of basketball
0339 he traveled so every time he'd come home,
0340 he kind of had like the American lifestyle
0341 so that's how I started picking up some stuff
0342 and then when I came here,
0343 I mean it /ain't/ changed nothing
0344 I mean, it just,
0345 I just listening to it,
0346 hip-hop, rap music.

Charles: 0347 So you listen to hip hop now?

Kelly: 0348 Yeah I mean I do.
0349 That's all I listen

Charles: 0350 And what did you listen to growing up,
0351 type of music?

Kelly: 0352 I just like culture music,
0353 it's nothing special about it.
0354 It's just drums and dance.

Charles: 0355 So did you all
0356 when you had celebrations
0357 was there music
0358 and you listened to it
0359 or did you listen to it just because.
0360 When did you listen to the cultural music?

Kelly: 0361 I just listen to cultural music
0362 when like I miss home
0363 and maybe I just have feelings for
0364 and I'm listening just because I miss the songs and the culture
0365 and whatever so that's when I always listen to my culture songs.

In addition to Kelly being conscious and proud of his nationality and ethnicity, he is also cognizant of perceptions based on race. Kelly believed that there were various stereotypes associated with black athletes in the United States. He believed that stereotypes included black collegiate athletes being viewed as unintelligent, disrespectful, and arrogant. Kelly was motivated by the stereotypes. He wanted to disprove these misconceptions. He began to recognize the stereotypes when he arrived in the United States. Kelly was assigned a paper related to researching how athletes are perceived. His research helped to highlight some of the stereotypes associated with the athletes in the United States.

Charles: 0643 What stereotypes are associated with being a black male
0644 college athlete.

Kelly: 0645 There's a lot of stereotypes.
0646 Like college athlete,
0647 they're not smart.
0648 They dumb.
0649 They don't listen.
0650 They're too cocky.
0651 They're not respectful.
0652 They don't know how to read or write.

Charles: 0653 How does that make you feel?

Kelly: 0654 It makes me feel really bad.

0655 I makes me want to do more
0656 so I can prove people wrong
0657 and show people
0658 that's not how you judge people and

Charles: 0659 So it kind of motivates you?

Kelly: 0660 yeah motivates

Charles: 0661 When did you first notice
0662 these stereotypes?

Kelly: 0663 It was some class I took here
0664 and yeah was it freshman year?
0665 And then when the teacher was explaining,
0666 she said write a paper about
0667 black athletes
0668 and then she told me the stereotype
0669 what they say and stuff
0700 and then when I like
0701 start notice what's going on
0702 I really like picture some stuff
0703 it wasn't right it
0704 just people just want to talk
0705 or whatever
0706 just want to talk.

In addition to being exposed to racial stereotypes associated with black male athletes, Kelly's initial exposure to the concept of racial discrimination was in the United States. While in high school, Kelly took a history class which featured videos on the Civil Rights Movement. Before this class, Kelly heard stories about slavery from his father. Also, while participating in a basketball camp in another country, he was told stories about how institutional racial discrimination was infused into the laws. In contrast, Kelly believed that race is not really emphasized in his native country. Kelly was surprised when he saw the films in his high school history class. The films helped Kelly to conceptualize the extent of social injustice.

Charles: 0535 So describe your earliest memory of race differences.

Kelly: 0536 I going say-

0537 I mean
0538 I know
0539 I went to a good school back home
0540 because my dad really is a /good educator/.
0541 He went to school in England.
0542 I know in school
0543 they tell us about all the stories,
0544 what was going on,
0545 how slavery started or whatever but
0546 we-
0547 I think back home we don't see that.
0548 We don't even look
0549 at that aspect of races and stuff
0550 but when I started experiencing race was when I came here.
0551 Now actually when I was in the southern part of a nonwestern country for
like basketball camp
0552 and then they tell us the story
0553 when how black people got to stay
0554 and the white people staying in this place
0555 and then for the black-
0556 in order for the black people to go
0557 where the white people were
0558 you have to have like a card
0559 or something,
0560 a pass something,
0561 it's a different story
0562 so that's when I experienced my /race/.
0563 But when I came here
0564 that's when I see like the picture
0565 and the whole thing
0566 and so I mean I don't really-
0567 it don't really bother me like that
0568 but it's just I think
0569 when I came here
0570 that's when I started experiencing the racism
0571 and I see the real picture and stuff

Charles: 0572 And that's when you came to high school,
0573 when you were

Kelly: 0574 Yeah when I came to high school in the United States.
0575 Taking history classes
0576 and watching films and stuff
0577 and I saw all that was going on
0578 and you know some students didn't even get along
0579 because they different races so

Charles: 0580 Did you get treated any differently?

Kelly: 0581 I didn't get treated-
0582 I mean I was /treated equal/.
0583 I know some people talk
0584 but that don't even get to me.
0585 I don't really-
0586 I just let people do their talking
0587 and whatever you want to say,
0588 it's not going to get to me.

Charles: 0589 Now were you caught off guard
0590 when you saw differences in race
0591 or experienced racism?

Kelly: 0592 /Did you say did I see the difference

Charles: 0593 Or did it
0594 surprise you?

Kelly: 0595 Yeah
0596 I was kind of shocked
0597 just because you know I saw-
0598 when I saw the real-
0599 because I never know about the
0600 I know about his story but I didn't,
0601 I never seen the film,
0602 but when I watch it in class,
0603 my history teacher,
0604 oh that's really touching
0605 and I saw like couple,
0606 some couple films
0607 and I saw that racism
0608 that's really big here.
0609 It really happened so

7.1.8.4 CAREER DEVELOPMENT TASKS

Kelly seemed to develop secure attachment relationships with his biological mother and father. He viewed his father and mother as being role models in his life. He lived with his biological parents until he moved to the United States during his freshman year of high school. As a result, Kelly felt safe in surviving his social environment. Kelly also developed a concern

about his future as a worker. Kelly's parents and older brother encouraged Kelly to participate in sports at the age of nine. His father pushed for soccer, while his mother preferred track. However, Kelly decided to play basketball. He was intrigued by the game once he saw his older brother practice with a basketball club team. Kelly's decision to play basketball demonstrated his ability to increasingly gain control over his vocational activities. His parents were supportive of his decision.

Kelly: 0270 I mean
0271 when I was younger-
0272 mean my mom used to run track
0273 when she was in high school
0274 and then when I was in school
0275 she always trying to make me run track
0276 but I never liked running track
0277 because it was just too much,
0278 just too much stuff
0279 and then my dad loves soccer.
0280 And he wanted me to play soccer
0281 so that's how I started playing soccer
0282 and so one I just came home
0283 and I told my dad
0284 and then my brother wanted me to play basketball
0285 so it's three,
0286 I had three stuff going on,
0287 so one day I told my dad
0288 you know I have love for basketball
0289 and I want to be a basketball player
0290 and he was like just go for it.
0291 Whatever you want to do
0292 in life just go after it
0293 so I was like alright
0294 and that's why I stick to basketball and

Kelly's perception of limited opportunities in his native country also influenced his decision to participate in basketball leagues. Kelly believed that there were limited opportunities for youth in his country to be successful. He emphasized that many youth could not afford to pay for a quality education. As a result, sport is viewed as an avenue to become successful.

Kelly: 0435 Yeah
0436 I think sport
0437 I think is the most important thing in my community
0438 because that's the only opportunity for the kids in my community
0439 use to be successful
0440 because one they can't afford-
0441 their parents can't afford schools
0442 and you know
0443 some people don't even know what school is.
0444 All they do is just /get up/
0445 and try to look for jobs
0446 and just business
0447 so they can have some money in their pocket.
0448 But sport is really big in my country
0449 because especially soccer
0450 that's the number one sport
0451 so a lot of kids growing up playing soccer
0452 you know every kid want to play soccer,
0453 want to be a soccer player.
0454 And then I think for me,
0455 being a basketball player in my community
0456 and coming over here,
0457 is like I think inspires a lot of kids right now
0458 just because they saw me here
0459 and they want to
0460 /just say/
0461 they want to be like me so

Charles: 0462 And you said that's kind of the only way for them
0463 to be successful?

Kelly: 0464 Yeah because that's the only opportunity
0465 we have right now
0466 because they don't go to school
0467 or their parents can't afford school
0468 so it's just

Although, Kelly used sport to access college, it is important to note that Kelly's family seemed to have a wealthy socioeconomic background. His father was elected a king of their community. Additionally, his father owned a petroleum gas company. As a result, Kelly felt comfortable

focusing on developing his basketball skills as a child and teenager and did not worry about finding a job for money.

Charles: 0839 Did you have any jobs
0840 when you were growing up?

Kelly: 0841 I never had no jobs.

Charles: 0842 So you kind of just focused on
0843 playing basketball?

Kelly: 0844 Yeah because
0845 I never needed /one/
0846 because my dad,
0847 my dad was-
0848 I mean he was-
0849 he was kind of wealthy
0850 then he fell off and then he-
0851 they gave him a /loyalty/,
0852 he was a /king/
0853 and he came back up.
0854 I mean
0855 I came here when
0856 he was a /king/
0857 and when I left back home,
0858 I never seen him
0859 before he passed away.

When Kelly lived in the United States, his host parents emphasized the importance of having a “Plan B” and not solely depending on basketball to become successful. They encouraged Kelly to use education as a way to create professional opportunities. Kelly became interested in the business field, particularly because of his biological family’s business ventures. Specifically, he wanted to be a “successful business man” like his father. Kelly’s father owned a petroleum gas company. Other relatives owned clothing companies and glass companies. As a result, Kelly decided to pursue a marketing degree at University X. Kelly’s host parents were

really involved with following up about his academic progress to ensure that Kelly was maximizing his academic experience in college.

Kelly: 0739 When I was young back home
0740 I wanted to be a soccer player
0741 just be a successful soccer player.
0742 It just came to a point where when you grew-
0743 the more you grow,
0744 it's like things changes
0745 and it's just different things just come to you
0746 sometimes you're confused
0747 and you don't know what to do
0748 and I decided I wanted to be a business man,
0749 a successful business man like my dad,
0750 and then when I started playing basketball,
0751 I wanted to be a basketball player
0752 and it's just changing.
0753 I came to the States
0754 and I was like I don't know what to do now,
0755 but I was like what am I going to do after my basketball career
0756 so I /need figure out what to do/,
0757 I need a plan B,
0758 and I came here and you know it was different story
0759 and you got to have a major
0760 and you have to use that after your basketball career
0761 so it was just different.
0762 The more you grew
0763 the more you use stuff coming into your life.
0764 You just have to be smart and make a good decision.

Charles: 0765 So what would be your plan B now?

Kelly: 0766 My plan B would probably be
0767 try my major economics so

Charles: 0768 So plan b is still to be a business man
0769 like your father?

Kelly: 0770 Yeah

Charles: 0771 Okay.
0772 Have you thought about what type of business
0773 you'd want to go into?

Kelly: 0774 Probably marketing

Charles: 0775 Was that influenced
0776 by the fact that your dad was in business?

Kelly: 0777 Yeah. and my family
0778 /owned a lot/ of business stuff so

Charles: 0779 What type of businesses
0780 does your family own?

Kelly: 0781 They do like gas stuff,
0782 clothing place,
0783 like glass place and stuff

Charles: 0784 And that's on your dad's side
0785 or your mom's side?

Kelly: 0786 That's my dad's side?

Charles: 0787 So the business stuff
0788 is all kind of on your dad's side?

Kelly: 0789 Yeah.

7.1.9 Larry's Narrative

7.1.9.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Larry's family lived in an urban city in the northeastern region of the United States. His mother worked entry level jobs at fast food restaurants including Wendy's and Roy Rogers. They lived in neighborhoods that were considered to be governmental public housing. Larry began playing organized sports through recreational leagues offered within his community. His uncle served as a basketball coach at the local community center. He viewed his cousins as brothers and played on their sports teams throughout childhood. During different periods of time, Larry and his mother lived with his grandfather when they needed support and housing.

In the ninth grade, Larry moved to a different city in the eastern region of the United States. He was offered the opportunity to attend a private Christian high school; which was predominately African American. Four recent NBA draft selections also played at the same high school. He lived with his basketball coach. Larry was honored with some of the most prestigious high school all-American awards. Larry earned an athletic scholarship to play basketball at University X and is entering his senior year. During his junior and senior year, he appeared in the starting line-up on a regular basis. He is currently seeking a bachelor in social sciences. Larry will be the first in his family to graduate from college.

7.1.9.2 DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

There are a variety of contextual variables that have influenced Larry's life. Larry was raised in an urban environment in the northeastern region of the United States. The assumption can be made that his family had limited financial resources. His mother, who provided the single income to the household, worked entry level jobs at fast food restaurants, including Wendy's and Roy Rogers. They lived in public housing, which Larry referred to as the projects. In addition, Larry is the first person in his family to attend college. His grandfather and uncle served as support systems for Larry and his mother. His uncle served as the basketball coach for the recreational teams throughout Larry's childhood. His grandfather provided Larry and his mother housing when they were in need.

Larry: 0088: My cousin's dad, you know,
0089: I just,
0090: he always was there for me when I didn't have stuff.
0091: He would help my mom out when I needed something,
0092: whatever like that.
0093: He also /took me to basketball/
0094: kept me doing that so that was good.

0095: And then my grandfather,
0096: he was just there for me,
0097: especially when we didn't have stuff like that,
0098: he was just give me money,
0099: give me and my cousins money,
0100: and stuff like that.
0101: He let me and my mom live at the house when we had nowhere to
live.
0102: We lived /there/ for free a few years or whatever until we found a
place.
0103: So I just look at the people like that
0104: who were always there for me,
0105: were always you know a positive influence on my life.

Throughout childhood, Larry utilized community resources including recreational centers within his community. He played organized basketball and football at his local community centers. While participating in sports was an outlet and positive resource in Larry's community, it seemed that Larry made the inference that he would have liked additional activities or resources to be offered.

Larry: 0030: I've just been playing in ever since I was little.
0031: You know, as a kid, especially growing up in like
0032: the area that I grew up in,
0033: urban area,
0034: the projects,
0035: that's pretty much all there is for kids to do is sports,
0036: football, basketball.
0037: And I played both when I was young.
0038: I was just playing it to have fun,
0039: playing with my friends.
0040: It was something that we did pretty much every day.

Growing up in an urban area influenced Larry to be very conscious of the experiences of youth living in similar situations. He believed that participation in sports plays a positive role and can be used as a tool to help youth change their living situation. Larry specifically mentioned that sports can be used as a way to "get out" of their community. This statement highlights his perspective that sometimes youth want or need to escape certain living situations by leaving their

communities to increase their chances of being successful. As a result, Larry and his mother decided that it was in his best interest to leave his community and attend a private high school.

This opportunity was made available because of his potential to be a good basketball player.

- Charles: 0221: Just describe the importance of sports in your community
- Larry: 0222: Okay. Sports in my community
0223: you know is very important
0224: because it's a way for a lot of kids to make it out of the community
0225: especially when you grew up in a bad area
0226: like me, myself, it was a way for me to get out.
0227: I was able to go to high school in a different area,
0228: different state, you know,
0229: being around positive people.
0230: And also you know it's an outlet for a lot of kids,
0231: just to stay out of trouble,
0232: stay off the streets,
0233: instead of going down the wrong path.
0234: So it definitely plays a major part in that as well.

Larry considered moving away from his family to attend a high school in a different state one of the major decisions in his life. His participation in basketball played a significant role in making this decision. He had a very close relationship with his mother and other family members such as his grandfather, uncle, and cousins, so this decision would involve Larry leaving his support network. The arrangements involved Larry living with his future high school coach. He viewed this decision as "taking a risk" that was necessary to be able to help provide for his family.

- Larry: 0291: The first major decision it influenced was me leaving my home state
0292: and going to a different state,
0293: leaving my family and my mom back at home,
0294: going out there on my own
0295: with a total stranger that I didn't even know that well,
0296: I was able to take that risk and it worked out for the most part.
0297: And it also you know changed my perspective on life
0298: and my ability as far as looking at my ability with basketball and

0299: how far I could take it, how far it could go with it,
0300: how far I can run with it or whatever,
0301: as far as life, can make a career out of it.
0302: Take it seriously.
0303: Was able to go to college out of it.
0304: Look at my future out of it.
0305: How I'm going to be able to provide for my family because of it.

His life experiences have influenced Larry to relate to the stories described in the lyrics of hip-hop music.

Larry: 0170: but hip-hop plays a major role /in my life/
0171: it's all I've been listening to all my life.
0172: It's what I listen to before every game,
0173: throughout the day,
0174: in the like when I'm in the car,
0175: I mean it's pretty much a part of your life.
0176: Part of the lifestyle that you live also.
0177: And you also can relate to some of the stuff people talk about.

Charles: 0178: What are the things you can relate to?

Larry: 0179: You know like when people talk about growing up in the poverty area,
0180: you can see yourself,
0181: like yeah he's talking about me.
0182: If you grew up in the same area like that, single parent home,
0183: didn't have nothing to eat you know,
0184: /nights/ and stuff like that, didn't have a lot of money.
0185: Being around certain people,
0186: individuals, from the neighborhood that wasn't always good,
0187: great influences and things like that.

Growing up in an urban area also has motivated Larry to want to help youth within similar communities. He is planning to help build community capacity and provide outreach to youth who are in need.

Charles: 0410: Okay. And what do you want to do after your basketball career is over?

Larry: 0411: /I just you know/ want to go back and help kids,

0412: you know, in my community and other communities
0413: who like grew up with the same type of background that I did
0414: and didn't really have much and may have nobody to come talk to,
0415: didn't have mentors in their neighborhood.
0416: I just want to go back and help kids in that aspect
in that area.

Larry will be the first person from his family to graduate from college. He described how he used basketball to be to pay for the expenses related to attending a four year university. He mentioned that he would not have been able to afford to attend college if he did not receive an athletic scholarship. He is very proud that he is able to pursue a college degree. He attributed this accomplishment to work ethic and dedication. As a result, Larry believed that he has created an opportunity to provide for his family.

Charles: 0122: And how does that make you feel being the first generation college student?

Larry: 0123: Feels good.
0124: Feels great
0125: especially for me to be the first one.
0126: Definitely good, shows you know
0127: that I strived to be good, be great with what I did,
0128: was able to use basketball to get into college.
0129: It also feels good to make my mom proud.
0130: /to be able to go to college when she didn't have to pay for that/.
0131: If it wasn't for basketball,
0132: I probably wouldn't have been in college
0133: because I wouldn't have been able to afford it.

Charles: 0134: Alright. And so how does that influence kind of your outlook on basketball?

Larry: 0135: I think it influences it because
0136: it proves to me that you know anything is possible
0137: if you just work hard at it.
0138: So you basketball you have to work hard,
0139: you got to be great,
0140: work hard every day and you'll be good in basketball;
0141: your skills will get better.
0142: And it also helped me you know,

0143: go hard in basketball and I'll be able to provide for my family.
0144: that's how I looked at it.

Charles: 0145: Got it. So that's kind of like your motivation.
0146: Go hard for your family,
0147: to provide for your family?

Larry: 0148: yeah.

7.1.9.3 IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Larry's athletic role seemed to be an important aspect of his life. He contributed gaining access to college as result of his ability to develop skills related to basketball. He will be the first person in his family to graduate from college and highlights that playing basketball at a high level in high school presented this opportunity. Larry believed that he would not have been able to afford college if he did not receive a scholarship.

Charles: 0122: and how does that make you feel being the first generation college student?

Larry: 0123: Feels good.
0124: Feels great
0125: especially for me to be the first one.
0126: Definitely good, shows you know
0127: that I strived to be good, be great with what I did,
0128: was able to use basketball to get into college.
0129: I also feels good to make my mom proud.
0130: /to be able to go to college when she didn't have to pay for that/.
0131: If it wasn't for basketball,
0132: I probably wouldn't have been in college
0133: because I wouldn't have been able to afford it.

Larry understood that most people need to work extremely hard at developing their basketball skills in order to play at the NCAA Division I level. As a result, he placed a lot of time and energy into developing his basketball skills. His motivation towards being great in basketball has its foundation in Larry wanting to provide for his family.

Charles: 0134: Alright. And so how does that influence kind of your outlook on basketball?

Larry: 0135: I think it influences it because
0136: it proves to me that you know anything is possible
0137: if you just work hard at it.
0138: So you basketball you have to work hard,
0139: you got to be great,
0140: work hard every day and you'll be good in basketball;
0141: your skills will get better.
0142: And it also helped me you know,
0143: go hard in basketball and I'll be able to provide for my family.
0144: that's how I looked at it.

Larry also seemed to be very conscious of perceptions of African American athletes. His consciousness offers insight into how race may be of high salience for Larry. He believed that he is viewed differently on campus compared to students who do not participate in varsity sports. Larry believed that people critique the actions of African American athletes more so than other students. Larry described how African American athletes are perceived by other people as being “flashy” and having access to certain “privileges.” He believed that often times these views are misconceptions and invalid.

Charles: 0323: Tell me the story of how being a Black male athlete has affected your life

Larry: 0324: It's affected my life in /many ways/
0325: because I'm looked at different.
0326: I've got a closer eye on me
0327: especially with being a black athlete,
0328: because a lot of black athletes are known to be flashy
0329: or like not great people.
0330: I mean I'm not going to say bad all the way,
0331: but just not great people.
0332: As far as like at first a lot of black athletes wasn't accepted in the sport,
0333: so it makes you look different.
0334: And then being an athlete itself,
0335: you know,

0336: makes us look different as far as school because people think that
0337: we get certain privileges and things like that,
0338: which is pretty much not true all the time,
0339: but for the most part it's not true,
0340: so we're pretty much regular students
0341: but we're looked at different in the eye of we have a closer watch
on us.
0342: We're not allowed to do certain things that regular people would
be able to do.

Charles: 0343: Okay. How does that make you feel?

Larry: 0344: I mean in a way makes me feel bad that I'm just characterized as a
0345: black athlete because I'm just a regular person,
0346: just like anybody else.
0347: There are certain things that regular people do that I wish I could
0348: do but I can't
0349: because I'm looked at closely under a magnifying glass.
0350: There are a lot of things I got to watch what I do, watch what I say
0351: and things like that.

Larry believed that other stereotypes related to African American male athletes are that they don't work hard and are not intelligent. These stereotypes made Larry upset because he believed that he was intelligent and was committed to doing well in school.

Charles: 0371: What stereotypes are associated with being a black male college athlete?

Larry: 0372: Don't do your work.
0373: Not really that smart.
0374: You get everything handed to you.

Charles: 0375: And how do those stereotypes make you feel?

Larry: 0376: Me individually,
0377: it makes me feel kind of mad, upset
0378: that people would think that when they don't really know
0379: because I am smart,
0380: otherwise I wouldn't be here.
0381: And I do my own work,
0382: regardless of what people say, I do my own work
0383: on my own so

Larry was asked to describe what makes him proud of his racial or ethnic background. He mentioned that he was proud of African American males who are in college. He mentioned that historically there has not been large numbers of this group to attend college. He was also proud of having the first African American president.

Charles: 0360: Okay. Describe what makes you proud of your racial or ethnic background.

Larry: 0361: I'm proud to be as far as my ethnic background,
0362: just to be in college
0363: because like just being a Black male in college
0364: in the beginning those numbers weren't high
0365: so I'm glad to be a part of that.
0366: Also to be a black man in society today,
0367: when we have our first black president.
0368: I'm proud to be a part of that.

Charles: 0369: Is there anything that you're not proud of or ashamed of in terms of being a Black male?

Larry: 0370: No, not really.

Hip-hop culture has also influenced Larry's identity development. He mentioned that he can relate to the stories described in the lyrics of the hip-hop songs. Stories of overcoming poverty, living in an urban area, and having a resilient mother who sacrificed for her family resonated with Larry. Other people within Larry's community also listened to hip-hop music. He remembered hearing hip-hop music playing from homes and cars when walking down the streets of his neighborhood. Hip-hop has influenced Larry's preference in style of clothing and getting tattoos.

Charles: 0151: how has hip-hop music and culture influenced you?

Larry: 0152: It influenced me a lot because
0153: growing up where I grew up,
0154: that's all I listened to.

0155: I mean that's pretty much
0156: what you hear walking down the street, your house,
0157: watch it on TV,
0158: everybody you're around,
0159: that's about it,
0160: you got friends that do it,
0161: just for fun you listen to it,
0162: as far as fashion,
0163: that's where you get your clothes,
0164: that's how you get the trend that clothes are in,
0165: how I dress and stuff like that.
0166: And also you know,
0167: as far as me having tattoos
0168: and stuff like that,
0169: it's also a trend from like hip-hop and basketball,
0170: but hip-hop plays a major role /in my life/
0171: it's all I've been listening to all my life.
0172: It's what I listen to before every game,
0173: throughout the day,
0174: in the like when I'm in the car,
0175: I mean it's pretty much a part of your life.
0176: Part of the lifestyle that you live also.
0177: And you also can relate to some of the stuff people talk about.

Charles: 0178: What are the things you can relate to?

Larry: 0179: You know like when people talk about growing up in the
poverty area,
0180: you can see yourself,
0181: like yeah he's talking about me.
0182: If you grew up in the same area like that, single parent home,
0183: didn't have nothing to eat you know,
0184: /nights/ and stuff like that, didn't have a lot of money.
0185: Being around certain people,
0186: individuals, from the neighborhood that wasn't always good,
0187: great influences and things like that.

Charles: 0188: Okay, and you feel like obviously you can relate to it,
0189: do you feel like a lot of athletes can relate to hip-hop culture?

Larry: 0190: I think for the most part a lot of athletes
0191: you know can relate to hip-hop,
0192: especially you know black athletes.
0193: You know, most of us come from urban areas.
0194: We listened to it,
0195: grew up around it.

The role models in Larry's life influenced his decision to dedicate a large amount of time developing his basketball skills. His uncle was his coach in elementary at the recreational leagues in his community. As a result, he was introduced to the game at an early age by his uncle. Eventually, he lived with his high school basketball coach. Larry's high school coach taught him about national recruiting rankings and other "business" aspects associated with earning an athletic scholarship at a NCAA Division I institution. This inspired Larry to take developing his basketball skills very seriously.

Larry: 0240: Ninth to my senior year,
0241: I moved to a different state,
0242: an area in the eastern US
0243: I went to a private school
0244: It was like a small, private Christian school.
0245: I lived with my basketball coach.
0247: He pretty much taught me a lot about the game.
0248: Taught me a lot about the business aspect of the game,
0249: introduced me to a lot of people,
0250: talked to me you know about a lot of recruiting things like that,
0251: colleges he pretty much was the reason I took basketball serious as
0252: far as trying to find a way to go to colleges free
0253: and you know all that stuff.
0254: Because before I moved to a different state,
0255: I didn't really take basketball serious.
0256: I was just playing it to play it.
0257: Like I never knew about like AAU and all that other stuff until I
moved down there.
0258: So he pretty much,
0259: you know, is the reason why I'm here today as far as like being in
college
0260: and stuff like that.
0261: And he's like the reason I became real good
0262: because he had me working had every day.
0263: Practice he told me go hard, everybody I go against go hard, go at
them.
0264: All those guys are ranked up ahead of you
0265: and you probably can pass them if you just go at them.
0266: And that's what I did.

Larry viewed his mother as serving as a role model. He respected her sacrifices and resilience. He respected her struggle to provide him throughout his childhood.

Charles: 0072: So tell me the story about your role models,
0073: how did role models influence your life when you were younger?

Larry: 0074: Pretty much just
0075: my mom
0076: because she always worked hard or whatever
0077: trying to provide for us because we didn't have much,
0078: but she always did her best.
0079: She always stayed strong for us,
0080: even though when we didn't have stuff and things like that
0081: she still would find a way,
0082: make a way for us you know
0083: stay strong
0084: when it /get down or whatever/.
0085: She worked hard when I was young,
0086: two jobs or whatever,
0087: when I was young to provide for us.

As a result, one of main priorities is to be able to give back to his mother.

Charles: 0452: Rank your top three priorities in life and explain why.

Larry: 0453: Be successful.
0454: So I won't have to go back to struggling like I did when I was younger.
0455: Be able to help my mom.
0456: Be able to get her anything she wants.
0457: Graduate.
0458: From college.

Charles: 0459: So help you mom is number two, and then graduate from college?

Larry: 0460: yeah.

The previously discussed contextual variables have influenced Larry's development of an athletic identity, his worldviews about race and ethnicity and affiliation with hip-hop culture. As a result, Larry's perceptions of social roles that society has assigned and ascribed are also influenced. When asked about his top three roles in life, Larry offered the following response:

Charles: 0465: What would be your top three roles in life then?

Larry: 0466: be a good student,
0467: good basketball player,
0468: and a good mentor, teacher.

Charles: 0469: Who do you mentor?

Larry: 0470: I mean right now,
0471: I don't specifically mentor nobody
0472: but I just know people look up to me as far as being a basketball player.

Larry believed that his top three social roles are being a good student, a good basketball player and a good mentor. Throughout the interview he described how basketball and school could provide an opportunity to provide for his family. Larry clearly has accepted the responsibility of helping his mother. He respected her resilience and sacrifice in taking care of him as a child. Additionally, he embraced the concept of helping people living in vulnerable situations, particularly people living in impoverished areas. Accordingly, he viewed being a mentor as a social role. These factors have shaped his vocational identity and career aspirations to help his community.

Larry: 0504 Well outside
0505 just accomplish my goals,
0506 be able to go back to my community and help,
0507 as far as taking like,
0508 majoring in social work even,
0509 that degree, taking the classes that could help me.
0510 As far as how would I be able to go back and help them,
0511 what would I be able to help them with,
0512 just some of the theories and stuff that you learn.
0513 Why people act a certain way or do certain things.

Charles: 0514 So taking the classes, having that knowledge base

Larry: 0515 Yeah.

7.1.9.4 CAREER DEVELOPMENT TASKS

When Larry was in elementary school, he wanted to be a firefighter. This decision was influenced by his interactions with firefighters who spoke on career days at his elementary school. This career aspiration gives insight into Larry's accomplishing of the career task of becoming concerned with his future as a worker. It seemed that Larry developed secure attachment relationships with his mother, grandfather, and uncle. As a result, he was able to form a positive conception of himself.

Charles: 0390: Describe your career aspirations and what you wanted to do when
0391: you were in elementary school and
0392: then middle school and when you were younger.

Larry: 0393: when I was younger, I wanted to be a firefighter.

Charles: 0394: And why did you want to be a firefighter?

Larry: 0395: I don't know.
0396: I think I just wanted to ride on the truck.

Charles: 0397: And was this like elementary?

Larry: 0398: yeah

Charles: 0399: And these are like people you saw in your neighborhood?

Larry: 0400: Plus you know in elementary you always got them coming to the
school,
0401: talking and stuff like that

Charles: 0402: So they came to the school.

Their family seemed to believe that Larry would have a better opportunity of being successful if he moved to a different state and attended a private high school. This opportunity was made possible because of his potential to develop into a special basketball player. Based on developing a secure attachment relationship with his mother, Larry was able to leave his family

at an early age and attend high school in a different state. Consequently, basketball became a major focal point and driver for his career aspirations in high school.

Larry: 0406: Yeah when I moved out,
0407: once I started playing basketball for real it just changed.
0408: I knew that was what I wanted to do.
0409: Play basketball.

Charles: 0410: Okay. And what do you want to do after your basketball career is over?

Larry: 0411: /I just you know/ want to go back and help kids,
0412: you know, in my community and other communities
0413: who like grew up with the same type of background that I did
0414: and didn't really have much and may have nobody to come talk to,
0415: didn't have mentors in their neighborhood.
0416: I just want to go back and help kids in that aspect in that area.

Charles: 0417: And you're pursuing what degree?

Larry: 0418: Right now, social work

Larry developed motivation to help build community capacity with vulnerable populations. This motivation was fueled by his experiences as a child. He was interested in providing resources for youth to be able to pursue their dreams, specifically through mentorship. As a result, he decided to pursue a bachelor degree in social work. He was interested in learning about theories and developing skills to be able to the communities he is so passionate about.

Charles: 0498 Describe the strategies
0499 you have considered
0500 for accomplishing your career goals
0501 and you can do for basketball,
0502 but I also wanted to know for accomplishing career goals outside
0503 of playing basketball.

Larry: 0504 Well outside
0505 just accomplish my goals,
0506 be able to go back to my community and help,
0507 as far as taking like,
0508 majoring in social work even,

0509 that degree, taking the classes that could help me.
0510 As far as how would I be able to go back and help them,
0511 what would I be able to help them with,
0512 just some of the theories and stuff that you learn.
0513 Why people act a certain way or do certain things.

Charles: 0514 So taking the classes, having that knowledge base

Larry: 0515 Yeah.

Larry seemed to have found a fit between his vocational identity and career aspirations. He pursued a degree that aligns with his passion of helping people. What is not clear in the interview is whether he searched broadly over various professions to narrow his decision.

7.1.10 Leland's Narrative

7.1.10.1 Background Information

Leland lived in various cities in the eastern region of the United States. His father worked for different banking companies. The family eventually settled in the northeastern region of the United States. Leland and his family lived with his great-grandparents on his mother's side of the family for seven years, starting when Leland was nine years old. While living with his great-grandparents, Leland shared a bedroom with his two siblings. His mother taught Leland academic lessons daily through home schooling for the 4th through 8th grades. The day would begin with spiritual devotion by reading scripture from the Bible. Subsequently, Leland learned core academic subjects, including math, English and science. Leland's father helped with math lessons since he had a master's degree in business administration. His mother focused on English and the social sciences. They had desks in their basement where lessons were taught. Periodically, exams were proctored by the home schooling agency in the area.

Leland began playing basketball at the age of seven. His father was his first coach for a team in the YMCA recreational league. The teams were composed of boys and girls. As a result, Leland was teammate of his brother and sister. As Leland grew older, he began playing for a travel basketball team. The players were expected to raise money to offset costs associated with uniforms and travel to tournaments. During the ninth grade, Leland attended a high school with other students. During his eleventh grade year, Leland transferred to a different school in another state. He began playing for a travel team that was sponsored by Nike when he turned sixteen. In 2011, Leland earned an athletic scholarship to University X. During the study, he was taking the prerequisite courses to gain acceptance into the College of Business Administration at University X.

7.1.10.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Leland's father eventually earned a master's degree in business administration. Although Leland did not discuss his socioeconomic status during the interview, his father's education indicated that they were possibly in a middle class family. His mother attended college but did not complete a degree. However, when living with his great-grandparents, Leland slept in a bedroom with two siblings. This indicated that the family may have been more aligned with a working class socioeconomic status. Leland mentioned that living with his great-grandparents was a good experience because it gave him a sense of "not having much" growing up.

Leland: 0005 Okay. My dad, he worked for a
0006 number of different banking companies,
0007 like a national bank in a major city
0008 We lived here for I think three four years
0009 and then we moved to different parts up and down the East coast
0010 until finally we settled in a city in the eastern region of the US.
0011 And that's where my- we lived with my great grandparents,

0012 my mom's great grandparents.
0013 And we lived with them for –
0014 and we lived with them for seven,
0015 with my great grandparents for seven years
0016 and you know it was a good experience for me
0017 because they gave me a sense of what it's like to not have much
0018 you know what I'm saying,
0019 because we lived in two bedrooms,
0020 me, my dad- my mom and my dad had one room,
0021 excuse me,
0022 my mom and my dad had one room to themselves
0023 and then me,
0024 my brother and my sister had one room to ourselves
0025 and at the time we were smaller of course,
0026 I wasn't seven feet tall. I was big

Leland's parents were instrumental in developing his worldviews. He viewed his parents as role models. Leland viewed his parents as being supportive and also providing a foundation for his spiritual beliefs. He credited his parents with helping to build a relationship with Christ. Leland is involved in home schooling, so he interacted with his mother for long periods of time on a daily basis.

Leland: 0202 My dad was like my biggest role model
0203 because basically he played college and high school basketball
0204 and like that was the basketball portion,
0205 but like in the life portion
0206 he was like the real disciplinary factor in my life.
0207 Then in combination with my mom,
0208 they just showed us a lot of love,
0209 showed us to have your own personal relationship with Christ
0210 by doing five years of homeschool.
0211 So I was really close with my mom and dad
0212 and just like my dad he was always there
0213 when like I was getting picked on by other people.
0214 He was there to pick me up
0215 and tell me it was it's nothing to worry about,
0216 it's no big deal.
0217 He would refer to a scripture in the Bible.
0218 That was special.
0219 That would really pick me up and increase my faith and stuff.

Leland described how his daily lessons during homeschooling began with a scripture reading and daily devotion. His father had a strong background in math, so he helped Leland develop math skills, while his mother focused on English and social sciences.

Charles: 0244 Okay.
0245 Talk about your experience with homeschooling.
0246 How was that?
Leland: 0247 It was basically
0248 a way for me to
0249 build my personal relationship with God
0250 because we started the day off with
0251 devotion so my mom
0252 she would give her testimony.
0253 And then she referred to a scripture
0254 and then after that we'd go straight into our lessons
0255 and do Math, English and all of that,
0256 all the core stuff,
0257 and we refer to a proctor or something

Leland's spirituality will be discussed further in the identity development section of this chapter. His community offered resources for youth; including YMCA recreational leagues. Leland was able to participate in youth basketball leagues. His father was his basketball coach. Leland's brother and sister were teammates.

Charles: 0085 Okay.
0086 Next questions.
0087 Just tell me the story of how you were introduced to basketball.
Leland: 0088 Okay.
0089 I first started playing basketball when I was seven.
0090 And we started out in YMCA rec leagues with my dad
0091 he was my first coach.
0092 And I remember losing the rec league championship.
0093 My dad he was like kicking over the chairs.
0094 He was so frustrated.
0095 That's when my dad was really into sports
0096 before he started dying down
0097 because he was still yelling in front of the TV at the NFL games.
0098 "What are you doing?"

0099 he was into sports.
0100 That's what got me into sports you know,
0101 just his excitement and his enthusiasm.
0102 So yeah he was my first and my brother and my sister were on the team
too.
0103 It was a co-ed rec league with the YMCA.
0104 It was a co-ed rec league for youngsters.
0105 And me, my brother, and my sister were on the same team
0106 and my dad was the coach,
0107 and I got a photo to prove it too.

Leland's relationship with his great-grandparents spurred a sense of respect and admiration for the elderly. He lived with his grandparents for seven years. Before his great grandmother died, they spent time together building a relationship. They played board games and Leland learned life lessons from his great-grandparent's experience.

Charles: 0071 And you learning that from your great grandmother?
Leland: 0072 Yeah.
0073 And of course from my sister and my mom.
0074 But yeah she helped too though.
0076 as far as like taking a liking and respect to old, elders and stuff.
0077 Like I feel like I was always going to her
0078 because I was interested in what she had to say.
0079 And even my grand-pop,
0080 you know, just going to him and picking his brain
0081 so like I've always like you know, I was attracted to older people
0082 outside of my grandparents
0083 just to pick their brain and see what knowledge they have
0084 cause they have more experience.

Leland seemed to be sensitive to issues around bullying. He appreciated his father offering spiritual guidance when he was being bullied.

Leland: 0202 My dad was like my biggest role model
0203 because basically he played college and high school basketball
0204 and like that was the basketball portion,
0205 but like in the life portion
0206 he was like the real disciplinary factor in my life.
0207 Then in combination with my mom,
0208 they just showed us a lot of love,

0209 showed us to have your own personal relationship with Christ
0210 by doing five years of homeschool.
0211 So I was really close with my mom and dad
0212 and just like my dad he was always there
0213 when like I was getting picked on by other people.
0214 He was there to pick me up
0215 and tell me it was it's nothing to worry about,
0216 it's no big deal.
0217 He would refer to a scripture in the Bible.
0218 That was special.
0219 That would really pick me up and increase my faith and stuff.

When asked about speaking out against social injustice, he mentioned that he advocated for his high school peers who were being bullied. He was also conscious of his personal tactics for avoiding situations with peer pressure. In high school, he used playing video games an alternative activity.

Charles: 0577 Describe a situation in which you've spoke out of fought against
injustice
0578 to yourself or someone else.

Leland: 0579 Let me see.
0580 There's a lot of times that it happened,
0581 I can't remember them all.
0582 They're kind of running into each other.
0583 Let me see.
0584 They're just all small instances like
0585 when somebody's getting made fun of
0586 you know, this mainly happened in high school.
0587 I would lean towards that person and try to back them up,
0588 you know,
0589 and some of my other friends would jump in to
0590 and help him out.
0591 When people come at me and try to tempt me to do something
0592 you know I would say no a nd then I would kind of go off and do
something else
0593 like play video games was big for me,
0594 as far as bringing me away from other,
0595 bad situations
0596 because like I would go over people's house
0597 and like is there anything we can do as far as video games
0598 or just game boards,

0599 board games excuse me, stuff like that.
0600 That's what I gravitated to when I was like being tempted
0601 or /struggled/ like that.
0602 And like when I speak out,
0603 I spoke out,
0604 I don't really speak out a lot,
0605 I just be quiet and just try to find a way around it.
0606 That's like my tactic.
0607 Sometimes there are instances where I do have to speak out
0608 and sometimes you have to step on a few toes to get your point
across.
0609 I'd rather show my actions
0610 than speak out.

Leland seemed to begin developing lasting friendships with peers outside of siblings once he began attending high school. He did not remember many of his friends from his childhood, while he stayed in contact with friends from high school. His lack of lasting friendships with his peers from childhood may be related to Leland's participation in homeschooling. Leland didn't interact with a peer group in a school setting. He played organized sports at recreational leagues and was friends with the children of his parents friends.

Charles: 0346 trying to take a step back a little bit,
0347 to the homeschooling,
0348 do you feel like,
0349 how did that affect friendships with other kids and stuff like that?
0350 How did you make your friends and stuff like that?

Leland: 0351 We would interact with the other homeschools.
0352 But I would say it was a lot less than the school environment,
0353 socialization wise
0354 so like the transition from like homeschool to high school
0355 it was a lot different you know.
0356 I mean we were raised to be very kind and gentle and outgoing
0357 by our parents
0358 so like as soon as we jumped that gap we were good.
0359 We made friends
0360 and everything was cool.

Charles: 0361 So you made more friends kind of in like high school?

Leland: 0362 Than homeschool

Charles: 0363 But you also interacted with

Leland: 0364 See for example,
0365 I don't even remember my homeschool friends.
0366 I remember most of my high school friends and everything.
0367 I still talk to them on Facebook.

Charles: 0368 High school friends

Leland: 0369 Yeah high school friends

7.1.11 Lonnie's Narrative

7.1.11.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Lonnie's entire family lived in a large city in the northeastern region of the United States. The majority of his relatives, including aunts, uncles and cousins, attended the same public elementary, middle and high schools in his neighborhood. Lonnie's grandparents were respected by residents in his neighborhood and they were known for helping community members when in need. His grandparents also cooked large meals and invited community members to share in the meal with their family. Although Lonnie's mother and father did not stay in a relationship, Lonnie had a good relationship with his father before his father died. Lonnie and his father played basketball in the neighborhood parks. Lonnie's father passed away when Lonnie was in the fourth grade. Lonnie did not have a relationship with many of his father's children. Lonnie described how he saw 13 names listed as his siblings in his father's obituary, but only kept in contact with six of his siblings.

Lonnie developed a strong relationship with his older cousin, who is three years older than Lonnie. Due to his mother's work schedule, Lonnie spent a lot of time with his older cousin

and aunt. Lonnie considered the relationship with his older cousin to be similar to a brotherhood. At an early age, they played basketball together at the courts in their neighborhood. Lonnie's mother decided to have Lonnie transfer to a boarding school in the eighth grade. He lived at the boarding school and attended classes on Mondays through Fridays. On the weekends, Lonnie continued to spend time with his older cousin. His boarding school incorporated after school programming for its students. Students were engaged in study table and other constructive activities. Lonnie's residential counselor coached Lonnie through basketball workouts as his afterschool activity.

The residential counselor also coordinated basketball leagues for students at the boarding school. When Lonnie was in the eighth grade, he was invited to try out for an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) team. Another student who played for the league coordinated by his residential advisor asked Lonnie if he wanted to try out for the AAU team. After joining his summer AAU team, Lonnie began to travel to various tournaments and camps. He also developed a close relationship with his AAU coach. When Lonnie was 13 years old, his older cousin began to have negative encounters with law enforcement. His cousin was first arrested when he was 16 years old.

Lonnie continued to excel at basketball. He was only the second player in his high school to earn four all-state honors. He participated in prestigious high school All-American camps. Lonnie decided to transfer to another boarding school in a different state at the conclusion of his junior year of high school. The new president of his boarding school implemented new policies. The new policies included a revised dress code and restrictions related to students having tattoos. During a meeting with Lonnie's mother and the president of the school, Lonnie confirmed that he was uncomfortable with remaining at the school. He eventually earned an athletic scholarship

to University X. During the study, he was completing his freshmen year was undecided on an academic major.

7.1.11.2 DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXUAL FACTORS

Lonnie's geographical community seemed to play major role in Lonnie's life experiences. The neighborhood has crime and potential negative influences. Lonnie described how fights between rival neighborhoods were the norm. He also mentioned that gun violence was associated with his neighborhood. As a result, there seemed to be a need for youth living in Lonnie's neighborhood to find constructive activities. Lonnie gravitated toward playing basketball. Lonnie mentioned that playing basketball in AAU leagues gave him the opportunity to travel for the majority of the summer, which allowed Lonnie to be away from his neighborhood and stay out of trouble.

Lonnie: 0621 I think it was important for me
0622 because it took me away from-
0623 from all the drugs and everything
0624 that was in my neighborhood-
0625 all the violence
0626 and all that,
0627 and all the like because
0628 I'm- around my way is like I'm from 52nd street
0629 so it's like people from 60th street-
0630 I don't really mess with them like that.
0631 And there's a lot of fights
0632 sometimes people get shot-
0633 and when I first started playing basketball
0634 I wasn't home
0635 so it was like
0636 I was hearing stuff that happened
0637 but I'm like dang
0638 I could have been right there,
0639 but it was like as I kept playing
0640 it was like-
0641 it was less and less time that I was home
0642 so it was keeping me out of trouble.

Lonnie spent a lot of time playing basketball at the local courts with his older cousin. Lonnie and his cousin developed a close relationship. Lonnie viewed the relationship with his cousin to be similar to that of a brother. Lonnie and his cousin created the nickname “the two sharp boys.” The boys wrote their nicknames on the basketball courts in the neighborhood. Lonnie’s cousin eventually got into legal trouble at the age of 16 years old and was arrested.

Lonnie: 0088 Yeah me and my cousin,
0089 he’s locked up right now,
0090 used to always-
0091 like we had a curfew,
0092 I just-
0093 because my mom used to work
0094 so I used to stay with my aunt
0095 and my cousin was more like my brother,
0096 so we used to just go to all the courts
0097 around the neighborhood
0098 and play around with the other kids and the older guys.
0099 I really started taking it serious-
0100 well he started taking it serious before I did.
0101 I went to go watch a couple of his games.
0102 He was good.
0103 I could see myself doing that
0104 like one day playing ball serious,
0105 but then he-
0106 my cousin got caught up on the streets.
0107 He took the drug route,
0108 but- and my mom sent me to a boarding school
0109 and she introduced me to a man who worked at the school
0110 that was my residential advisor
0111 and you know the school was so small
0112 and middle school we didn’t really have a team
0113 so he had like his own little league
0114 just for like students
0115 and I just fell in love with basketball from there.

Charles: 0116 So when your cousin-
0117 you were kind of playing ball with your cousin,
0118 at what age was that?

Lonnie: 0119 I was like ten through like thirteen, fourteen.
0120 We used to call ourselves the /two sharp boys/.
0121 We used to write it everywhere too,
0122 on all the courts.

Lonnie's mother was aware of the potential dangers and negative influences of their neighborhood. His mother's awareness is demonstrated in the decision to have Lonnie attend and live at a boarding school throughout the week. Although, there were negative influences in his community, residents in his neighborhood attempted to be a positive influence towards Lonnie once they saw he had potential to be good in basketball at the collegiate level. If his neighbors saw Lonnie sitting on steps, they would encourage Lonnie to go and practice to develop his basketball skills at the local recreation center. The community also emphasized that they were proud of accomplishments and potential, which Lonnie describes as "showing love."

Lonnie: 0678 In my city I know,
 0679 yeah, basketball is important in my city.
 0680 That's all everybody talk about is either Meek
 0681 or basketball
 0682 or a cheesesteak or something,
 0683 but in my neighborhood,
 0684 basketball it wasn't,
 0685 nah it's not important at all.
 0686 In just my little neighborhood,
 0687 that's why like so many people
 0688 in around my way showed me love
 0689 and they like proud of me
 0690 and like they see me
 0691 like I can be chilling on the steps or something
 0692 like on the bad block
 0693 but they-
 0694 they'll /feel some type of way about that/.
 0695 They'll want me to go to the gym or something.
 0696 That was when I was younger.
 0697 They was just trying to tell me
 0698 like you don't need to be on this block right now.
 0699 That's why I just spent most of my time at the rec center.

Lonnie's mother raised the family with limited financial resources. So the importance of basketball was emphasized when she sacrificed paying some of the household bills in order to

send Lonnie to a basketball camp in San Diego, California. Lonnie heard his mother crying on the phone because she was stressed over the decision.

Lonnie: 0190 I remember my mom,
0191 she wanted me to go to this camp-
0192 well coach wanted me to go to this camp,
0193 but it was in San Diego
0194 and my mom didn't really have the money.
0195 She didn't have the money to send me.
0196 I just remember her on the phone crying
0197 with my uncle saying how she didn't pay one of the bills
0198 so she could send me to the camp
0199 and me and my mom's relationship from when I was younger,
0200 it wasn't that good,
0201 but I just remember her on the phone
0202 and like crying and saying telling her uncle how much she loved me
0203 and how much she didn't think I would be grateful,
0204 so ever since that day
0205 I just-
0206 I've been playing basketball for my mom
0207 for real.

Lonnie also had support from his grandparents. His grandparents were positive figures in his community. Lonnie noted that his grandparents would cook and invite members of the neighborhood to share with their family. His grandparents would also allow people live with them if they were in need. Lonnie admired his grandparents and viewed them as being his role models. Many residents in his neighborhood viewed his grandfather and grandmother as roles models. This allowed for Lonnie to be known within his community because he was associated with his grandparents. As a result, community members recognized Lonnie for being associated with his grandparents and having talent in playing basketball.

Lonnie: 0322 I always looked up to my grandma
0323 and my grandpa.
0324 My grandpa,
0325 he was like the strongest man that I knew.
0326 He was like-
0327 I don't understand how he was so nice to everybody all the time,

0328 but it was like he never was mad.
0329 If he had it /
0330 you had it/.
0331 He'd cook for the whole neighborhood
0332 like it wasn't just the family.
0333 He cooked for the whole neighborhood.
0334 If you needed somewhere to stay,
0335 he'd let you stay there.
0336 I mean just people from the neighborhood.

Charles: 0337 So that made you kind of look up to him?
0338 That's something that you want to do?

Lonnie: 0339 Yeah everybody like-
0340 my neighborhood is big,
0341 but it's like everybody in the whole neighborhood
0342 looked up to my grandpa.

Charles: 0343 How did that make you feel?

Lonnie: 0344 I mean sometimes
0345 it made me feel accepted.
0346 It's like everybody already knew who I was
0347 when I walked around the neighborhood.
0348 I mean my grandma,
0349 she was like the same.
0350 Everybody knew who my grandma was.
0351 She was always,
0352 I mean my grandma was always there for me
0353 when I was going through a problem with my mom.
0354 She would always take my side,
0355 but then she passed away
0356 and my mom went through it
0357 so I was trying to be strong for my mom.

7.1.11.3 IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Lonnie seemed to have developed a strong athletic identity. Basketball has always been an important activity in his life. Until Lonnie was in the fourth grade, he played basketball at the playgrounds with his father. This helped to build a strong relationship with his father.

Charles: 0072 Oh your /pop's/ from there?
0073 Okay.
0074 When did your dad pass?

Lonnie: 0075 When I was in 4th grade.
Charles: 0076 Did you have like a relationship with him
0077 up until that point?
Lonnie: 0078 Yeah, we was real close.
0079 I mean him and my mom weren't together,
0080 but I used to always see him
0081 and we'd go shoot around at the courts
0082 and all that.

Subsequently, after his father passed away, Lonnie began to play basketball at the courts in his neighborhood with his older cousin. He watched his older cousin play basketball for school teams and Lonnie was inspired to “take basketball seriously.” Basketball seemed to be used as a tool to develop relationships with important people in his life.

Charles: 0083 And that can kind of transition into the next question.
0084 If you could kind of just tell me the story
0085 about how you were introduced to basketball,
0086 you know,
0087 all the way up to kind of where you're at now.
Lonnie: 0088 Yeah me and my cousin,
0089 he's locked up right now,
0090 used to always-
0091 like we had a curfew,
0092 I just-
0093 because my mom used to work
0094 so I used to stay with my aunt
0095 and my cousin was more like my brother,
0096 so we used to just go to all the courts
0097 around the neighborhood
0098 and play around with the other kids and the older guys.
0099 I really started taking it serious-
0100 well he started taking it serious before I did.
0101 I went to go watch a couple of his games.
0102 He was good.
0103 I could see myself doing that
0104 like one day playing ball serious,
0105 but then he-
0106 my cousin got caught up on the streets.
0107 He took the drug route,
0108 but- and my mom sent me to boarding school
0109 and she introduced me to a man who worked at the school
0110 that was my residential advisor
0111 and you know my school was so small

0112 and middle school we didn't really have a team
 0113 so he had like his own little league
 0114 just for like students
 0115 and I just fell in love with basketball from there.
 Charles: 0116 So when your cousin-
 0117 you were kind of playing ball with your cousin,
 0118 at what age was that?
 Lonnie: 0119 I was like ten through like thirteen, fourteen.
 0120 We used to call ourselves /two sharp boys/.
 0121 We used to write it everywhere too,
 0122 all the courts.

Eventually, he developed a close relationship with his AAU coach. Lonnie viewed his coach as a mentor.

Lonnie: 0164 Yeah I played AAU I think 8th grade,
 0165 started in 8th grade.
 0166 Somebody from the little league,
 0168 somebody from the league
 0169 he was in my class
 0170 and he played AAU for the for this team.
 0171 He asked we did I want to play.
 0172 He took me to the practice
 0173 and he introduced me to the coach
 0174 The coach that's like my mentor.
 0175 He put a lot of guys in D-I colleges.
 0176 He knows a lot of guys in the pro's
 0177 so a lot of guys through the city
 0178 I mean they play for the team
 0179 or another AAU team in the city.

In addition to using basketball to help develop relationships with his father, older cousin and AAU coach, basketball was seen as a constructive activity to help keep Lonnie out of trouble. Playing AAU basketball offered safety because if Lonnie wasn't practicing, he was traveling to tournaments. Traveling to tournaments allowed Lonnie to leave his community. His AAU coach would also invite Lonnie and his friends to stay at his home to give them a break from the stressors within their community.

Lonnie: 0621 I think it was important for me
0622 because it took me away from-
0623 from all the drugs and everything
0624 that was in my neighborhood-
0625 all the violence
0626 and all that,
0627 and all the like because
0628 I'm- around my way is like I'm from 52nd street
0629 so it's like people from 60th street-
0630 I don't really mess with them like that.
0631 And there's a lot of fights
0632 sometimes people get shot-
0633 and when I first started playing basketball
0634 I wasn't home
0635 so it was like
0636 I was hearing stuff that happened
0637 but I'm like dang
0638 I could have been right there,
0639 but it was like as I kept playing
0640 it was like-
0641 it was less and less time that I was home
0642 so it was keeping me out of trouble.
0643 And like my AAU coach
0644 they knew how it was,
0645 where I stayed at,
0646 and he would like-
0647 I would stay up there sometimes
0648 just have like a couple of my friends
0649 and my cousin come up to his house
0650 so it wasn't that far.
0651 You know my city is not that big-
0652 it's big
0653 but you know it's not that big,
0654 so people would come up there
0655 and just chill with me.
0656 He didn't want me in no trouble.
0657 And then when I did get in trouble,
0658 my mom wouldn't let me play so-

When Lonnie attended the boarding school beginning in the eighth grade, he was given the opportunity to play basketball as his after school activity with his residential advisor. Once again, basketball was associated with being a positive activity and the importance of his participation was reinforced by people who were in supportive roles. In addition to being

exposed to basketball at an early age, Lonnie also received positive recognition for playing by community members and family members. Once Lonnie began to receive city and state basketball honors, community members would encourage Lonnie to work on his basketball skills at the recreational centers instead of sitting on the porch and hanging out with friends. Community members mentioned that they were proud of Lonnie for his basketball talent. Members from his father's side of the family began to reach out to Lonnie to get connected.

Lonnie: 0379 Yeah that definitely did.
0380 I remember
0381 like before I started playing basketball,
0382 I didn't know nobody.
0383 Like outside of where I stayed at,
0384 like my neighborhood,
0385 I didn't hang with nobody
0386 except like my cousin
0387 and you know just people from around the way.
0388 And then there was like maybe 9th grade
0389 when I start-
0390 when people in the city start
0391 like my name start buzzing around the city
0392 and just seen like people just was coming out of nowhere.
0393 It was like family members
0394 that I never,
0395 like my dad's side of the family.
0396 I don't know anybody.
0397 I don't know my grandma.
0398 I don't know my uncles,
0399 my aunts.
0400 I just know my two sisters
0401 and my little brother.
0402 And it was like when I started playing ball serious,
0403 it was like everybody wanted
0404 to come around and be a part.
0405 It was like I don't know.
0406 My mom always told me
0407 because I was-
0408 once my dad's side of the family
0409 started trying to come around,
0410 I was I mean just talking to them
0411 and like everything was cool,
0412 but my mom she warned me

0413 like people going to come out of nowhere
0414 when you start being successful,
0415 when you start doing successful things
0416 so I mean I seen a lot of people come out of nowhere,
0417 like people that I've seen,
0418 like people that I've seen
0419 wouldn't never say nothing to me,
0420 especially girls.
0421 I mean
0422 I've seen girls-
0423 I ain't even going to talk about that.

Lonnie viewed Allen Iverson as a celebrity role model. Lonnie related to Allen Iverson because he was a small guard in the NBA. The city backed Iverson since he played so well and was the main superstar on his NBA team.

Lonnie: 0365 I just-
0366 Allen Iverson was my role model.
Charles: 0367 Why was he your role model?
Lonnie: 0368 I was never so big
0369 like the other basketball players,
0370 he just was the same.
0371 He just showed me just small-
0372 small guards can still make it to the NBA.
0373 Once I started playing ball serious,
0374 that's all I wanted to do was play in the NBA.

Lonnie was also conscious of public perception of how athletes are viewed. He believed that the media helps to reinforce the idea that athletes receive special privileges that are not afforded to others. These privileges include special treatment by educators and authority figures. Although he did not provide a specific example as to how the media perpetuates this stereotype, he provided an example of how students in his high school subscribed to this view of athletes. In his example, he described how students viewed his high school math teacher as giving him additional assistance during class because he was an athlete.

Lonnie: 0562 I think
0563 the media think that
0564 like a lot of athletes have it easy.

0565 They don't really,
 0566 they don't really understand how much you have to put in
 0567 to get to this point.
 0568 I think,
 0569 I think a lot of people just
 0570 yeah that's it.
 0571 I just think that the media think it's a cakewalk.
 Interviewer: 0572 Have you-
 0573 like have you heard it?
 0574 Do they say it directly
 0575 or they say it kind of indirectly?
 Lonnie: 0576 Nah like-
 0577 I don't know how to word it,
 0578 but I know a lot of people don't think
 0579 that athletes should get the
 0580 - get recognized like we should,
 0581 or get as much praise as we should,
 0582 but I know some people think that we get special privileges.
 0583 In high school,
 0584 everybody thought that I had a special privilege.
 0585 That wasn't the case at all.
 0586 I wish I knew what a special privilege felt like
 0587 in high school.
 Charles: 0588 How did you feel like-
 0589 why do you feel like people in high school
 0590 thought that you had special privileges?
 Lonnie: 0591 Because I know like
 0592 I would stay after talk to my teacher.
 0593 Like my math teacher,
 0594 I had problems with math
 0595 and I was close to my math teacher
 0596 so we like developed a relationship
 0597 and she would like-
 0598 I would go to her in the middle of class
 0599 while she at her desk
 0600 and she would help me with my work,
 0601 but people just took that as
 0602 oh he,
 0603 that's Lonnie,
 0604 like she just up there doing his work for him.
 0605 That's what a lot of people in the school thought
 0606 that she just did my work.
 Charles: 0607 And she was really just helping you
 Lonnie: 0608 She was really just helping me.

Lonnie described other stereotypes associated with collegiate athletes as people viewing athletes as being ignorant, promiscuous sexually, and not being serious academically. Lonnie viewed these perceptions as being invalid.

Charles: 0839 What stereotypes
0840 are associated with being a Black male
0841 collegiate athlete?
Lonnie: 0842 Stereotypes?
0843 That we're not smart.
0844 That we have multiple women.
0845 Don't do schoolwork.
0846 There's a couple.
0847 That all I can think of right now.
Charles: 0848 Okay.
0849 How do those stereotypes make you feel?
Lonnie: 0850 I don't think they're true.
0851 I mean as far as not doing work,
0852 I mean that's up to you.
0853 I mean
0854 I know plenty of athletes
0855 that could have went to school for academics.
0857 As far as athletes being not smart
0858 I think it all depend on who the athlete is.
0859 As far as having multiple women,
0860 it depend on who you is too,
0861 but when people see you play
0862 and they see you on TV,
0863 of course girls going to fall for you.
0864 That's just how the world is.
0865 Don't matter if you're an athlete,
0866 you could be a singer,
0867 a rapper.
0868 Once you-
0869 it's like yeah
0870 once they see you on tv
0871 and see that you got a shot of being successful-
0872 I don't think it has anything to do with basketball.

Factors that influenced Lonnie's racial identity included his neighborhood and interaction with students at a rural boarding school during his senior year of high school. Lonnie grew up in a predominately African American community until he entered his senior year of high school.

His only interaction with people of different ethnicities, particularly European Americans, was as authority figures and business professionals. European Americans with which Lonnie interacted included teachers and principals. Lonnie interacted with Asian Americans at the local convenience stores. His first regular interaction with peers of different races was when Lonnie transferred to a boarding school in a rural area of state that was different than where he was raised. The school was predominately white.

Lonnie: 0740 I didn't know it was like that out there.
0741 I talked to /Deon/ from a division I university.
0742 He told me a whole-
0743 he told me some totally different-
0744 that it was poppin and all this like college.
0745 Having parties and all that.
0746 I got there and- I got there,
0747 man,
0748 it was a whole another story.
0749 It was- it was just people that was-
0750 nobody in that school was like me.
0751 It was like everybody was different,
0752 so it was like-
0753 I got used to talking to people that weren't the same as me.
0754 It was like,
0755 I never really been around white people before
0756 I think that got me ready for University X
0757 because at University X there's a lot of white kids.
0758 And I didn't really know how to interact with them
0759 before I went to my second boarding school.
0760 I think that prepared me for University X.
Charles: 0761 Prepared you for University X?
0762 Got it.
0763 So you're transitioning to each of my questions.
0764 I want to transition to talking about race a little bit.
0765 Describe like your earliest memories of like differences
0766 between races.
Lonnie: 0767 I mean,
0768 I really never
0769 met a white person
0770 unless it was my teacher
0771 or like my principal
0772 like I said until last year.
0773 I never really looked at white people any type of way

0774 or Asian people any type of way,
0775 I just never came into contact with them.
0776 Only like type of Asian people that I saw
0777 was like at the store working.
0778 So it was like my neighborhood was just all black.
0779 And then like every neighborhood I ever lived in was all black.

Lonnie mentioned that this experience helped him prepare for attending his current college, which is predominately white. During this experience, he gained insight on communicating and interacting with different cultures. Before this experience he did not realize some of the commonalities in interest and how people of different ethnicities behaved in a similar way.

Charles: 0780 So when you moved to that school in a different state,
0781 that was kind of your first time interacting people of different race
0782 on a regular basis.
0783 Talk-
0784 What did you learn for that or
0785 talk about that experience.

Lonnie: 0786 I mean
0787 I know I had to talk to them different.
0788 They didn't really understand me.
0789 I talked a lot of slang in high school.
0790 So it was like I had to talk more proper
0791 when I talk to them.
0792 It was like-
0793 At the new school,
0794 they was cool
0795 because I would try to talk like them sometimes
0796 and they would try to talk like me sometimes
0797 so it was cool.
0798 It was a good experience.
0799 That was a good experience.

Interviewer: 0800 You said that helped you prepare for University X.
0801 So kind of talk about that a little bit.

Lonnie: 0802 Because I mean
0803 I always though like around black people
0804 you had to act a certain way,
0805 but it's like nah white people act just like black people,
0806 so it's like I got more comfortable
0807 being around white people.

Interviewer: 0808 So it was a good experience.

Lonnie: 0809 Yeah.

Lonnie also noted that hip hop culture and celebrity culture have influenced his life. Lonnie believed that hip hop culture influenced his decision in getting amount and type of tattoos. It also influenced preference in clothing. Lonnie did not feel that hip hop music and culture influenced his worldviews and opinions.

Charles: 0542 Kind of switching gears a little bit,
0543 how has hip hop music and culture influenced you?
Lonnie: 0544 That's all I listen to.
0545 I don't really-
0546 well I listen to R&B too.
0547 I don't really know how it influenced me.
0548 I don't know.
0549 I guess you can say my tats.
0550 Tattoos
0551 or the way I dress.
0552 Yeah, I definitely watch and see what on the video,
0553 and see what one of the rappers is wearing.
0554 Yeah mainly with me,
0556 it just influenced my fashion.
Charles: 0557 And has it influenced how you see the world?
0558 Or anything like that?
Lonnie: 0559 No.

7.1.11.4 CAREER DEVELOPMENT TASKS

Lonnie's mother had work responsibilities, which called for Lonnie to live with his aunt and cousin. Lonnie mentioned that he did not have a good relationship with his mother when he was young. Lonnie wanted to build a relationship with his mother that was similar to the relationship that his cousin had with his aunt. Lonnie also went to boarding school in the eighth grade, which meant that he was away from home during the week. Lonnie recalled hearing a phone conversation where his mother was frustrated because she wanted to send Lonnie to a camp in California. His mother did not have the money to send Lonnie, so she sacrificed paying a bill. His mother not only described being frustrated at her financial situation, but also

mentioned that she didn't feel that Lonnie would be grateful. Overhearing this conversation was an instrumental experience for Lonnie. He was hurt because he thought that he displayed his appreciation for his mother. Additionally, this experience was influential because at that point he dedicated his efforts in playing basketball to help his mother.

Lonnie: 0190 I remember my mom,
 0191 she wanted me to go to this camp-
 0192 well coach wanted me to go to this camp,
 0193 but it was in San Diego
 0194 and my mom didn't really have the money.
 0195 She didn't have the money to send me.
 0196 I just remember her on the phone crying
 0197 with my uncle saying how she didn't pay one of the bills
 0198 so she could send me to the camp
 0199 and me and my mom's relationship from when I was younger,
 0200 it wasn't that good,
 0201 but I just remember her on the phone
 0202 and like crying and saying telling her uncle how much she loved me
 0203 and how much she didn't think I would be grateful,
 0204 so ever since that day
 0205 I just-
 0206 I've been playing basketball for my mom
 0207 for real.

Charles: 0208 So you overheard the conversation and that hit home

Lonnie: 0209 She still don't know to this day
 0210 that I heard her conversation.

Charles: 0211 And she was just saying she didn't know if you were grateful
 0212 for kind of the
 0213 what she was going through?

Lonnie: 0214 yeah because when I was young,
 0215 me and my mom,
 0216 we weren't close.
 0217 She was always at work
 0218 and I was always you know
 0219 with my cousin
 0220 and we just never really bonded,
 0221 but I took upon myself to get a relationship with my mom.
 0222 I seen the relationship that my cousin had with his mom,
 0223 and I had that relationship with her too,

0224 but I wanted that with my own mom.

Charles: 0225 So when you heard
0226 you know
0227 your mom on the phone
0228 saying she wished she could send you to this camp
0229 and that you weren't grateful,
0230 how did that make you feel?

Lonnie: 0231 I mean it just made me feel sad,
0232 a little bit sad.
0233 A little bit angry.
0234 I mean I thought I was a grateful kid.
0235 I didn't really ask for a lot from her,
0236 but she-
0237 I mean she been through a lot with all her kids.
0238 My little sister,
0239 I mean they still go through a lot to this day.
0240 She calls me so
0241 I can kind of mediate
0242 so I think that experience helped me grow as a man.

Restraints in his relationship with his mother may have influenced his attachment relationship with his mother. Lonnie's father passed away when Lonnie was in the fourth grade. This may have influenced his indecisiveness about a career in elementary school. Lonnie may have been more concerned about survival and securing basic needs.

Lonnie: 0921 Elementary school.
0922 I don't know what I wanted to be in elementary school.
0923 I know teacher used to ask.
0924 I used to probably just say like a fireman or something,
0925 just make anything up.
0926 In middle school,
0927 that's when I started watching basketball more,
0928 it was like I just wanted to play in the NBA.

Lonnie may have developed insecure attachment relationship with his mother, but seemed to develop secure attachments with his aunt (his cousin's mother). As a result, he seemed to develop a future orientation. Lonnie is also inspired to build a positive relationship with his

mother, similar to the relationship that his cousin had with Lonnie's aunt. Lonnie began to develop career concern in middle school.

Lonnie was optimistic about playing basketball. Basketball was an important activity in Lonnie's life. He played basketball to build relationships with his father, cousin and eventually his AAU coach. Playing basketball also allowed him to stay out of trouble and have relief from the violence in his neighborhood. As a result of the time spent playing basketball, his skills really developed, and he began to be recognized for his talent. Lonnie received city and state recognition in basketball awards and honors. Lonnie related to the NBA superstar, Allen Iverson. Allen Iverson was a small guard who excelled at basketball. Iverson came from a poor background. Iverson wore tattoos and hip hop clothing, so Lonnie could relate to the NBA superstar. Lonnie inspired to play basketball in the NBA once he enters middle school.

Charles: 0360 Okay.
 0361 So and you also mentioned that you had
 0362 some role models that might have been celebrities
 0363 or that you didn't know personally,
 0364 who were those?

Lonnie: 0365 I just-
 0366 Allen Iverson was my role model.

Charles: 0367 Why was he your role model?

Lonnie: 0368 I was never so big
 0369 like the other basketball players,
 0370 he just was the same.
 0371 He just showed me just small-
 0372 small guards can still make it to the NBA.
 0373 Once I started playing ball serious,
 0374 that's all I wanted to do was play in the NBA.

As Lonnie developed basketball skills, people reinforced the idea that Lonnie needed to continue to develop his basketball skills. Community members encouraged Lonnie to work out

when they saw Lonnie hanging out with friends on his porch. His family on his father's side began to connect with Lonnie. He began to receive college recruitment letters. Basketball influenced decisions he made around education.

Charles: 0710 tell me the story about how basketball
0711 influenced major decisions you made in life.

Lonnie: 0712 It influenced my college decision.
0713 And then it influenced,
0714 it influenced the high school that I graduated from
0715 because I could have easily just went to West
0716 and played.
0717 My mom,
0718 she didn't want me around there,
0719 but basketball just really influenced my decision on school
0720 and my education.

Lonnie's mother encouraged Lonnie to pursue his dream of playing basketball professionally. Lonnie did not feel comfortable with following advice from many people. His mother was one of the few people that Lonnie trusted. His mother advised Lonnie to work hard if playing basketball was his professional aspiration. Lonnie and his mother did not discuss careers outside of playing basketball professionally. Additionally, Lonnie did not have jobs growing up. His main concern was developing his basketball skills. As a result, Lonnie did not explore a broad range of careers outside of playing basketball professionally.

Charles: 0935 So currently
0936 who do you depend on to help you make decisions
0937 about a professional career?

Lonnie: 0938 My mom
0939 and just my mom.

Charles: 0940 That's the main person you trust on that one?

Lonnie: 0941 Yeah I don't think it's good to have
0942 a whole bunch of different opinions
0943 in your ear

Charles: 0944 Okay.
0945 What advice has she given you?

Lonnie: 0946 I mean
0947 she just she just told me
0948 if NBA's really my dream,
0949 just keep working hard
0950 and don't do- don't do nothing to jeopardize it.
0951 Don't put nothing before it.
0952 When you're on the court,
0953 just give it your all.
0954 Play hard.
0955 And never give up.

Charles: 0956 Have you guys talked about
0957 careers outside of the NBA?

Lonnie: 0958 Nah.
0959 Not really.

Charles: 0960 Did you have any jobs growing up?

Lonnie: 0961 Nah.

Lonnie's main priorities in college were his family, basketball, and school. Lonnie believed that his experience with basketball would help in pursuing a career after his professional career has concluded and help in developing life skills. Particularly, Lonnie mentioned that his experiences with basketball have taught him how to be loyal, which is a very important value for

Lonnie.

Lonnie: 0972 I mean basketball
0973 it just –
0974 basketball taught me to be a loyal person.
0975 When I was playing with-
0976 I played with my AAU team,
0977 and we weren't,
0978 when I was playing,
0979 we was kind of broke.
0980 It was like
0981 only tournaments I was playing was local

0982 and like Philly, Delaware, Jersey, New York.
0983 It as like
0984 somebody else on my team,
0985 he didn't think he was getting publicity
0986 that he deserved
0987 or whatever you want to call it,
0988 so he left and he went to go play with a different team,
0989 and that team,
0990 that's like our rival
0991 but it's like a real rival
0992 like we don't like them.
0993 And my coaches don't like their coaches
0994 and he went to go play with them
0995 and my coach I seen-
0996 probably he was one of our best players
0997 and our coach he was like-
0998 he was like upset,
0999 sad,
1000 because he treated us like his own kids
1001 like fed us all day and all that
1002 and he went to go play with the enemy,
1003 but then when that didn't work out
1004 and he tried to come back,
1005 and I seen it
1006 and my coach doesn't hold grudges.
1007 He let him come back,
1008 but I seen it in the other players
1009 and other players' faces.
1010 We talked-
1011 didn't really-
1012 wasn't really feeling that.
1013 So like can't always just go where who's winning.
1014 You got to ride with-
1015 you got to ride with your team.
1016 Win or lose.
1017 Can't be just bandwagon,
1018 just hopping team to team.
1019 That's what I /understand/.
1020 Playing with my AAU team
1021 taught me to be loyal to the people that's loyal to you.
1022 And don't go for coaches telling you they promise you sneakers
1023 and gear and all that,
1024 just ride out with your team.

Interviewer: 1025 So loyalty is the big thing.

Lonnie: 1026 Yep.

Interviewer: 1027 How will your experiences with sports
1028 help once your basketball career has ended?

Lonnie: 1029 I mean like loyalty.
1030 Loyalty is deeper than basketball.
1031 You got to be loyal in whatever you do.
1032 You got to be fully committed.
1033 You can't be in a relationship with your wife
1034 and not be loyal,
1035 not be loyal to her,
1036 have kids with her and not be loyal to your family.
1037 So I think loyalty is a big thing to me.
1038 I think if-
1039 I just think that will help me as a man.

During the study, Lonnie was completing his freshmen year and undecided on an academic major.

7.1.12 Marcus' Narrative

7.1.12.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Marcus' parents were born in a city on the west coast of the United States. They attended a large public university. Marcus' father was a member of the university's varsity men's basketball team. Towards the end of their college career, his parents gave birth to Marcus. After graduating from college, Marcus' father began working for a soft drink company, and after earning a promotion with the company, the family moved to a different city in the western part of the United States. While in this city, Marcus' mother began a master's degree related to health care administration. Marcus' mother is currently a high school English teacher. She also teaches courses at a junior college. Marcus' father has been working with the same company for over twenty years.

Marcus played basketball on the varsity high school basketball team. He earned a partial academic scholarship to University X. When arriving on campus, he volunteered with the varsity men's basketball team as a student manager. He eventually earned a roster position on the team as a player. During his career at University X, Marcus earned a bachelor degree in economics and went on to pursue a master's degree in the School of Business while playing basketball for his final year of competition. The subsequent narrative describes the contextual and identity development factors that have shaped behaviors and decisions made by Marcus.

7.1.12.2 DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXUAL FACTORS

Marcus' parents' socioeconomic level and educational background seem to have created educational standards and expectations for Marcus. Both parents graduated with an undergraduate degree, while his mother earned a master's degree. Marcus mentioned that his grandparents on his mother side of the family also emphasized the importance of education. After emphasizing that his main role models were family members including his parents and grandparents, Marcus was asked about the lessons learned from these individuals. His response is as followed:

Marcus: 169 Well they said do as best,
 170 always be the best in the classroom.
 171 Always,
 172 well my grandpa, he would always say like
 173 because he was real athletic when he was younger too,
 174 so he was like training,
 175 he was real into training and preparation
 176 kind of, that's on the sports side,
 177 and on the education side, my mom's side,
 178 my great grandparents just the education.
 179 Always striving to be the best, always push yourself,
 180 always have a goal in mind. Have a clear goal in mind.
 181 And in working, do what you have to do to get there.
 182 It was clear.
 183 There was never no grey area.

People who were significant in Marcus' life emphasized the importance of education. This encouragement helped to motivate Marcus to excel academically at an early age. In particular, Marcus highlighted how his mother's side of the family was particularly instrumental in stressing the importance of education. Other developmental contextual factors that affected Marcus include participation in sport as being a staple in his family. His father had an extraordinary basketball career in college, which included being inducted into the university's hall of fame. Marcus was introduced to basketball by his father at very young age. The following narrative describes how Marcus watched his father play pick-up basketball games and referee basketball games.

Marcus: 121 I was introduced at a young age.
 122 My dad played
 123 my dad played so.
 124 My dad played all sports
 125 but he did basketball that was his best
 126 and I can remember ever since I was young just always going with him
 127 and he would go play pick up
 128 and he would referee games.
 129 I was always surrounded by
 130 always thinking I was great
 131 I was going to be the next you know NBA star.
 132 I love basketball but he put me at a young age
 133 so I was always playing

Marcus' grandfather on his father's side of the family was very athletic when he was younger. Marcus described how his grandfather would emphasize the importance of training and preparation. As a result, Marcus seemed to be able to develop a balance between academic and athletic development at an early age. Growing up in a suburban area near a large city in the western part of the United States, Marcus mentioned that sports were very important in his community. He also mentioned that sports are important in the African American community.

Marcus: 400 Um growing up

401 since most of my childhood was in a state in the western part of the
country and my adulthood here
402 I would say sports are huge.
403 They are pretty big.
404 But only like the great athletes
405 like the great high school athletes are recognized.
407 They're not going to follow.
408 Baseball was a big sport in my state.
409 I would say in the African American community
410 sports is huge.
411 Basketball, football.
412 It's the way people express themselves.
413 The way people escape from wherever they're doing.
414 They do it to have fun.
415 Everybody.
416 It's a culture kind of thing I would say.

In subsequent sections, I expand on the connection between the significance of sports on Marcus' identity development, but the importance of sports in his geographical community also can be considered a contextual developmental factor that influenced his values, worldviews, and interests in sports.

7.1.12.3 IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Marcus' development of a strong athletic identity has been influenced by multiple factors. As mentioned in the previous section, Marcus was exposed to multiple sports at a very young age. Equally as important is the influence of his role models. His most influential role models were his parents and grandparents. Although Marcus mentioned that public figures served as role models, his family served as the chief role models. He spent time bonding with his father through sports. In addition, his grandfather used sports to teach life lessons such as knowing the importance of training and preparation. Since Marcus viewed his father and grandfather as role models, he imitated desirable qualities that they displayed. One of the desirable qualities exhibited by his father was a commitment to athletics.

While Marcus was encouraged by his family to participate in sports, recognition for his performance by community members also influenced Marcus to value sports. As Marcus received recognition from his peers for his talents related to playing basketball, he was inspired to continue to play organized sports. It inspired him to want to continuously improve and be the best. It seemed to have reinforced the message that sports were important.

Marcus: 264 It drove me to want to keep playing.
265 I would definitely say that.
266 I would definitely say
267 um wanting to be a star
268 to be the best player like I could be
269 and being recognized for that, it kind of keeps you wanting to play.
270 You got to get that thirst for the fame
271 and the people liking you.
272 A lot of my friendships are based on the fact that
273 I was good at basketball
274 and I was on the team.
275 It definitely makes you want to strive
276 to keep working being good.
277 It's one thing to keep playing
278 and to be that guy.
279 It drives you.

Marcus seemed to be very conscious about how race has impacted his life. As discussed previously, Marcus viewed sports as being important to the African American community. He described sports as serving various functions in the African American community including being a way to be expressive, utilizing sport as an escape and having fun. He also emphasized that there is an expectation for African Americans to have an association with sports, particularly basketball, football and baseball. His racial identity has also been influenced by his role models, who are family members. When asked how his role models influenced him, Marcus replied with the following segment of a narrative:

Marcus: 141 When I was younger most of my role models were
142 like my grandparents,
143 like my grandpa my dad's side.

144 Because I would always be over there
 145 just hearing the stories.
 146 Hearing his lessons that he was teaching me
 147 and my great-great-grandparents on my mom's side.
 148 I would always go over there
 149 and he was.
 150 They just passed away last year,
 151 but he just taught me about just like all the Civil Rights
 152 all the great Black men that go unheard of.
 153 Told me stories just about everything
 154 he was so knowledgeable about everything.

Marcus emphasized "great" Black men in his response. Marcus also seemed to be proud of the idea that his grandfather was one of the first African American police officers in their community. Marcus grew up in suburban neighborhoods and attended predominately White schools. As a result, he connected hip hop culture with being a representation of something different from the norms within his suburban community. Marcus viewed hip hop culture as a way to express his identity. He connected hip hop culture with being affiliated with African American culture. Particularly, Marcus viewed hip hop culture as giving him a sense of racial identity.

Marcus: 285 Um well I know growing up
 286 that's the that's kind of
 287 that's the only genre I was listening to.
 288 I don't really know how it influenced me.
 289 Maybe what I saw on TV that's how I would dress
 290 or that's how I would want to present myself to my friends kind of
 291 and like actually I rap a little bit.
 292 Like freestyle.
 293 I've also made friends out of the whole music and rapping and doing all
 294 that stuff so
 Charles: 295 So it's like a social thing
 Marcus: 296 yeah
 297 it's like a social thing.
 298 Kind of
 299 helps you identify yourself as a Black man
 300 really cause I grew up most of my life been around mostly white people.
 301 Growing up in the suburbs so
 302 it kind of gives yourself a sense of identity and like pride yeah

303 the rapping.
304 I can rap all the words
305 I know what they're talking about
306 and like you guys don't really.
307 That kind of sets me apart you know.
308 Yeah some I just used to keep my sense of like Black,
309 being Black.

In another stanza of the narrative, he associated “real” hip hop with African American culture.

Marcus: 343 The real.
344 Cause I feel like there's a real hip hop culture
345 and then there's the type that white people see,
346 ya know.
347 I had a good sense of the real hip hop culture
348 because ya know I had family
349 I could talk about it with.
350 I had my Black friends,
351 I could talk about it with them.
352 And everybody else, they accepted it.

Marcus viewed hip hop as a safe place to relate to other African Americans in high school, but he also viewed knowing the lyrics of the songs as a means for gaining social capital. Additionally, Marcus used basketball as an avenue to gain social status among his peers in a predominately white school and living in a suburban neighborhood. This was a tool to transcend race and also connect with a social group.

Marcus: 320 every Black kid has their time where they're
321 like a Bill Cosby episode.
322 Someone says a racist comment or something
323 but they don't know what they're saying.
324 They don't mean it
325 but it was great.
326 I've always been embraced,
327 because I was playing basketball, I was talented, I was outgoing.
328 I've always been accepted everywhere I've been at.
329 Like I've never really been pushed away
330 or excluded from anything
331 or um never felt different.

332 I mean I felt different in the sense of me having something that nobody
 333 else has not necessarily me being different and not accepted.
 334 Like I've always been accepted wherever I'm at.
 335 I've always be accepted. Had a bunch of White friends.
 336 Had friends of all types.
 337 It's never really held me back.
 338 It's only pushed me forward.
 339 I've used it to push me forward.
 340 Instead of holding me back.

Marcus was not only able to use sport to make friends and build relationships, but also, he was able to stand out in a positive manner. The combination of having an outgoing personality and excelling athletically helped Marcus create friendships in high school.

Marcus: 493 um it's made me
 494 stand out from my peers in a good way.
 495 Made me stand out
 496 you know being an athlete,
 497 being a black male athlete at an all-white school being the best player
 498 being a good guy that makes you
 499 I'm not trying to toot my own horn
 500 but I'm a good guy being respectful being outgoing accepting other people
 501 for who they are
 502 being funny and everything like yeah

Marcus' responses to questions about stereotypes associated with African American male athletes highlight that he was aware of possible negative perception of this group. But he emphasized that he was determined to disprove those perceptions.

Charles: 514 What stereotypes are associated with being a black male collegiate athlete?
 Marcus: 515 uh
 516 I would say arrogant.
 517 Uh lazy in the classroom.
 518 Womanizer.
 519 Um.
 520 Dumb.
 Charles: 521 How do these stereotypes make you feel?
 Marcus: 522 Uh.
 523 They make me want to work to change that.
 524 Kind of inspired me to
 525 show people that there is another side.

526 There's another spectrum of students.
527 Like some, a lot of them are true.
528 I'm not going to lie.
529 In some cases that is true
530 but uh makes me want to work to change that perception so when people
531 meet me I'm not just somebody in that stereotype.
532 There are people out there who do take their education seriously. They're
533 here not just to play sport they're here mainly for education furthering
534 their career goals

Towards the latter portion of the interview when asked about his top roles, Marcus mentioned that one his roles was being a “positive male black role model.”

Marcus' athletic and racial identity development has been influenced by multiple factors. These factors have led Marcus to strive for “greatness.” He mentioned the desire to be recognized for greatness through athletics. He noted that his role models informed him about “all the great black men that go unheard of.” When asked how he wants his life story to conclude, he responded that he wanted be remembered as a “great man.” Marcus' desire to be great is also reflected in his vocational identity. Marcus eventually attempted to acquire information about the self and about occupations to construct a career.

7.1.12.4 CAREER DEVELOPMENT TASKS

According to career construction theory, the developmental tasks associated with the growth stage include 1) developing concern for one's future as a worker, 2) increasing control over vocational activities, 3) forming conception about making educational choices, and 4) acquiring confidence to implement these choices (Savickas, 2002). Marcus seemed to sufficiently accomplish these tasks between the ages of 4 to 14. It seemed as if Marcus was able to develop secure attachment relationships with his parents and grandparents. As a result, he

seemed secure to explore the world. He has demonstrated a sense of optimism about his vocational future.

During elementary and middle school, Marcus wanted to be a professional basketball player. He was exposed to basketball at an early age, and his role models had success in the sport. He developed skills that were as good if not better than the peers in his neighborhood. Marcus' professional aspirations are described in the following discussion.

- Marcus: 548 When I was in elementary school, I wanted to be NBA.
549 I wanted to be a professional athlete in NFL
550 or something.
551 I wanted to be a professional athlete.
552 There were no if, ands, or buts what I was doing.
553 Definitely what I'm doing.
- Charles: 554 How did that come about?
- Marcus: 555 just from playing basketball, being the best out there
556 when I'm younger.
557 Watching NBA being obsessed with it.
558 I wanted to be great.
559 I wanted to be the next Jordan.
- Charles: 560 what about middle school?
- Marcus: 561 Um middle school I still was professional athlete.
562 Professional basketball
563 I would say.
564 I knew like in my head, like when you're young you think you can do everything.
565 I want to be a doctor, astronaut, but like I was main my main thing was sports, basketball.

Optimism to accomplish the lofty task of playing professional basketball was nurtured by the secure attachment relationships developed with his parents and grandparents. During elementary and middle school he knew that he wanted to be great. He also expressed interest in being a doctor or astronaut.

During adolescence, Marcus had job experiences that help to address the career tasks of career control. As an umpire he learned problem solving skills. Just as importantly, Marcus learned to stand by the decisions that he made. It also helped Marcus to develop

confidence in making judgments and decisions. His experience working for the warehouse of the soft drink company in which his father worked exposed Marcus to additional experiences in the work world. It helped him to learn the chain of command in an organization.

Marcus: 603 My first job um I was a referee.
604 I was an umpire.
605 Baseball umpire.
606 And that did you say what skills it gave me?
607 It gives you, what does that give you?
608 That gives you problem solving skills
609 cause real time problem solving.
610 Something happens you don't know what to do you have to use what you
learned studied to make and call and stand by the decisions you make.
611 Like make a decision, stand by it.
612 Um defend it for people who want to scrutinize it
613 and they're just being assholes about it you know.
614 Helps you kind of be confident.
615 It helps with your confidence.
616 Standing by what you call what you say helps you because you're in
control of the game so it just helps you like strong, firm
617 because you have to be because they're gonna rip you apart.
618 Rip you apart.
619 Exactly it's crazy.
620 It was crazy when you first start and they know it too so they try and get
you.

As a result, Marcus was able to accomplish the career task of career conception. He conceptualized how life should be led. Subsequently, he developed career confidence. Marcus expected to be successful in encountering challenges in the future.

As Marcus graduated from high school and entered college, he began to address the tasks associated with the exploration stage. Through crystallization, Marcus broadly explored ideas around his preference in a career. During the crystallization stage, people focus on the more attractive selves for exploration (Savickas, 2002). Although Marcus' athletic identity was salient, his role as a college student seemed to be more important. He didn't receive an athletic scholarship, but received academic scholarship funding. As a result, he used knowledge about

the self and occupational information to test the reality and likelihood of playing basketball professionally.

While staying connected to basketball as a student manager and eventually becoming a member of the team as a player, Marcus explored a career related to his academic major in economics. This process is related to the developmental task of specification of an occupational choice. Marcus made the decision to return to the basketball team after graduating from undergraduate school and simultaneously pursue a master's degree in business. This decision was an important step in addressing the specification task. Marcus chose to pursue a master's degree and expand his professional network. Marcus is interested in expanding his educational background to be more marketable in a business field that relates to sports. In addition to his parents, Marcus built a support network to help him make career related decisions. When asked who depended on to make career related decisions, Marcus responded in the following manner.

Marcus: 584 um I would say right now I depend on my mentors in the basketball,
 585 athletic department here.
 587 um my coach, the life skills coordinator, and former players
 588 just the mentors I met here
 589 who I look up to and I want to follow the same path they did.
 590 I definitely
 591 go straight to them.

7.1.13 Mike's Narrative

7.1.13.1 Background Information

Mike's mother was born in an urban city in the northeastern region in the United States. Her family moved to two other cities before eventually settling in the city in which Mike was born. His family lived in several other communities in the northeastern region of the United States. While moving to different neighborhoods and communities, Mike and his mother periodically

lived with relatives, including his grandfather. He mentioned that they constantly moved because of housing and financial situations involving his mother being a single parent and giving birth to Mike in high school. He was introduced to basketball by his father at an early age (around kindergarten). Mike was not able to build a consistent relationship with his father during childhood because he was incarcerated frequently.

During elementary school Mike's mother served as his basketball coach in the local recreational league. Mike eventually enrolled in high school and played varsity basketball towards the end of his freshmen year until his junior year. During high school he played with two AAU teams. Mike transferred to a preparatory high school during his senior year. He ranked highly in various high school basketball ranking lists and participated in prestigious invitational camps. He earned a basketball scholarship to the University X in 2010. During the study, he was entering his junior year. He saw action in the majority of games as a sophomore.

7.1.13.2 Development Contextual Factors

Mike's social environment seemed to be significantly influenced by his socio-economic status growing up. His mother was a single parent raising a son in high school. They did not come from wealthy families where great financial resources would be available. Mike mentioned that he lived in a variety of neighborhood due to his "housing situations". Mike and his mother did have the support of extended family including his grandfather (his mother's father) and stepfather. They were provided housing and emotional support by these relatives. His grandmother cared for Mike as a baby when his mother attended high school during the day.

Charles: 0043 So you guys did a lot of moving?
Mike: 0044 yeah we did a lot of moving,
0045 mainly because situations,
0046 housing situations.
0047 And my mom being a single parent.

Charles: 0048 I was going to ask you that.
0049 So she pretty much raised you,
0050 kind of on her own
0051 and then went with her dad and stepmother a little bit of time,
0052 but she's the one that pretty much raised you?
Mike: 0053 yeah she,
0054 well my mom had me when she was in high school
0055 and her step mom,
0056 I call my grandma,
0057 but her stepmother
0058 she pretty much raised me
0059 for when I was a baby and stuff.
0060 She looked after me when my mom was in school
0061 and that like that I was close to my grandmother and stuff
0062 and me and her have the same birthday
0063 so that even made it more closer.

During childhood, Mike didn't build a strong relationship with his father because his father was consistently incarcerated. However, Mike acknowledged that his father introduced him to basketball and recognized the potential for Mike to be great at a very early age. Mike and his father played basketball in the park until it was late at night. His father played him tough and encouraged Mike that he needed to get stronger.

Mike: 0065 When I was young,
0066 my dad always had me outside
0067 like all hours of the night.
0068 He gave me a basketball.
0069 My mom always used to yell at him because I was young.
0070 I was probably in kindergarten and he used to have me outside at
one o'clock,
0071 twelve o'clock shooting,
0072 and he used to always block my shots and stuff and tell me be
stronger.
0073 And I just always loved the sport.
0074 Growing up,
0075 just kept playing.

When asked about his relationship with his father, Mike noted that there was strain because his father was not consistently in his life. However, during the study he was building a relationship with his father. Mike appreciated how his father saw his potential to be great at an early age and

recognized that Mike had talent. During their conversations as adults, his father encouraged Mike to be a better father than he was.

Charles: 0086 How was your relationship with your dad?
Mike: 0087 well my dad's been in and out of jail
0088 so when I was growing up,
0089 I didn't really get to see him
0090 until like now when I got older,
0091 got in contact with him.
0092 My dad, he has a lot of kids,
0093 probably has fifteen kids
0094 so- so right now he's living with his girlfriend and stuff
0095 and they have three kids like on their own
0096 so I see, when I go home,
0097 I try to see them more.
0098 And like regardless of the fact,
0099 I'm always going to call him my father no matter what.
0100 I know he hasn't been there.
0101 He hasn't been there for me.
Charles: 0102 Okay, if you could kind of just keep talking about your relationship
0103 with your dad,
0104 how did it influence you with basketball.
Mike: 0105 yeah. Like I said before,
0106 he put the ball in my hands
0107 so that always made me
0108 happy that somebody seen the talent
0109 and they, he wanted me to keep going with it.
0110 And the one thing that struck me,
0111 that just when I've seen him recently,
0112 he said the only thing I want from you is be better than me.
0113 And that's the only thing I can take in
0114 as far as him being a father and me being a father.

Mike's experiences with his father have inspired him to strive to be a reliable and responsible parent for his 11 month old daughter.

Charles: 0119 Okay.
0120 How does that affect the decisions you make?
Mike: 0121 I mean just looking,
0122 I just want everything,
0123 everything to be like-
0124 I'm just trying to provide for my family and stuff,

0125 try to do the best I can do for them
0126 and possibly me
0127 and now that I have a little one,
0128 got a daughter and stuff,
0129 that's another thing that adds on to it
0130 is trying to provide for my daughter
0131 and try to get big things,
0132 do big things for her.
Charles: 0133 How old is your daughter?
Mike: 0134 She's 11 months

In addition to the support received from his mother and grandparents, Mike utilized community resources such as recreational leagues. As a child, he participated in local recreational basketball leagues. His mother was extensively involved with his basketball teams. She eventually began coaching his teams while he was in elementary school. Mike developed a strong relationship with his mother. She has been very support and served as his primary caregiver throughout his life. He considered his mother to be one of his role models and number one supporter.

Mike: 0137 It all started when my mother,
0138 she once again she in the recreation league
0139 there was a coach,
0140 he coached us and stuff.
0141 My mom was like my personal coach;
0142 she was on the sideline yelling at me,
0143 telling me to do things.
0144 And then the next- following year
0145 she ended up coaching me,
0146 like actually being like the actual coach.
0147 So that was a big thing.
0148 I'd go home and she'd yell at me about stuff that I did in the game
0149 and she'll just tell me some good things
0150 and bad things that I did and that's always good to come home to
something like that
0151 and that's one of my biggest role models right there is my mother.
0152 And she's probably my number one fan.
0153 She's going alone,
0154 just always being supportive no matter what.
0155 Now that I'm here at University X,
0156 she's still being supportive.
0157 She'll call me
0158 After the game and tell me this and that,

0796 A couple examples were you went to the different school
0797 or you went to prep school,
0798 do you want to tell me a story about how you dealt with a
transition in your life.

Mike: 0799 I definitely dealt with different cultures.
0800 Like I started off,
0801 I started off at one neighborhood that is basically an African American
culture
0802 just everybody around us just you know just being rude
0803 and basically being rude and stuff
0804 and going from there to a different neighborhood and that's a whole
different culture.
0805 That's a Spanish culture.
0806 And then just adapting to that.
0807 Just everybody around us speaking Spanish and stuff and you not
understanding anything.
0808 Basically, not understanding what they're saying
0809 and then you got to adapt to that.
0810 And then I went to (?) that's another African American culture
0811 just,
0812 you just always got to watch your back and stuff
0813 because that was a bad neighborhood,
0814 like a bad town and stuff and then from there it was a big jump,
0815 going from there to a good neighborhood
0816 And that was a good neighborhood and everybody around you is
0817 nice and they greet you wherever you go.
0818 It was a clean respectful area and stuff
0819 and then going right back to my original where I was growing up at,
0820 it just that basically made me happy
0821 because I was going back to a place where I was growing up at
0822 and where I felt safe at and happy at

Being able to adapt to different social environments have also helped Mike adjust to responsibilities of living independently. He lived independently at his preparatory school during his senior year of high school. He also lived independently on his college campus. Mike used adaptation strategies to also deal with racial differences when he was an ethnic minority during high school. There will be further discourse presented in the identity development section but it is worth noting here because similar adaptation strategies have been implemented in various settings. While being an ethnic minority at his high school, Mike decided to assimilate to the

culture at the school. He mentioned that he “basically took in how they act and how they dress and stuff and I just kept with what they did”.

During the study, Mike was enrolled at a NCAA Division I institution, where he earned a basketball scholarship. He will be the first person in his immediate family to graduate from college. His mother is his role model and Mike depended on his mother to make major decisions in life. Since Mike was the first in his family to attend college, he did not necessarily have members in his immediate family who have personal experience with persisting and graduating from college. However, his family was very supportive and offer encouragement. He also has access to resources at his university through the athletic department with life skills staff and other administration to help with the academic and social demands of persisting and graduating from college.

7.1.13.3 Identity Development

Mike seemed to have a strong athletic identity. There are multiple factors that have contributed to Mike’s development of a strong athletic identity. He was exposed to basketball at an early age. He played basketball with his father in the park until late hours at night when he was in kindergarten. Mike appreciated that his father recognized his potential to be great. Although, he did not have consistent contact with his father during childhood and the beginning stages of adolescence, he appreciated that his father took time to introduce him to basketball and believed in his potential. Eventually his AAU coach became an instrumental male figure in his life. Since Mike did not have consistent in-person contact with his father, however AAU coach was involved with Mike’s social and athletic development.

Mike 0162 and then another is my AAU coach
 0164 He was a big role model.
 0165 He was like a big brother,

0166 basically a father to me.
0167 He took me in.
0168 His son played for the AAU team,
0169 so me and his son became best friends
0170 and I used to spend the night over at his house,
0171 go to camp,
0172 me and his son used to go to camps together,
0173 we used to travel together.
0174 He, we used to eat dinner.
0175 I used to chill with his family
0176 like their family,
0177 so they took me in as being like the fam.
0178 And I just took that in as him being one of my biggest role models also.
0179 He always had my back no matter what.

Additionally, his mother served as his youth basketball coach during elementary school in the local recreational league. He has a very close relationship with his mother. His mother's interest and involvement in his development as a basketball player promoted the significance of the sport to Mike. He viewed his mother as being a personal coach, but also his biggest supporter.

Mike: 0137 It all started when my mother,
0138 she once again she in the recreational league
0139 there was a coach,
0140 he coached us and stuff.
0141 My mom was like my personal coach;
0142 she was on the sideline yelling at me,
0143 telling me to do things.
0144 And then the next- following year
0145 she ended up coaching me,
0146 like actually being like the actual coach.
0147 So that was a big thing.
0148 I'd go home and she'd yell at me about stuff that I did in the game
0149 and she'll just tell me some good things
0150 and bad things that I did and that's always good to come home to
something like that
0151 and that's one of my biggest role models right there is my mother.
0152 And she's probably my number one fan.
0153 She's going alone,
0154 just always being supportive no matter what.

The adults that had the most influence in Mike's life emphasized the importance of participating in sports. In particular, they emphasized the importance of playing basketball. Mike seemed to appreciate people who believe in his potential to be successful. The encouragement through coaching from his mother, father and AAU coach were factors that contributed to Mike developing a strong athletic identity.

Mike did not feel that he received enough recognition for his athletic talent, so he decided to enroll in a preparatory school for his senior year of high school. This school offered Mike more exposure to NCAA Division I universities. He also decided to play with a different AAU team. A new AAU would offer more exposure as well. Mike's willingness to change high schools based indicates that receiving recognition for playing basketball was significant to him. He recognized that basketball has influenced major decisions made in his life.

Charles: 0412 How has sport,
0413 particularly basketball,
0414 influenced major decisions you've made in your life?

Mike: 0415 I mean basketball
0416 it made me like
0417 choose to go to a prep school.
0418 You know,
0419 if I wasn't playing basketball,
0420 I wouldn't have went to prep school.
0421 I would have stayed in my high school just trying to,
0422 just basically get to a school you know and still play basketball,
0423 but not like something
0424 I wanted to do like a major major major high major school.
0425 Some basketball definitely affected something like everything,
0426 like basically my whole life
0427 it just affected my whole life.
0428 It affected the way the way I,
0429 the living arrangements you know.
0430 I ended up living on my own my senior year
0431 so that was a big step for me,
0432 living away from my family.
0433 And just basically going to college
0434 and again living away from my family
0435 so if I wasn't playing ball,

0436 I probably be in the community college near my house.
0437 It's like right down the block from me so.

Mike's strong athletic identity is highlighted when asked about his top priorities in his life. He mentioned that basketball is more important than school at this point. He viewed basketball as an opportunity to provide to for his family; particularly his mother and daughter. His top priorities were being a good father and being able to get his family "out of the hood". He was interested in helping his family live in a neighborhood that has residents of a higher social economic class and a community that his considered safe. Mike viewed basketball as a tool to provide for his family and accomplish his goals in life.

Charles: 0733 Currently, what is more important to you at this point in your life:
0734 Basketball or school?
0735 And why?
Mike: 0736 I'm not even going to lie right now.
0737 I think about basketball,
0738 you know.
0739 Just in my head
0740 just want to get my mom get my mom what she deserves you know.
0741 She gave me what I wanted in life
0742 and I just trying to give her what she basically deserves you know.
0743 Just everything she gave,
0744 she basically like would take a bullet for me
0745 so I'm trying to do the same,
0746 just take a bullet for her.
0747 Just keep going,
0748 just keep grinding with basketball
0749 so I can make it to the next level.
Charles: 0750 And obviously make it to the next level is a big goal of yours
0751 and providing for your mother,
0752 is that kind of a part of that motivation for you?
Mike: 0753 yeah provide for the family and my mom.

Mike also related to hip-hop culture. He related to stories presented in the lyrics of some rap songs indicating that there is struggle associated with being successful. He referred to this

process as “trying to grind”. He believed that he has a relationship with hip-hop music because he can relate to the artists.

- Charles: 0339 so you feel like you can relate to hip-hop artists and their experiences?
Mike: 0340 yeah I can definitely relate to them.
0341 I know like me growing up,
0342 I had hard times and I know by just listening to some of the music,
0343 the hip hop artists had the bad times growing up also,
0344 so it's like it's like a relationship right there.

Mike believed that most hip-hop artists are African American and trying to success. He was not prompted within the interview question to discuss race, but made the connection between hip-hop artists' aspirations to be success and their race. When asked about the media's perception of athletes he also indicated that race is a factor. He described how the media designates specific sports for various racial groups.

- Charles: 0345 How has the media influenced your perception of athletes?
Mike: 0346 I see the media always,
0347 they look at different sports as different people.
0348 Like they'll say
0349 swimming, swimming's for white people.
0350 They'll say basketball's for black people, you know.
0351 And then they'll say like track is for black people
0352 and then they'll go on and say baseball is for Spanish,
0353 you know
0354 so I see the media always have a different perspective on different
0355 sports
0356 and different cultures.

He also offered examples of how the media assigns certain sports to various racial groups. However, he believed that these designations should not exist. He believed that your race or ethnicity should not determine which sport in which you decide to participate.

- Charles: 0357 How does that make you feel?
Mike: 0358 I mean I can see some
0359 I can see some of the
0360 like some of the relationships,
0361 like similar relations in it,

0362 but you never, people different people can play every sport.
0363 It doesn't matter if you're black or white if you're Spanish if you're Indian
0364 like any person could play a sport and be good at it.
0365 Right now,
0366 they're trying to talk about Jeremy Lin and how he's Asian
0367 and like, come on.
0368 He probably, he worked his butt off to where he's at,
0369 so doesn't really matter like what color you are,
0370 what culture you are,
0371 if you're working hard at it you can be whoever you want to be.

When asked about pride in his racial or ethnic group, he mentioned that he respects seeing successful African Americans. He noted the success of Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods and Kobe Bryant. Mike was also aware of the stereotypes associated with African American male athletes. Specifically, he described how African American athletes may be viewed as deficient intellectually and not having others complete their course work in college. He provided the following example as a personal experience in his math class.

Charles: 0591 So we'll go to the next question.
0592 What stereotypes are associated with being a black, male collegiate athlete?

Mike: 0593 I mean there's definitely the stereotype that we have
0594 like people doing your homework
0595 you know
0596 and you not being as smart as like it says on paper.
0597 That's probably something that done with all athletes
0598 but I've noticed that when last year when I was in a Math class.
0599 And me I like my teammates we were basically talking,
0600 whispering to each other and then one of the teachers say can you put,
0601 not the teacher
0602 one of the ladies in the class said can you please be quiet some of us actually do our work.
0603 So we all looked at each other like "are you serious right now"
0604 like we got made because we do our work you know we're regular
0605 students it's just, we're an athlete.
0606 We do our work and stuff,
0607 we just have extra help.
0608 But we got we kind of got offended by that
0609 and it got to the point where we don't even want to be in this class right now
0610 because we didn't want to argue with nobody

0611 so like half the like basically most of the kids walked out
 0612 like teammates just walked out and stuff.
 0613 It was just like that's disrespectful,
 0614 you know.
 0615 So they walked out.
 Charles: 0616 And how did that make you feel when she said "some of us
 actually do our work"
 Mike: 0617 I mean I made me feel like
 0618 crap.
 0619 It made me feel like I'm useless,
 0620 you know.
 0621 Like I don't do anything.
 0622 But I know I do something
 but that just made me feel like I don't do anything.

Mike encountered cultural and ethnic differences throughout his life. Based on his family's financial situation, he was required to live in numerous communities. He relied on strategies of adaptation to adjust to the demands of the different social environments. Adaptation strategies were used to address the stress of being an ethnic minority at a predominately white high school.

Charles: 0471 Okay so the next set of questions
 0472 is kind of talking about race.
 0473 Describe your earliest memory of race differences.
 0474 Kind of talk about what information you learned
 0475 at the time
 0476 and how did you get that information.
 0477 So your earliest memory of race differences.
 Mike 0478 I have to say probably my earliest memory is
 0480 That was in, probably like 2000.
 0481 The year of 2000
 0483 the school was an all-white school
 0484 so I stood out because I was probably like
 0485 it was probably like a good two percent black people in the school
 0486 probably like ten kids.
 0487 You could actually like count out
 0488 like in the school so me being like an athletic black kid,
 0489 I stood out a lot.
 0490 Like playing basketball,
 0491 I played football,
 0492 I played lacrosse for the team,
 0493 just me being athletic,
 0494 I always played sports
 0495 and a lot of kids look at you different because your black and stuff,

0496 different color skin,
 0497 you know.
 0498 They probably raised with their own color
 0499 like their own kind of stuff.
 0500 I fit in.
 0501 I just adapt.
 0502 Wherever I go,
 0503 I adapt.
 0504 And that's how I always,
 0505 I always adapt to wherever I go.
 0506 So I basically just adapted to the community.
 0507 I adapted to the white kids.
 0508 I made friends with a bunch of kids there
 0509 and I was cool with it.
 0510 I had no problems with nobody.
 0511 Some kids didn't want no parts of me.
 0512 Some kids were like cool with me
 0513 so I didn't have no problems.
 0514 I didn't do anything wrong
 0515 so it was good.
 Charles: 0516 So that was something that you kind of learned before you
 0517 got to that school,
 0518 in terms of adapting?
 Mike: 0519 I mean that's probably something I
 0520 like I always had in my head.
 0521 I didn't want to be a negative like negative towards anybody
 0522 so I just, I just adapted.
 0523 I basically took in how they act and how they dress and stuff
 0524 and I just kept with what they did.

7.1.13.4 Career Development Tasks

Mike seemed to become concern about his future as a worker during his childhood. One factor which influences this concern is his socioeconomic status growing up. His family income was low due to his mother being a teenage mother and his father not consistently being present in his life. However, he had family support from his grandparents and during early adolescence from his AAU coach. His mother, grandfather, father and AAU coach all encouraged Mike to develop his basketball skills at an early age. During childhood, he seemed to develop secure attachments with his mother and grandparents. During elementary school Mike wanted to be a

police officer. His aspiration to be a police officer was inspired by his grandfather serving in the military.

- Charles: 0634 What did you want to do career wise when you were in elementary school.
- Mike: 0635 I mean elementary kids always have something they want to do.
0636 When I grew up,
0637 when I was growing up,
0638 I always wanted to be a police officer.
0639 My grandfather he served in the army and my
0640 that was my great grandfather he served in the army
0641 and my grandfather he was a police officer
0642 so just looking up to him,
0643 I wanted to be a cop.

This helped Mike feel secure in the future to explore other environments. He displayed his ability to demonstrate characteristics of career control when decides to attend preparatory school during his senior year of high school. He believed that attending this school which required him to move away from his family would increase the likelihood of being recruited by NCAA Division I universities.

- Mike: 0415 I mean basketball
0416 it made me like
0417 choose to go to a prep school.
0418 You know,
0419 if I wasn't playing basketball,
0420 I wouldn't have went to prep school.
0421 I would have stayed in my high school just trying to,
0422 just basically get to a school you know and still play basketball,
0423 but not like something
0424 I wanted to do like a major major major high major school.
0425 Some basketball definitely affected something like everything,
0426 like basically my whole life
0427 it just affected my whole life.
0428 It affected the way the way I,
0429 the living arrangements you know.
0430 I ended up living on my own my senior year
0431 so that was a big step for me,
0432 living away from my family.
0433 And just basically going to college
0434 and again living away from my family

0435 so if I wasn't playing ball,
 0436 I probably be in the community college near my house.
 0437 It's like right down the block from me so.
 Charles: 0438 So how was that living on your own your senior year?
 Mike: 0439 I mean I had no problem living on my own.
 0440 I always wanted to like
 0441 I didn't want to live on my own,
 0442 but I always knew there was going to be a day I was going to live
 on my own
 0443 so that was a big step for me.
 0444 I had a lot of I had a lot of like goals to set
 0445 like basically I had a lot of
 0446 I can't like responsibilities
 0447 yeah that's it,
 0448 I had a lot of responsibilities,
 0449 getting up every morning
 0450 and those pretty much stuff I had to do for like,
 0451 like for example I had to like every Monday
 0452 you had to have your clothes,
 0453 you had to have your clothes
 0454 your dirty clothes like basically set ready to set and just walk it
 down to the laundry place
 0455 and you had to do that every morning,
 0456 if not your clothes aren't washed for the rest of the week
 0457 so that's a big responsibility
 0458 because if I didn't get up and bring my clothes down then my
 clothes wouldn't be washed.
 0459 And then just getting up for class
 0460 and being on time for class and everything.
 Charles: 0461 So you said living on your own, this is at the prep school?
 Mike: 0462 yeah /second/ prep school, it was like a boarding school, all
 boys, it was an all-boys school so.
 Charles: 0463 So they didn't have you with a roommate, you had like your own
 Mike: 0464 I mean some kids had roommates
 0465 but I was a senior
 0466 so I got to choose if I wanted a roommate or not
 0467 and I chose not to.
 0468 I wanted that responsibility on me.
 0469 I wanted to see like how I'm going to be without anybody
 0470 like basically being alone.

This experience allowed Mike the independence to learn responsibilities related to living independently. He learned lessons related to the importance of timeliness, taking care of laundry and attending class without having a parent ensuring that he went every day. His jobs he held

before attending preparatory school also helped with this development. He held jobs such as being a janitor and landscaping. He was responsible for helping to provide additional income to his family.

- Charles: 0699 Did you have any job growing up?
Mike: 0700 Yeah.
0701 You mean outside of basketball?
0702 Yeah I work for like in high school,
0703 I worked I was basically a little mini janitor and stuff.
0704 Just to get some food in the house,
0705 just to provide for the house.
0706 Then I did some landscaping,
0707 basically like moving bricks and moving like tiles and stuff
0708 back and forth and fixing like the shades in high schools and stuff.
0709 I always try to get some extra cash in my mom's pocket
0710 and stuff so we can get some food for the house.
Charles: 0711 And what did those experiences teach you?
Mike: 0712 They teach me a lot of big responsibilities
0713 you know?
0714 Just being there,
0715 I had to be there early in the morning,
0716 like basically seven o'clock in the morning.
0717 That's teaching me like responsibility to get up and work.

Mike seemed to demonstrate that he has developed skills related to career confidence in childhood as he transitions into his senior year of high school and eventually his freshmen year of college. Throughout his life, he continued to develop his basketball skills. He viewed this skill set as an asset which will be the key to his enrolling in a NCAA Division I institution. He believed that if he did not capitalize on earning a basketball scholarship; he would have been required to attend a community college near his neighborhood. He acknowledged that he would be the first person to go to college directly from high school, and he viewed earning a basketball scholarship as being the main avenue to do so.

- Mike: 0425 So basketball definitely affected something like everything,
0426 like basically my whole life
0427 it just affected my whole life.
0428 It affected the way the way I,

0429 the living arrangements you know.
0430 I ended up living on my own my senior year
0431 so that was a big step for me,
0432 living away from my family.
0433 And just basically going to college
0434 and again living away from my family
0435 so if I wasn't playing ball,
0436 I probably be in the community college near my house.
0437 It's like right down the block from me so.

While in college, Mike has characterized various occupations according to their requirements, routines and rewards. He was interested in playing basketball professionally, managing a business or being a sports analyst. All of his career aspirations are related to his interest in sports.

Charles: 0685 What careers are you thinking about?
Mike: 0686 I mean I always think about going pro.
0687 I mean just going pro,
0688 that's my big thing right there.
0689 Then if that doesn't work,
0690 I always wanted to like manage my own business.
0691 Become like, get my own shop and just manage that.
0692 Or if not,
0693 just be a commentator not a commentator
0694 but like a sports analyst
0695 and talk about like the sports and stuff.
Charles: 0696 And what type of business would you want to do?
Mike: 0697 Probably like a sports-
0698 like something to do with sports.

When asked how defines personal success. He mentioned that he wanted to play professional basketball so he can provide for his mother and daughter.

Charles: 0842 So what is successful?
Mike: 0843 Going pro,
0844 getting my mom a house
0845 like a house whatever she wants,
0846 providing for my daughter,
0847 and basically just being a good father.

He emphasized throughout the interview that he was motivated to be successful so he could help his mother and family. Mike is utilizing basketball as a means to access a career and college education.

7.1.14 Sam's Narrative

7.1.14.1 Background Information

Sam's mother was born in an urban city in the northeastern part of the United States. Sam's grandparents were also from the same city. As a young adult, Sam's mother moved to a neighboring state. Sam's mother was accepted into a college, but was pregnant with her oldest son. As a result, she did not enroll. Three years later, she gave birth to her second son and moved back to the state in which she born. Sam's mother eventually earned an associate degree in nursing. Subsequently, she gave birth to Sam.

The three brothers were involved in sports. Sam grew up watching his older brothers play sports. Specifically, his older brothers taught Sam various aspects of basketball. His oldest brother emphasized defensive aspects, while the second oldest brother emphasized dribbling and passing. Sam's oldest broth also played sports in high school and eventually attended a college. The second oldest brother had an outstanding basketball and football career in high school and earned an athletic scholarship to NCAA division I university. He was the starting quarterback for his university. He was drafted to an NFL team, but did not make the final roster before the season began.

Sam began playing basketball in a local recreation league when he was six years old. He also played basketball at the local park. When Sam was in the sixth grade, he volunteered as the "water boy" for the middle school team. Sixth grade students were not allowed to play basketball for the school teams, but Sam was permitted to practice with the team. He also traveled to the games with the middle school team. Sam did not play in a summer league such as AAU when he was in middle school. When Sam was in the eighth grade, he played on the freshmen high school basketball team. In the ninth grade, Sam played on the junior varsity team, while seeing action in

a few of the varsity basketball games. He also began playing in various summer tournaments with an AAU team. This was the only summer team in their community. Players from neighboring cities played on this team. During his tenth grade year, Sam earned a position on the starting roster for the varsity team.

During his eleventh grade year, he committed to attend University X, once they offered an athletic scholarship. During his senior year of high school, Sam transferred to high school in a large urban city. He viewed this high school as being better at preparing students to play at the division I level because they played better competition. While playing at this high school, his team finished with a number seven national ranking. During his high school career, Sam earned many personal accolades and awards. He was named to the all-state second team and participated in high school all-star tournaments. During the study, Sam was completing his sophomore year athletically at University X, after being granted a medical hardship waiver due to an ankle injury. He earned a position on the starting lineup. During the study, he was pursuing an undergraduate degree in Administration of Justice.

7.1.14.2 Developmental Contextual Factors

Sam's older brothers were a major influence because they exposed Sam to sports. His brothers participated in sports and encouraged Sam to develop his basketball skills at an early age. Sam's oldest brother emphasized playing defense and the importance of being in good physical condition, while his second oldest brother emphasized dribbling and passing skills.

Sam: 0105 I was introduced by just my brothers playing it.
0106 They were playing;
0107 I used to watch them playing growing up
0108 and then they used to always have a little hoop
0109 in the house so that's where I learned.
0110 I actually started shooting

0111 my first basket with their little hoop.
0112 And then just-
0113 the brother who went to a Division I university,
0114 he was really good at basketball
0115 so we –
0116 he-
0117 I used to always watch his game
0118 growing up
0119 and then my oldest brother was the athlete.
0120 He was really an athlete
0121 so he was more focused on defense and jumping
0122 and all that
0123 /when/ he used to try to teach me basketball.
0124 That’s something I wasn’t really worried about back then.

Charles: 0125 You weren’t-

Sam: 0126 I wasn’t worried about playing defense back then.

Charles: 0127 So he kind of taught you that aspect of it?

Sam: 0128 Yeah basically yeah,
0129 because my other brother
0130 he was more of passing
0131 and breaking a guy down.
0132 He was more of that
0133 “and one” era player
0134 so it was like

Sam’s second oldest brother, who is seven years older than Sam, received a lot of recognition in their community because he excelled in basketball and football in high school. He eventually earned an athletic scholarship to play football at a Division I university. When Sam was younger he believed that he was growing up in his brother’s “shadow”. At times, the attention given to his brother was annoying, but he also viewed his lack of attention as serving as a motivational factor. It motivated Sam to want to be better than his brother at basketball.

Charles: 0138 Okay.
0139 Now how did that kind of affect you,
0140 you seeing like your brothers playing
0141 and them exposing you.

Sam: 0142 it affected me
0143 because they-
0144 my brother that went to a Division I university
0145 he always had a big name,
0146 like his name was bigger in our community than my oldest brother
0147 because he was more of the better basketball player.
0148 So just growing up in his shadow
0149 was just like
0150 something that used to get on my nerves kind of
0151 because I was like,
0152 I feel like I can be better than him
0153 so it's just like-
0154 it's something that got on my nerves
0155 but at the same time like looking back at it
0156 now was like-
0157 it was motivation
0158 because it was like dang
0159 I never realized how much he influenced me
0160 to want to be better-
0161 without him even realizing it.

Sam was raised in a household with low income. Their mother's educational level offers insight into their family's socioeconomic status. The mother was a single parent. She eventually earned an associate degree, but did not obtain this degree until after her oldest son was born. The three boys also shared a bedroom for the majority of their lives. Sam noted that he appreciates and respects his mother's sacrifice and hard work to make sure her sons' needs were provided. As a result, he viewed his mother as a role model. Sam valued dedication, hard work and the importance of sacrifice. Sam hoped to exercise these values with his son.

Sam: 0280 Yeah I'd have to say
0281 my role models were my brothers
0282 and also my mom,
0283 just raising three boys by herself
0284 was something that not many people can do
0285 and she did it and she made sure we had everything we needed
0286 and a lot of the things that we wanted
0287 also so she-

0288 especially we were all sleeping in one room
0289 for a majority of our lives
0290 basically so-
0291 I mean just seeing her work hard.
0292 She worked two- three jobs just to keep us happy-
0293 keep us-
0294 everything we need.

Charles: 0295 So how did that make you feel
0296 when you saw your mom sacrificing?

Sam: 0297 At the time, I really didn't realize it.
0298 I was just so young,
0299 but now like
0300 it's just so many things I want to do for her
0301 just to make her life so much easier
0302 because I know she struggled
0303 just as were growing up
0304 all three of us.
0305 I know she was struggling.
0306 I know there were things she wanted to do
0307 that she couldn't really do
0308 so just I just want to make her life as easy as possible.

Charles: 0309 What do you feel like you learned from your mother?

Sam: 0310 Just hard work
0311 like it's-
0312 sometimes you've got to sacrifice the things you want,
0313 the things you need
0314 and the health of other people.
0315 She showed me-
0316 with my own son
0317 she's definitely shown me
0318 because it's just you've got to give up a lot
0319 for the better of your children.

Sam also viewed his older brothers as role models. He was inspired to excel in sports because his brothers were talented and obtained sport related skills. Sam was influenced to listen to rap music because followed his brothers' interests. He listened to the same hip hop artists that his brothers preferred. Sam mentioned that he wanted to do everything "they were doing".

Sam: 0448 I kept me in tune with what was going on out in the world
0449 I guess,
0450 hip hop,
0451 certain rappers I used to listen to all the time,
0452 especially Jay-Z.
0453 Back then
0454 when I was younger,
0455 I used to listen to Mase and all them
0456 because my brother used to listen to them.
0457 I used to want to do everything they were doing so
0458 I just wanted I wanted to be just like them in a way.
0459 I never admitted
0460 that but they were listening to Mase and all that
0461 and I used to-
0462 my mom wouldn't let me listen to it
0463 because they were cursing and stuff like that
0464 because I was-
0465 I used to steal their tapes when they weren't around
0466 and just listen,
0467 put it in a Walkman
0468 or something
0469 and just listen to it.
0470 But it influenced like –
0471 it didn't really let it influence my entire life
0472 I just-just listen to it-
0473 just listen to it.
0474 That's about it.

Sam's community did not have many people earning athletic scholarships to division I institution. As a result, Sam and his brother received a lot of recognition for the athletic ability in the local newspapers. Since his second oldest brother was seven years older, they received media attention simultaneously. As Sam's brother's college career concluded, his brother received local media attention because he was a N FL prospect and excelling in college athletics. Simultaneously, Sam received media attention because he excelled in high school locally and was a division I college prospect. Sam was first featured in a local newspaper in the eighth grade.

Charles: 0391 Did you get recognized in the papers and stuff locally?

Sam: 0392 Oh yeah.

0393 After like-
 0394 after every game
 0395 or something like that we had,
 0396 I was in the paper everyday
 0397 just because it wasn't that many-
 0398 especially basketball like there wasn't that many basketball players
 0399 in the area at my time
 0400 especially that were being considered for a D1 talent.
 0401 It was and someone else
 0402 and he went to another high school.
 0403 It was like two different levels compared to
 0404 plus I had like
 0405 already the hype of my brother
 0406 because he was in the paper every day for both sports,
 0407 football and basketball so

Charles: 0408 What's the age different between you and your brother?

Sam: 0409 Seven years.

Charles: 0410 So it was kind of just enough time
 0411 for it to settle down and here you come-

Sam: 0412 But it was like,
 0413 he was in it
 0414 and then like he went to college and still was in it
 0415 and then like as soon as he was done with college,
 0416 like closing out his college career
 0417 like that's when I got-
 0418 I got into-

Charles: 0419 So it was non-stop basically

Sam: 0420 basically.
 0421 So he was closing out his college career
 0422 and then that's when I-
 0423 they just started picking up on me
 0424 I guess.
 0425 Kind of weird

Charles: 0426 Did you just kind of expect that kind of attention
 0427 or how did you handle it?

Sam: 0428 I didn't really-
 0429 I mean I was in the paper
 0430 I had an article in the paper like my 8th grade year

0431 and that was just like that caught me off guard.
0432 I'm like I'm in 8th grade.
0433 I'm in 8th grade.
0434 I'm still wearing uniforms to school
0435 like I'm like
0436 I /don't/-
0437 that caught me off guard
0438 and then like just high school
0439 was just like it just became like every day almost.
0440 After every game
0441 it was like it was someone who wanted to talk to me
0442 or do an article
0443 or something like that
0444 so after a while I just became used to it.

Although Sam played basketball at high level in high school, his time was not completely consumed with playing basketball as a youth. He played a variety of sports and participated in many activities as a child. He played baseball, enjoyed skateboarding, snowboarding, biking, hitting golf balls and created games in the woods. He met most of his life-long friends through playing games in the neighborhood. These activities also served as a way for Sam and his friends to have fun in a constructive manner.

Sam: 0555 When I was younger,
0556 that was all we used to do
0557 is just go out and play different sports.
0558 We used to play basketball,
0559 play-this is just my neighborhood friends growing up so-
0560 we just go out, play basketball.
0561 That's how I met most of my-most of my good friends back home
now,
0562 playing basketball
0563 and we used to all live in one little neighborhood.
0564 Where I actually still live in,
0465 but everyone moved out of-
0466 we used to go play basketball,
0467 go play football, go-
0468 go around-
0469 we used to walk through the woods
0470 and through the baseball field right behind the woods
0471 and we used to go up there and play baseball.

0472 We used to do a lot of things.
0473 There's a guy-
0474 there used to be a guy up the hill
0475 that just let us hit golf balls and stuff like
0476 that so we just always-
0477 sports was just something that
0478 we always did like we used to be skateboarding,
0479 BMX-ing, all that,
0480 so it was just something-
0481 it was a big influence.
0482 I don't think-
0483 it made childhood so much fun
0484 just being able to go out and play sports,
0485 especially with friends like-
0486 I definitely-
0487 I don't think-
0488 I don't know what we would have been able to do without sports.

Charles: 0489 So it kind of filled up your time?

Sam: 0490 Yeah basically
0491 like if we're not in school
0492 or doing you know-
0493 if we're not in school,
0494 we was out playing sports.
0495 I remember bunch of my friends,
0496 we used to try to snowboard
0497 when it would snow outside.
0498 We always used to try to do
0499 like always tried to do something
0500 like we see it on TV.
0501 Oh we can do that.
0502 We used to take the wheels off our skateboard
0503 and try to snowboard down hills
0504 and stuff like that so

Charles: 0505 And that was all your friends
0506 and that was what you guys had in common.

Sam: 0507 Yeah
0508 we always wanted to do other stuff
0509 like not even just play basketball.

Growing up in the same neighborhood for the majority of his life resulted in a sense of loyalty and pride in his geographical community. He represented the area through his

participation on the varsity basketball team. As a result, it was a difficult decision for Sam when he decided to transfer to a high school in a different state during his senior year. Sam felt that his initial high school was not preparing him to excel at the Division I collegiate level. Sam wanted to play better competition. Sam felt the members of the community expected Sam to stay at his initial high school. However, the people in Sam's support network encouraged Sam to transfer. They felt the move was in his best interest. Sam's support network included his closest friends, his former coach from a recreational league and most importantly, his older brothers.

- Charles: 0552 So did you feel a certain type of way
0553 because you were leaving your friends or family
0554 or loyalty to the neighborhood,
0555 what was kind of going through your mind
0556 when you were making the decision?
- Sam: 0557 It was kind of hard at first.
0558 I never really told anyone that
0559 because everyone expected me to stay at my original school
0560 and just finish out my career there,
0561 just because that's what my brothers both did
0562 and just same for me,
0563 but at the same time,
0564 like my friends,
0566 they didn't care because my friends were older
0567 so they graduated.
0568 So they graduated and then my other friends,
0569 they weren't really on the basketball team
0570 so it was just like they influenced me
0571 like yeah you need to go do that.
0572 And I had my brother in my ear
0573 like yeah that's the best move for you.
0574 You don't have to graduate from that school.
0575 You don't got to do none of that.
0576 You're your own man.
0577 You can go do something different
0578 and then just like coaches that used to coach me growing up
0579 like rec coaches and stuff like that,
0580 they're like yeah that's definitely the best move for you
0581 like I've been thinking that for a while
0582 that you need to get away from-

0583 because they didn't- no one really felt that our high school coaches
0584 were as good as like you know just getting me prepared for the
next level
0585 so that was-
0586 it wasn't like- they made it a lot easier than it could have been.
0587 Because like my older cousin,
0588 he's been a huge influence on my life just and he really pushed for
that too.
0589 He really thought and he's real good friends with one of the
coaches
0590 on the staff at my original school
0591 so and he still was still was pushing that move for me.
0592 Everyone knew that I needed that
0593 extra push.

The demographics of Sam's community seemed to change as he got older. Sam mentioned that when in elementary school his classes were predominately white. As he progressed to middle school and high school, the proportion of white students decreased. During middle and high school, the student population was predominantly black and Latino. Sam believed that the change in dynamics occurred because the white families had the resources to move to different neighborhoods where they perceived the education to be of better quality. Sam mentioned that people within the community mentioned that his high school performed poorly on the state standard examinations. Sam contributed various families leaving the community as a result of the high school's poor performance on the state examinations.

Sam: 0605 I guess you could say that I-
0606 just my schooling,
0607 like my school because I went to all city schools
0608 whereas and they were dominantly black, Hispanic,
0609 you know
0610 and like there's few white people
0611 and like that-
0612 the higher education,
0613 the higher I got in my education,
0614 like the less white people I seen
0615 because like middle school-
0616 elementary it was nothing but white-
0617 little white kids, but and us, and black people,

0618 and in middle school it was more Hispanics and blacks,
0619 and fewer whites, more whites were-
0620 their parents were transferring them to like different schools in
different counties
0621 and those are different little schools in our neighborhood,
0623 And then just high school,
0624 it became more evident because it was few whites
0625 and then like then the whites that were in our school,
0626 they were in just we had different communities
0627 and they were AP Honors,
0628 but that was like extra smart classes.
0629 Like they were taking college courses
0630 and I had a few of those classes myself,
0631 but that was pretty much it.

Charles: 0632 So when you saw those differences
0633 in the higher you went up from middle school to high school,
0634 and there were fewer whites,
0635 how did that make you feel
0636 or what were you thinking?

Sam: 0637 I didn't really feel no type of way about it.
0638 It really didn't affect me.
0639 Like I felt
0640 they were doing that because they knew they weren't-
0641 like I don't like they were getting a better education
0642 I felt. I don't-
0644 like they always used to talk about my high school state scores
0645 like not being so good-
0646 like they weren't bad
0647 but they weren't as good as the other schools
0648 so I feel like parents went there.
0649 I don't know like and they can actually afford that move.
0650 A lot of black people and Hispanics couldn't afford to move into
those neighborhoods
0651 for them to go to that school.

The possible implications for Sam's identity development is discussed the subsequent section. However, it is important to note that the demographics of Sam's neighborhoods changed as Sam aged. More importantly, Sam attributed these changing dynamics to being associated with the quality of education in his community and the ability of certain families to relocate to other communities with better quality of education.

7.1.14.3 Identity Development

Sam seemed to have developed a strong athletic identity. Sam was exposed to basketball at the age of six years old. He admired his older brothers and they excelled in sports. Sam's brothers excelled at football and basketball in high school. Sam's second oldest brother eventually earned an athletic scholarship to a division I university and was drafted by a NFL team. He viewed his brothers as being his role models. Sam felt that he was always compared to his second oldest brother when he was in high school. This actually motivated Sam to want to be better than his brother in basketball.

Sam: 0142 it affected me
0143 because they-
0144 my brother that went to a Division I university
0145 he always had a big name,
0146 like his name was bigger in Lancaster than my oldest brother
0147 because he was more of the better basketball player.
0148 So just growing up in his shadow
0149 was just like
0150 something that used to get on my nerves kind of
0151 because I was like,
0152 I feel like I can be better than him
0153 so it's just like-
0154 it's something that got on my nerves
0155 but at the same time like looking back at it
0156 now was like-
0157 it was motivation
0158 because it was like dang
0159 I never realized how much he influenced me
0160 to want to be better-
0161 without him even realizing it.

In middle school through high school, Sam played with older competition. In the sixth grade, he practiced with the middle school team. In the eighth grade, Sam played with the freshmen high school team. He earned a position in the starting lineup for the varsity team when he was in the tenth grade. Local newspapers recognized Sam's athletic accomplishments. A

paper featured Sam in an article when he was in the eighth grade. When Sam was on the varsity team, he was featured weekly. His second oldest brother was also featured weekly because he was the starting quarterback at a division I institution. Sam began to be recognized nationally when he played for a summer AAU team. This team featured NCAA division I players including an eventual first round NBA draft pick. Playing for this team and the associated recognition inspired Sam to continue to work hard at developing his basketball skills.

Sam: 0324 It was just-
0325 it influenced me a lot I guess.
0326 It just made me keep wanting to work hard
0327 and I-
0328 have no one have anything bad to say about me
0329 or have disbelief about how good I was
0330 or how good people saying I was.
0331 But it also influenced my life a lot
0332 because just-
0333 certain people just
0334 oh you want to play on this team
0335 dadada;
0336 we're traveling.
0337 Like I ended up playing with the team final
0338 end of that my-
0339 my-
0340 end of the year I played with an AAU team,
0341 the one and only year
0342 I played with them so
0343 at the end of the year
0344 I played with a different AAU team.
0345 They had like players who played in college and the NBA
0346 all the big name guys from the area
0347 and stuff like that
0348 so I was just the guy from my home town.

Charles: 0349 You think that was pretty big
0350 being on that team.

Sam: 0351 Yeah definitely.
0352 I think that was definitely the start
0353 just when I started playing with them,
0354 that's when I really started getting recognized.

0355 I played with them like one tournament
0356 and then their coach
0357 his name is (?),
0358 he got me in to like different camps
0359 that I wouldn't have been able to get into like /Elite/
0360 and all that so
0361 just-that-
0362 just felt like the start of everything
0363 because recruiting and all that.

Sam is aware of the media's influence in shaping public perception about athletes. Sam believed that there has been a negative perception of athletes not being diligent students. However, he believed that there have been recent trends of also promoting athletes has being able to excel academically. Sam noted that he understands that these are misconceptions and stereotypes of collegiate athletes. Sam believed that he is not influenced by these perceptions. He was aware of his academic goals, which includes earning a master's degree.

Sam: 0489 I don't-
0490 the media they-
0491 some media,
0492 I'm not going to say all,
0493 they put this perception out athletes
0494 like a lot of them don't do their schoolwork
0495 and stuff like that and all that.
0496 I guess commercials-
0497 there's a commercial
0498 I just seen like the-
0499 they were talking about oh 10%-
0500 the rate-
0501 10% of Sam athletes graduate,
0502 it's risen or something like that,
0503 so it's like 10 more percent
0504 or and there's a higher chance of black student-athletes graduating
now
0505 so it was like before that commercial
0506 like they did-
0507 the perception was oh what was it?
0508 We don't graduate.
0509 We don't go to class.
0510 Stuff like that.

0511 I mean that's about it,
0512 but other than that like since I'm in it,
0513 it's more like I know actually what's the truth behind it
0514 so I don't really let nothing like the media you know
0515 since I'm actually student-athlete.
0516 I know that a lot of people go to class.
0517 A lot of people,
0518 they're getting good grades 3.0.
0519 That was my first time ever getting a 3.0,
0520 I was here in college so.
0521 Yeah so it was-
0522 I feel like the media's
0523 just need something to write.
0524 They need something to write about.

Charles: 0525 How does that make you feel
0526 when they're putting that particular perception out there?

Sam: 0527 I don't make me feel no type of way
0528 it just it's just something that it's another thing
0529 to prove someone wrong.
0530 I want to get my Master's.
0531 I'm hoping to do that,
0532 but that's what I'm trying to do before I leave here
0533 so it's just like it's not-
0534 I really don't let the media affect me
0535 personally too much.
0536 I have certain goals
0537 that I just want to do on my own.

Sam believed that the main stereotypes associate with athletes are that they do not attend class regularly, do not persist and graduate when in college and they have other people do their assignments. Even though Sam was conscious of these stereotypes, he did not allow the stereotypes to affect his academic aspirations and behavior.

Sam: 0772 We don't go to class.
0773 Not going to graduate probably.
0774 Got people writing our papers for us
0775 I believe.
0776 What else.
0777 Probably collect money for somewhere.
0778 I don't know.

0779 I don't.

Charles: 0780 How do these stereotypes make you feel?

Sam: 0781 They don't make me feel no type of way.
0782 I mean it's obviously some people doing it
0783 but just-
0784 just black people doing it
0785 but also other people doing it also.
0786 It don't make the feel no type of way
0787 as long as I feel like I'm not doing it
0788 and I'm doing what I have to do.
0789 There's not much
0790 I can do about it.

His strong athletic identity is also demonstrated when analyzing the important decisions that have been made in Sam's life. Considerations around basketball have been at the center of every major decision. Sam decided to transfer to a high school in a different city entering his senior year because it would better prepare students to play division I basketball.

Sam: 0516 I think the first major decision basketball influenced
0517 was me transferring from original high school,
0518 my hometown school.
0519 I think that was the first-
0520 alright that was my second
0521 because I picked my college already.
0522 But I feel like that one impacted the most a times
0523 because I left my hometown
0524 and it was like people were thinking I was going to leave
0525 before because the town loved
0526 when they thought I felt like I needed to get-
0527 I never really did, I never really wanted to until
0528 I actually was on the AAU circuit
0529 with the better teams
0530 and I seen like these guys are legit
0531 and it's like I'm not playing against this all year round
0532 and that would hurt me if I wasn't playing against it all year round
so.
0533 I just- that- that really influenced me.
0534 And then I went and worked out with highly ranked high school
0536 and I seen just how hard they went
0537 and in a work out,

0538 it wasn't even practice.
0539 It was the end of the season
0540 and they were working out
0541 and I see how hard they were going
0542 and I was working out with them
0543 and I was just so tired and out of shape
0544 and I just couldn't perform like they were.
0545 I was getting my butt kicked
0546 like started playing one on one
0547 and I couldn't play basketball
0548 because I was so tired,
0549 so it was just like yeah that's definitely something
0550 that I need to change
0551 so I just had to make that move.

He also viewed basketball as being a higher priority in his life when compared to school. His major professional goal is playing in the NBA. Expanded discussion about Sam's career development and aspirations will be discussed in the next, but it is important to emphasize the importance of basketball in shaping his identity.

Charles: 0979 Currently, what is more important to you
0980 at this point in your life,
0981 basketball or school?

Sam: 0982 Probably basketball.
0983 Not even going to lie.
0984 I'm still healthy so I want to still try to fulfill those goals of
making it to the NBA
0985 and stuff like that but also school is just
0986 school is important,
0987 just very important
0988 because I want to be able to have accolades in school
0989 so whereas when I'm done playing basketball
0990 I can just find a job or you know.
0991 I don't want to have to come back and finish
0992 something or if I do,
0993 I want to finish my Masters or be going for a doctorate
0994 something like that,
0995 you know,
0996 so I don't want to come back to school just to finish my bachelors.
0997 I definitely want to graduate
0998 before I leave here.

Sam's role as a father is very important. Sam wanted to be able to provide for his son. He also embraced the responsibility of being a positive role model for other youth. Sam believed that his obligation of being a collegiate athlete is being a role model for youth. He appreciated the opportunity to graduate from college because many people are not afforded this opportunity. He also wanted to inspire youth to pursue higher education.

Charles: 1000 Rank your top three priorities and roles
 1001 in life and explain why.

Sam: 1002 Being a father definitely,
 1003 that's my number one.
 1004 I don't-
 1005 I want him to live an easy life,
 1006 but I also want him to learn
 1007 just lessons
 1008 and my experiences I can help him with that,
 1009 but I also have to let him live his too.
 1010 I realized that when I know he's about to go and do something
 1011 and hurt himself,
 1012 a lot of times I stop him,
 1013 but then there's a few time where I let him go
 1014 and let him learn for himself
 1015 and let him know he'll never do it again,
 1016 like touching something hot.
 1017 Like I told you not to touch it,
 1018 but after a while it's like you want to touch it that bad,
 1019 go ahead like you're going to learn.
 1020 So just being able to do that,
 1021 that's number one.
 1022 And then just being someone people can look up to,
 1023 especially him,
 1024 my son,
 1025 but just more people,
 1026 more kids as a whole you know,
 1027 like a lot of kids in my area look up to me
 1028 just because I'm playing basketball for University X,
 1029 but I want them to look up to me more than that
 1030 just cause I'm a graduate.
 1031 I want to be a graduate.
 1032 I want to graduate from school,

1033 for college,
1034 and a lot of people won't even have the chance to go to college
1035 so I just want them to learn at-
1036 my son especially-
1037 I want a lot of kids to learn a young age
1038 to make sure you keep your grades intact
1039 because worse comes to worse,
1040 at least you have your high school diploma
1041 or you can just get academic scholarships
1042 if not athletic scholarships
1043 so just always keep good grades that's definitely important.
1044 I feel like I didn't really keep my grades
1045 as good as possible in high school.
1046 I just did like necessary to say
1047 oh I don't have bad grades
1048 but I don't have good grades either,
1049 you know.
1050 And then lastly
1051 just probably just a basketball player.
1052 I want to be the best basketball player I can be.
1053 I don't want to leave no regrets in anything I do
1054 or anywhere I play anything like that.

Sam was also conscious of how race has influenced his life. Sam noticed changes in demographics within his neighborhood as he progressed from elementary to high school. The proportion of white students decreased as Sam entered middle and high school. Sam attributed this trend to lack of quality in education of his neighborhood schools. He mentioned that white families began to leave the community because the schools were not performing well standard state exams. Sam mentioned that the black families did not have the resources to leave the community and attend better school districts. Sam also noted that there was a disparity among ethnic minority students and white students that attended his high school. The white students were enrolled in advanced placement courses, while the African American and Latino students were not enrolled in advanced placement courses.

Charles: 0594 So I'm going to switch into talking about race a little bit.
0595 Describe your earliest memory of race differences.

Sam: 0596 I never really
0597 I didn't really see until high-
0598 like racism is that what you mean or

Charles: 0599 I mean just differences in race.
0600 It could be racism
0601 or I know you mentioned earlier that you kind of told the story
0602 about there was a difference between the one AAU team
0603 was predominately white and the other was predominately black,
0604 but any, any early memories or difference in race.

Sam: 0605 I guess you could say that I-
0606 just my schooling,
0607 like my school because I went to all city schools
0608 whereas and they were dominantly black, Hispanic,
0609 you know
0610 and like there's few white people
0611 and like that-
0612 the higher education,
0613 the higher I got in my education,
0614 like the less white people I seen
0615 because like middle school-
0616 elementary it was nothing but white-
0617 little white kids, but and us, and black people,
0618 and in middle school it was more Hispanics and blacks,
0619 and fewer whites, more whites were-
0620 their parents were transferring them to different counties
0621 and those are different little schools in our neighborhood,
0622 And then just high school,
0623 it became more evident because it was few whites
0624 and then like then the whites that were in our school,
0625 they were in just we had different communities
0626 and they were AP Honors,
0627 but that was like extra smart classes.
0628 Like they were taking college courses
0629 and I had a few of those classes myself,
0630 but that was pretty much it.

Charles: 0632 So when you saw those differences
0633 in the higher you went up from middle school to high school,
0634 and there were fewer whites,
0635 how did that make you feel
0636 or what were you thinking?

Sam: 0637 I didn't really feel no type of way about it.

0638 It really didn't affect me.
0639 Like I felt
0640 they were doing that because they knew they weren't-
0641 like I don't like they were getting a better education
0642 I felt. I don't-
0643 I have no idea like my first high school not-
0644 like they always used to talk about my high school state scores
0645 like not being so good-
0646 like they weren't bad
0647 but they weren't as good as the other schools
0648 so I feel like parents went there.
0649 I don't know like and they can actually afford that move.
0650 A lot of black people and Hispanics couldn't afford to move into
those neighborhoods
0651 for them to go to that school.

Sam was also conscious of his race in understanding the disparity among African American males entering college from his community. He noted that the majority of high school athletes from his community who have an opportunity to go to college are the white athletes. This trend was due to differences in their academic performance. People within Sam's community encouraged Sam to not end up like previous athletes who went to college but did not graduate.

Charles: 0670 Tell me the story of how being a black male athlete
0671 has affected your life.

Sam: 0672 It affected it just because-
0673 just being a black male athlete in my community
0674 it affected because there's been a few,
0675 there hasn't been that many to go to college
0676 from my city.
0677 Mainly the white athletes are the ones that go to college
0678 because of football and the just football and baseball
0679 and mainly because their grades were just better
0680 because like I said my high school wasn't known for their
schooling
0681 as much.
0682 We were just known for being good at basketball and football,
0683 mainly, like we weren't even that great in football,
0684 but that's the years I was-

0685 when my brother, his years were good at football.
0686 But just like there's been a few guys to go to college
0687 from my high school and eventually they wouldn't finish
0688 or they'll get kicked out
0689 and be back home like that-
0690 that's what everyone was telling me.
0691 Don't end up like someone else.
0692 Don't end up like blah-blah-blah
0693 and be back playing in the street park in the summer time.
0694 Like there's been a lot of those type guys.

Sam was proud of how African Americans progressed through the struggle of institutional and blatant racism. Sam's grandmother told Sam stories about the difficulties of living in the United States as an African American in the past.

Charles: 0743 Describe what makes you proud
0744 of your racial or ethnic background.

Sam: 0745 Just the struggle,
0746 being able to get out the struggle.
0747 A lot of people don't know like
0748 they don't I mean they know
0749 but like they don't understand
0750 what black people had to do to get to where we're at today
0751 and even today it's still like some racial discrepancy
0752 but it's not as bad so just being able to get out the struggle
0753 because I know my grandma used to talk about it all the time
0754 how hard it used to be for black people
0755 and stuff like that
0756 and my great grandma,
0757 she used to tell my mom stories
0758 and my mom told me those stories.
0759 My great grandma just passed last-
0760 two years ago something like that.
0761 She was 102
0762 so she was in the midst of it
0763 so and then my grandma
0764 she was in it to also so just having them
0765 just be able to tell me personal experiences
0766 and just tell me how /good it was/.
0767 The struggle used to be crazy for black people.

7.1.14.4 Career Development Tasks

Sam seemed to have developed secure attachment relationships with his mother. Sam developed a trust that helped when exploring various environments. Sam felt safe in fostering a future orientation and helped Sam have the confidence to plan for the future. When Sam was in elementary school, he aspired to be a firefighter or police officer. During middle school, he was interested in being an accountant because he developed good math skills. During the ninth and tenth grades, his focus shifted to being a professionally basketball player.

Sam: 0809 I remember when I was in like kindergarten,
0810 I wanted to be like a firefighter
0811 something like that.
0812 I can't-
0813 I think it was either a firefighter or police officer,
0814 something like that.
0815 And then when I got a little older,
0816 middle school or something like that,
0817 I was real good at math
0818 so I used to always say
0819 oh I want to be an accountant
0820 or something like that.
0821 Yeah I believe it was an accountant.
0822 Then high school,
0823 I was like I don't-
0824 I just want to go to the NBA.
0825 I don't want-
0826 that's all I was worried about:
0827 the NBA.

During this phase, Sam was consumed with seeking his goal of playing in the NBA. People advised Sam have a secondary plan, but he believed that he would have the opportunity to play professionally in Europe if he was not drafted by a NBA team. This perspective changed when Sam entered the eleventh grade. He began to see talented guys fall short of their aspirations play in the NBA because of injuries. Similarly, during this time, Sam's brother was the starting quarterback at a division I university and did not make the final roster for a NFL team. His

brother's experience helped to confirm that he needed to reflect on professions of interest in addition to playing basketball professionally.

0828 I was like,
0829 I'm going to the NBA.
0830 I don't-
0831 they're like you need a back-up plan.
0832 I was like I'll go overseas.
0833 I just wanted to go to NBA.
0834 And then once I got here,
0835 I started-
0836 like I started-
0837 like not even once I got here.
0838 Once I got to the 11th grade,
0839 my senior year, 11th grade-
0840 my senior year,
0841 I started wanting to look at types of majors
0842 I wanted to get into,
0843 just in case because once then
0844 you start seeing and playing against,
0845 start knowing and playing against a lot of guys
0846 who you think will get in the NBA
0847 or who have those same aspirations
0848 and just wouldn't make it or got hurt
0849 or something like that
0850 so I think a lot of that was with my brother
0851 because his aspirations was to play in the NFL
0852 and then around that time he just,
0853 it just didn't happen for him.
0854 He got signed-
0855 we thought-
0856 He got signed with a NFL team
0857 and then the next day
0858 he got cut
0859 so it was like one day in school my brother's on a NFL team
0860 The next day, he's cut.
0861 It's like-
0862 it was really one day.
0863 Yeah so it was like he couldn't even-
0864 like he didn't even make it to the city
0865 because it was like they signed him
0866 and then like he got cut like the next day.
0867 It was weird so it was like dang.

As a result, Sam developed an interest in criminal law. Sam's current academic major in college is administration of justice. He was interested in possibly seeking a career that required a business as he completed high school. However, Sam's older cousin persuaded Sam to not pursue a business major. His cousin pursued a business major in college while participating in a fraternity. His cousin had difficulties balancing the academic regiment and responsibilities of being in a fraternity. As a result, Sam was convinced that playing basketball and pursuing basketball at the division I level was not realistic.

Charles: 0940 When you start thinking about your plan b,
0941 what majors and what kind of areas were you thinking about?

Sam: 0942 The crime,
0943 criminal law,
0944 stuff like that.
0945 I wanted to go into criminal justice right out of high school.
0946 I was-
0947 my cousin,
0948 he's a business man.
0949 I was thinking about going that route,
0950 and then his son was like
0951 I don't think that's the best route
0952 because that's like,
0953 especially while you're an athlete,
0954 I barely had time because
0955 he had to do it and he ended up not going that route
0956 because he was in a frat or something like that he said.
0957 It was just time consuming.
0958 He was like it's going to be too-
0959 it's going to be real hard,
0960 real difficult.
0961 And then I seen what he was talking about
0962 when I had to take-
0963 I took a class my freshman year.
0964 I can't remember the name of it.
0965 I was like yeah I got to drop this class
0966 because I couldn't-
0967 It was just too time consuming you know.
0968 So I just took the criminal law route
0969 and that's where I really wanted to go in the first place.

The decision to pursue administration of justice instead of a business degree may have been an indication that Sam had a realistic view of his academic skill set. Sam noted in the interview that his first time earning a 3.0 grade point average was in college. However, if Sam explored an introductory course related to the business major, he may have realized that he had the potential skill set to pursue a business degree. Even with taking an introductory course in business there may have been difficulties with courses such as business calculus and economics which are prerequisites for the business major.

7.2 CONCLUSION

Each narrative features life experiences that have influenced the student-athletes' worldview. Each student-athlete has constructed their reality in a unique fashion. All of the narratives offer insight into the drive, motivation, determination and resilience of each student-athlete. The narratives provide context for understanding how each student-athlete will conceptualize experiences and relationships in the college environment. Specifically, the narratives offer a micro level view of how each student-athlete has constructed their career development attitudes. While each student-athlete has a distinctive story, there are commonalities that surface throughout the narratives.

8.0 APPENDIX B

8.1 PERSONAL NARRATIVE

8.1.1 Introduction

This study was designed to explore how role identity is related to career development attitudes among African American male student-athletes. I am a former African American male student-athlete who played NCAA Division I collegiate basketball. I also work with current collegiate student-athletes as an academic and life skills administrator. As a result, I am very connected to this research and the population being studied. This personal reflection is a way of connecting my personal experiences and my professional work to properly situate my role in the research and its outcomes. I wanted to ensure that I had an opportunity to reflect on my life's experiences so I can identify possible biases, in an effort to truly allow the study to describe the perspectives of my sample.

First, I assume that there will be common themes represented in my reflection and through the narratives of my interviewees, but more importantly, I want to be able to allow unique themes to also surface from the student-athlete narratives. Secondly, I want to share with the reader certain experiences of my life so they can have insight on how my worldviews have been influenced. The following reflection is my responses to the interview questions posed to my

sample. Obviously, these responses are retrospective, but they are my best attempt at capturing experiences that influenced my role identity and career development attitudes from early childhood through adolescence.

8.1.2 Family Background

My father's side of the family has its roots in Louisiana. My grandfather proudly told me that his great-grandfather owned land during slavery in Louisiana and still has a copy of the land deed. My grandfather arrived in Detroit in the mid-1930s when he was six years old. He was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His parents worked in an automobile factory in Detroit. In contrast, my grandmother came to Detroit from Georgia as child. Both of my grandparents are products of Detroit Public Schools. My grandfather graduated from Detroit Northern High School and my grandmother graduated from Detroit Northwestern High School. My grandfather mentioned that after he returned from serving in World War II he saw my grandmother "out of the corner of his eye" while in church service. This sparked a relationship which led to many years of marriage and three children.

My grandfather and grandmother had three children. My father was the youngest child. My father has two older sisters. He grew up in Detroit and lived across the street from my mother. My father and mother began dating in high school. They attended Cass Technical High School. Subsequently, they attended the University of Michigan. My parents are first generation college students. My grandfather on my mother's side of the family worked in a General Motors factory in Detroit. He was offered an athletic scholarship to attend a college in Florida, but decided to migrate to Detroit once he realized my grandmother was pregnant with my aunt. Both of my parents earned master's degrees from the University of Michigan in social work.

My mother has worked in Detroit Public Schools for her entire career. She is a social worker who focuses on students with mental, social and emotional disabilities. My father has worked at a male youth home and community organization named Don Bosco Hall for the majority of his career. He has held a range of positions, but eventually became the executive director of the organization. My parents gave birth to me and three years later gave birth to my sister. They filed for divorce when I was six years old. They both re-married and had children. My mother and stepfather had three boys and a girl. My father and stepmother had my brother. Overall, I am the oldest child and I have six siblings.

8.1.3 Background Information (My Life at a Glance)

I began playing organized basketball at the age of six. I played in the Police Athletic League (PAL) during elementary and middle school. Subsequently, I began playing in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) tournaments in middle school. I maintained over a 3.5 GPA throughout middle school and high school. I attended Golightly Educational Center during middle school and Martin Luther King Jr. High School, both are Detroit Public Schools. I made the varsity high school basketball team as a freshman. Our team won the Detroit Public Schools championship during my freshmen year. We played at a high level over the next three years, exceling in the Detroit Public Schools city tournament and in the Michigan state tournament. I also continued to play in AAU tournaments during the summer.

I struggled with continual knee injuries and had surgery in the tenth grade. During my senior year of high school, I quit the basketball team towards the end of the regular season. My high school coach and I did not agree on how I was being utilized and my injuries began to be overwhelming for me. I maintained good grades during high school and gained acceptance into

multiple universities within Michigan. I was also being recruited by small NCAA Division I institutions and NCAA Division II institutions to play basketball. Eventually, I decided to attend the University of Pittsburgh. One of the assistant coaches was from Detroit and he informed me that I could be a member of the varsity basketball team as a non-athletic scholarship player (also known as a walk-on). I decided to attend the University of Pittsburgh.

I played on the basketball team for four years. I earned a bachelor and master's degree in social work. I was an intern with the Student Life office in the athletic department and eventually was hired as a full time staff person. I coordinated the community service initiatives for the student-athletes and other life skills programming. While working in the athletic department, I began my doctoral work in higher education management in the School of Education. I also transitioned into a position as an academic counselor for the football and women's track team. Recently, I accepted a new position at a different institution as an Assistant Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Enrichment at the University of New Orleans.

8.1.4 Developmental Contextual Factors

8.1.4.1 Socioeconomic Status

My life was influenced by my parent's socioeconomic status. My mother and father earned master's degrees in social work. They are first generation college students. My mother had primary custody of me, however since my father was my basketball coach in middle school and for AAU summer tournaments during high school, I spent a lot of time living with my father. Often, my mother produced the sole income for the family. My stepfather struggled to keep consistent work, which often included security services or catering for small businesses and churches. He was not consistently at home, so my mother was the primary financial provider for

the family. Since she was providing for six children, there were times when our living situation was more aligned with the working poor. However, we always had a clean and safe home. We also had access to plenty of food. My father was more comfortable financially. My stepmother was also a social worker and the only other child in household was my younger brother. As a result, my sister (Ashley) and I never felt endangered of not having our basic physiological needs provided.

Although our physiological needs were met, our family was far from wealthy. Specifically, I was influenced by living in a capitalistic society. I remember wanting Jordan name brand shoes when I was ten years old playing the PAL basketball league. I saw commercials on television and more importantly, I watched the best basketball player of all time dominate with his Nike shoes. Periodically, my parents bought me a pair of the shoes during elementary school and I would wear the shoes to play basketball while in local recreational leagues.

When I entered middle school and high school, Nike began to market retro Jordan shoes. The company resold older models of his shoes. Once again, I wanted the popular shoes. This was also an opportunity to get the shoes that I did not have the opportunity to get when I was younger. In high school, kids would skip school and head to the mall when the shoe was released to ensure that they could get a pair. Nike never supplied enough pairs of the shoes so the demand soared allowing the company to raise the price. Many of my friends were robbed for their shoes while waiting for the city bus to arrive. There were even news stories of youth being shot or stabbed because they did not want to relinquish their prized possession. The shoes were extremely expensive but many of the buyers were relatively poor. At the time, the shoes cost 120 dollars plus sales tax.

Although I was not aware of it at the time, I grew up in a household that many would consider low income. I always had a clean home and food, but it was difficult for a single mother to raise such a large family. We moved to our second home because my mother found a gunshot hole in the wall over my youngest sisters' crib. My mother did not feel safe. Our second home was eventually foreclosed because of sudden increases in our mortgage rates as we were victims to the floating rates. Often, my mother used our financial situations as a way to teach me life lessons.

Specifically, my mother taught me the value of being humble. She did not have a problem with shopping in resale or thrift stores. There was a time when I felt embarrassed because she asked me to help her go through bags of clothes that were left in front of a home in a wealthy neighborhood. They placed these bags in front of their home to be picked up by the city's sanitation workers for the monthly "big garage pick-ups." My mother explained to me that people can be wasteful and that there are probably quality clothes in the bags. She was right. We washed the clothes and I was grateful that I looked past my pride and learned a lesson on practicality from my mother. This experience taught me that I cannot be prideful.

In spite of our financial difficulties, my mother always provided our basic needs and my siblings and I were never made to worry about family finances. Now I look back and wonder how she pulled off such a tremendous feat. A specific example stands out when I reflect on my mother's willingness to sacrifice for me and my siblings. When I was in the ninth grade, I asked my mother for the newest model of the Jordan shoe. The shoe was white with a cherry red trim. The retro Air Jordan brand shoes were named according to the order in which they were created. This shoe was named the retro 14. My mother was hesitant to commit. I decided to negotiate

with her. I asked my mother to purchase the new model of shoes if I earned all A grades on my ninth grade report card in January.

I knew how she valued excelling at school. She agreed to the deal. I eventually earned all A's and my mother complied with the agreement. In retrospect, I wish that I did not place my mother in compromising position. She probably endured stress financially from the purchase. As an adolescent, image and social status with my peer group was very important for me. Consequently, I valued the shoes and other popular clothing. My mother knew that excelling in high school would present positive opportunities for me. She made sacrifices to reinforce the message that education was important and she was willing to reward good performance in school.

8.1.4.2 Early Education

In addition to my basic physiological, safety and emotional needs being provided, I had access to parents who promoted and valued education. My parents placed me in a position at a young age to eventually access higher education. Similarly, my grandparents were huge promoters of valuing education. When I was in elementary school, my grandmother always asked which college I planned to attend. She was very proud that my father and aunt attended the University of Michigan. My grandmother reminded me and my sister that we could also attend the University of Michigan and that it was an excellent institution. The underlying message was that I was expected to attend college. My grandfather rewarded the grandchildren with money for A and B grades. As a result, I earned A and B grade throughout elementary school. The underlying message was that mediocre and failing grades were unacceptable.

Consequently, I had the opportunity to attend Golightly Educational Center in middle school which prepared me for acceptance into the Math, Science and Technology (MSAT)

program at Martin Luther King Jr. High School. Golightly Educational Center was a Detroit Public School that required students, who did not live in the neighborhood to apply for admission. My parents understood the importance of me receiving a quality education, so they sought ways to make sure I was enrolled in competitive programs. Golightly Educational Center prepared me to apply for the leading public high schools in Detroit including Martin Luther King Jr., Renaissance and Cass Technical High Schools. In the fall of 1998, I enrolled in the MSAT program at Martin Luther King Jr. High School.

8.1.4.3 Role Models

My direct role models were my parents. They provided a nurturing environment and were my biggest supporters. They offered a great example of being responsible adults and wonderful parents. They always emphasized the importance of excelling academically and demonstrating quality character. My mother attended my basketball games, enrolled me in summer camps and always took the time to help cultivate my dreams and aspirations. She understood the importance of receiving a quality education at an early age, so she fought to enroll me in the best programs offered by Detroit Public Schools. Since my parents were divorced, my father deliberately coached basketball teams so we could spend time together. Not only did he emphasize his values through discussions, he provided an example by living by his values.

Both of my parents earned master degrees in social work from the University of Michigan and were working professionals. Throughout childhood and adolescence, I admired what my parents stood for and today I continue to look up to them. Although sport figures served as role models athletically, my father and mother served as my direct role models off the court. I knew that I wanted to live a similar lifestyle as my father and one day build a similar relationship with my son. I wanted to bring joy into everyone's life as my mother was so dedicated. I was

fortunate to have a dedicated father, who also provided a blueprint for being successful in all aspects of life. I had a mother who laid a foundation for me spiritually and demonstrated how to love unconditionally. My father and stepmother (I simply refer to stepmother as mom) also provided an example of how to establish a healthy and loving marriage. Although my stepfather was not consistently in our lives, he was very supportive and loving when he was around.

During childhood and adolescence, sports figures also served as role models. I appreciated their dedication and performance on the basketball court. I respected NBA greats Isaiah Thomas, Joe Dumars, Michael Jordan, “Magic” Johnson, “Mugsy” Bogues, Larry Bird and Kevin Johnson. Additionally, since both of my parents attended the University of Michigan, I was “hazed” into being a Wolverine fan. As a result, I loved the Fab Five. They were a group of freshmen who eventually worked their way into the starting lineup at the University of Michigan during their first year. They played in consecutive National Championship games. Specifically, Jalen Rose and Chris Webber were from Detroit. I could relate to their style on and off the court and I wanted to see them succeed. During elementary and middle school, I would imitate their style in terms of dress and play on the court. I wore long shorts, black socks and matching compression shorts under my game shorts.

While in college, I also respected my academic advisor for athletics. Brian Hines was young and I was impressed by his professional demeanor and work ethic. As a freshman in college, I did not realize that I would eventually hold the same position nine years later as an academic counselor for collegiate student-athletes. As I entered early adulthood, I began to admire and respect athletes who were able to transcend beyond their playing career and utilize their experiences as an athlete to make them successful professionally after their playing career was exhausted. During college, if the athlete was conscious of their potential to build capacity in

vulnerable communities, was dedicated to positively impacting society or used sport to protest political/social injustice, I was more prone to view them as a role model. There are many examples, but Erving “Magic” Johnson is one of the athletes I admired the most.

Magic Johnson’s career was filled with amazing accomplishments. He won championships at every level; high school, college and five NBA titles. One of the best players of all time, he charmed audiences with his smile and pleasurable personality. Probably more impressive than his athletic accolades is his success off the court. Currently, Johnson is worth over \$700 million (Russano, 2011). He has a variety of major business ventures. Johnson also made sure to have his ventures positively impact low income and predominately African American communities. In particular, he opened Starbucks coffee shops and Magic Johnson Movie Theatres. Most recently, his company Johnson and Co. won the bid to own the professional baseball team the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Magic Johnson was featured on a n ESPN show called *Homecoming* hosted by Rick Reilly. During the show, Reilly interviewed Johnson in front of 4,000 people who sat in Jenison Fieldhouse, where Michigan State University played their home basketball games during the 1970s and 1980s. During the feature, Johnson reflected on his accomplishments throughout his basketball career (Russano, 2010). When asked about his business ventures during the television special, Johnson noted, “I was just dreaming to hopefully impact my community in a positive way; put people to work...Success is not whether you are successful, it’s how many people you help become successful.” When Rick Reilly asked Johnson about placing theatres in the low income community of Crenshaw in Los Angeles, California, Johnson replied:

At that time, minorities were the number one group of people going to movies, but we did not have movies in our community. I knew that if I put a brand new movie theatre there they would come...I was right in the middle of the Blood and Crips (street gangs). I talked to both gang leaders and told them that this theatre had to be off limits...I

talked to our construction company and gave both groups ten jobs each. We changed their lives.

Johnson was the first individual person to own a Starbucks franchise (Russano, 2011). He placed many of his business ventures in the African American community. He has also spoken out to educate people on HIV and the Aids disease. He was socially concerned with African American issues; likewise he was also in tune with other social concerns that impact a variety of cultures.

8.1.5 Identity Development

8.1.5.1 Athletic Identity

I was exposed to basketball and other sports at a very young age. I played in organized leagues beginning at the age of eight. In addition to loving the competition of playing basketball, it was a way for me to build a very strong relationship with my father. Since my parents were divorced, playing basketball offered additional time for me to spend with my father. He was my coach throughout elementary, middle school during the summers of high school. My family members and peers recognized that I excelled at playing basketball which helped to reinforce that basketball was an important aspect of my self-concept. Since basketball was a major aspect of my self-concept, I also was more inclined to learn life lessons from basketball. My personal values helped me to conceptualize how experiences with basketball should be interpreted and influence other aspects of my life.

At a very young age, I played for hours in the basement, pretending to play against imaginary competition. My father used bicycle wires to hang a rim in the basement of his apartment. When I played in the basement at my mother's house, I would use the section of the

ceiling which hung slightly lower than the other sections as a basket. Since the tile was made out of drywall, I mistakenly would put holes in the tile because I shot the ball too hard. This made my mother upset. Every Friday afternoon, my sister and I visited my grandfather and grandmother on my dad's side of the family. Once again I would play basketball in the basement. My grandfather cut the bottom of a milk crate, which served as a basketball hoop.

When I was eight years old, I played in the Police Athletic League (PAL). I played for a team named the Jake Boyd Road Runners. I played in the 10 year old and under division. We were the best team in the league. We practiced twice a week and played games on Saturdays. I learned the fundamentals of the game such as right hand and left hand lay ups, proper chest and bounce passes and shooting techniques. PAL was very competitive. At the age of eight, I learned that if I wanted to be best, I needed to work harder than everyone. I wanted to be the best on the Road Runners so I practiced passing and dribbling at home so I could be sharp in practice. I always had a basketball in my hand. I would dribble my rubber basketball for hours outside. I would practice dribbling the ball through my legs and around my back. I passed the ball against the house to make sure I had proper technique. My efforts paid off and I was one of the best on my team and our team was the best in the league. At an early age, I recognized how my skills continued to improve since I consistently practiced. The PAL league also helped to create an appetite to compete and win championships. It was a great feeling to see how my hard work individually and our efforts as a team were rewarded by winning a championship. The feeling was almost addictive. As I continued to play basketball, I wanted to have the satisfaction of winning.

My father eventually was involved in coaching basketball. He helped Larry Griffin coach a team called the Magic. This was an opportunity to spend time with my father during the week

and play the game I loved. Since my parents were divorced, my sister and I stayed with my father and stepmother every Friday. Additionally, we stayed with my dad and stepmother from Friday to Sunday on every second and fourth weekend. Our basketball team usually practiced on Mondays and Wednesdays at Winterhalter Middle School located on Detroit's west side. During the fifth and sixth grade many of my teammates lived near Winterhalter Middle School, so the location was convenient. My dad used his minivan to pick up my teammates who did not have a ride to practice.

We eventually practiced at the gym donated by NBA superstar and Detroit native Chris Webber. The Brewster Wheeler gym was located in the Brewster housing projects. During my seventh and eighth grade years, many of my teammates lived in this housing project, so it was more convenient to change practice locations. Our team was eventually involved in the American Amateur Union (AAU) basketball league. We played games across the state and across the country. When competing in the AAU league, we had vicious in-state rivalries with teams from the Flint area. In the fall of 1997, we won another PAL championship and in the summer of 1998 we won the AAU state championship. We beat our rivals from Flint, which made the victory even sweeter.

When I was in middle school, my peers deemed me as being the best basketball player in the school. Among other attributes, I was known for my athletic talent and potential. This recognition helped to develop my athletic identity as a salient aspect of my self-concept. When I entered Martin Luther King High School, I made the varsity basketball team as freshmen. Making the varsity team as a freshman contributed to my high school peers also viewing me as an athlete. This further solidified that sports was an important aspect of my identity.

There were a couple of main factors which influenced my decision to attend Martin Luther King Jr. High School. This school offered quality programs focusing on math and science and my best friend from Golightly Educational Center, Austin Garrett, planned on attending. In addition to these factors, basketball influenced my high school selection. Many of the guys on the varsity basketball team, including James Theus, Sam Hopes, Durand Walker, Mike Winans and Chuck Bailey played with an AAU team called the Family. So I knew the majority of the team, including one of my closest friends Mike Helms, because I played on the same AAU team in selected tournaments.

The head coach was also a former assistant at the University of Detroit Mercy. In middle school, I participated in Coach Perry Watson's basketball camps at the University of Detroit Mercy. As a result, entering the fall semester of high school was a smooth transition because I had friends attending the high school and I knew the basketball coach. I trained and conditioned with the basketball team in September. I followed the same formula which led to success in the past; work harder than the next person. I was one of few freshmen who volunteered to participate in fall conditioning and played pickup games at night with the varsity team. My hard work resulted in a place on the varsity team. Our high school team was very talented and we had a successful year. We won the city championship and lost in the state semifinals game. Although, I didn't play in many of the close scoring games that year, I viewed it as a great accomplishment to make a team that was filled with such talent. Many of my high school teammates earned NCAA Division I basketball scholarships to schools including Syracuse University, University of Michigan, Oakland University and University at Albany.

The tenth grade presented unique challenges. I struggled with knee issues since the sixth grade. The pain and swelling in my knee continued to bother me in the tenth grade. When I saw

a doctor about the issues, he mentioned that cartilage was loose and caused periodic swelling. After consulting with the doctor, my parents and I made the decision to have arthroscopic surgery. After surgery, I rehabilitated my knee diligently, but I was never able to fully recover physically. I continued to have issues with my knee throughout my career, which impacted my speed and ability to jump. Often when I was in pain, I ran with a noticeable limp. However, I refused to give up on the game I loved. I continued to play AAU basketball and during the summer entering my sophomore year my dad began coaching Team Detroit. Rodney Heard coached the junior and seniors and my dad and Duane Carter coached the sophomores. We played at a very high level and traveled throughout the state and across the country; including the prestigious Addidas Big Time Tournament in Las Vegas. As the tournament was appropriately named, this was “big time” basketball. Our team was sponsored by companies including Addidas and And 1. We received shoes, warm-up suits, t-shirts and travel bags, which were provided by the sponsoring companies.

During the eleventh grade, I played well during the high school season. I was in the starting lineup for the majority of the year for Martin Luther King. When I was not in the starting lineup, I was a reserve for the talented sophomore point guard Lonny Fulse. Our team lost in the regional round of the state finals. During the game against Detroit McKenzie High School, we were winning by over 20 points in the first half. The entire team was playing well. Once again, my knee gave me problems. In the second half while playing defense, I fell down on the court. I did not return to the game. Detroit McKenzie’s Calvin Wooten began to make three point shots from everywhere on the court. Our team could not stop the momentum. We lost a heart breaker. I felt helpless because I wanted to play to help my team battle. Although we lost in a heated clash against Detroit McKenzie High School, I did not have time to dislike Calvin Wooten. We

became teammates over the summer, when we played for Team Detroit during AAU tournaments. Calvin Wooten was a very talented player and eventually earned a basketball scholarship to play for Rutgers University. In addition to Calvin Wooten, other players on Team Detroit during my sophomore and junior years earned basketball scholarships at division I institutions including Maurice Ager at Michigan State, Cliff Brown at Kent State, Gary Ware at the Purdue University, Walt Walters at the Cleveland State University, Brandon Jenkins at Louisville University, Jonathon Kelly at the University of Detroit Mercy and Brandon Bell at Marquette University.

During the summer prior to my senior year, I was invited to participate in the Addidas ABCD camp in Teaneck, New Jersey. My coach for the camp was “Tiny” Morton. He coached point guards who developed into good college players. In particular, he coached Stephon Marbury, who was a superstar in the NBA at the time and an up-and-coming high school phenomenon, Sebastian Telfair. This camp featured the top high school players across the country. Specifically, current NBA superstar LeBron James and I were teammates during the camp. There was a lot of excitement and anticipation around the camp because LeBron James was entering his junior year of high school and was projected to be one of the best players to ever play high school basketball. There was also a great deal of eagerness around the matchup between LeBron James and Lenny Cooke.

Lenny Cooke was also ranked as one of the top players in high school basketball that year. During the camp, our team matched up against Lenny Cook’s team. Ironically, I was given the assignment to guard my AAU teammate from Team Detroit, Brandon Jenkins. Brandon was a very talented player and eventually received a scholarship to play basketball at Louisville University. As usual, LeBron James played magnificently including his game winning shot as

time expired on the game clock. The energy that filled the arena was unreal. I played in big games with large crowds before this camp but I knew that this particular game was special. It was something that I had not experienced before this moment. LeBron's performance during this camp helped jump start the media frenzy that would follow the superstar throughout his career. However, Lenny Cooke did not have a prosperous professional basketball career.

Other players who attended the camp eventually played in the NBA including Raymond Felton, Charlie Villanueva, Leon Powe, Trevor Ariza, Sebastian Telfair and Allan Ray. This was an unbelievable experience. More importantly it taught me another life lesson. It taught me that often opportunities are presented because of relationships that have been built and how people perceive your character. Rodney Heard and my father developed a close relationship, which afforded me the opportunity to participate in the ABCD camp. If Coach Heard did not recommend me for the camp, I would not have been invited. Although, I was a very solid player, I am sure that his recommendation for such a prestigious camp was predominately based on his relationship with my father. He also respected my polite demeanor around authority figures, including coaches, parents and teachers.

During the summer going into my senior year of high school, I was dedicated to improving weaknesses in my game. In addition to playing in the ABCD Camp, I played very well in our high school summer league hosted by St. Cecilia church. My high school coach also noticed my efforts. My jump shot improved. I was in very good physical shape. In addition to working out with my high school teammates over the summer, I spent extra time conditioning with my cousin, who at the time played football at Duke University. At the beginning of the fall during our one-on-one meetings, my high school coach mentioned that it was my time to lead the team on the court. As we entered the fall of my senior year, I began to suffer from symptoms

related to my nagging knee injury. My coach took me out of the starting lineup. I was very disappointed. Entering the fall, I was confident that this was going to be a great season. I used the formula that worked well in the past; work hard and benefit from the results. This time the results were not necessarily favorable. I wanted to be in the starting lineup during my last season. I wanted to be a major contributor to our team's success. I did not want my injury to prohibit me from making the moves that I envisioned in my mind.

During the summer and fall, I began receiving recruiting letters from mid major universities and Division II colleges. I continued to receive letters during the fall. Some coaches contacted my father while others contacted my high school coach. The entire process was stressful because I wanted to perform well and have an opportunity to play basketball in college. As the year progressed, I noticed that I had more opportunities to play at a Division II college than playing a Division I school. However, I had my eyes set on Colgate University. Colgate was known for being an excellent academic institution. They were in contact with my father and needed a point guard. The coach at Colgate mentioned to my father that they needed to follow up with my high school coach. As the year progressed, Colgate was not as interested as they were during the summer and the beginning of the year.

My knee continued to give me problems. In addition, there was tension between my high school coach and me. Subconsciously, I did not feel that he was pushing for me to be recruited by Colgate. In addition, he rotated me in and out of the starting lineup. I was more frustrated that my knee would not let me perform physically. I worked my whole life to build a set of skills, but I was not able to perform due to physical problems. A specific situation that was very frustrating was before a game against Southfield High School. My knee felt fine earlier in the day. As I began to warm up, my knee locked and became very stiff. I had limited mobility. Five minutes

before the start of the game, I informed Coach White that I would not be able to play. It was a helpless feeling. I was disappointed because I couldn't compete and I also felt that I put my coach in a difficult situation having to change his game plan minutes before the game.

As result, I made the decision to quit the team towards the end of the regular season. I made the decision after a great win against one of our rivals, Detroit Murray Wright High School. I cried that night. I felt that I lost my first love. As I reflect on the situation, I should have completed the year to prove to myself that I could overcome one of the biggest barriers that I had faced at that point in my life. It is something that I am not proud of. This experience taught me that I should never quit on goals that I aspire to achieve. More importantly, I should not quit on my teammates and coaches. I did not come to this realization in time to ask to be allowed back on the team. Fortunately, I earned good grades in high school would be accepted to universities and colleges based on my academic performance. I was accepted into the University of Michigan and Illinois Wesleyan College. However, I continued to work out every day.

In March, I received a call from Coach Heard, he mentioned that I could attend the University of Pittsburgh and be a member of the varsity basketball team. One of the assistant coaches, Ernie Ziggler knew about me from playing on Team Detroit and actually traveled with us to the Ball State basketball camp when I was in the eighth grade. I was accepted to Pitt and placed on the team as a walk-on. This was a wonderful experience. I was able to continue to play the game I loved. I was a member of the Big East regular season and tournament championship teams. We played in the NCAA tournament every year that I was on the team. Our team competed against current NBA superstars such as Carmelo Anthony, Dwayne Wade, Rudy Gay, Ben Gordon and Devin Harris.

8.1.5.2 Importance of Sports in Detroit

Historically sports have functioned to serve a variety of purposes for African Americans and their communities. Similar to other ethnic groups, African Americans have emphasized the importance of sports at various levels. The importance was emphasized by encouraging youth to participate in leagues and play sport during leisure time. The importance of sports was emphasized by the community involvement in elementary, middle and high school sports. Growing up in Detroit, I witnessed and lived these dynamics. The Police Athletic League (PAL) facilitated several sport leagues with an array of teams from the east and west side of Detroit. Parents and family members came out to support the youth who played basketball, football and baseball. PAL also offered other sport leagues.

I noticed that the same coaches who ran teams in the PAL basketball league also followed our development during high school. I saw similar faces at my high school at Martin Luther King Jr. It was great to see that people were interested in seeing you play. It also sent the message that sports were important in Detroit. People followed the professional teams and were passionate fans. Whether it was during family gatherings or if you were being introduced to someone for the first time, often Detroiters shared the commonality of cheering for the Lions, Tigers, Red Wings or Pistons. Interestingly, many Detroiters also followed high school sports. The city championship for the Detroit Public School high school basketball was conducted at the Cobo Hall in downtown Detroit. This is the same arena which held functions such as the International Auto Show. This arena also was the home of the Detroit Pistons during the 1980s. Cobo Hall drew large crowds of spectators for the Detroit Public High School championship games. The state of Michigan high school championships were held at on Michigan State University's campus at the Breslin Arena. These games would also draw very large crowds.

Exposure to sport at an early age, public recognition of my athletic success and sport on various levels being a staple in Detroit were factors that helped to create a high athletic identity for me as a youth. Other factors influenced my racial identity development.

8.1.5.3 Racial Identity

It is difficult for me to remember my earliest memory of race differences. Growing up in Detroit and attending public schools, the majority of children were African American. In each grade level, I had a couple of classmates who were of different ethnic background including Irish, Latino or Italian. I was aware of differences in race but it did not get in the way of me having friendships with people who were of a different racial backgrounds. However, my closest friends were African American. I am not sure if subconsciously I gravitated towards people who had common interests or if I was socialized to feel more comfortable around African Americans. Another explanation could have been based around the fact that the majority of students who attended elementary, middle and high school were African American, so there was a high probability that my closest friends would be African American.

I remember early memories of race differences when traveling to play basketball in elementary and middle school. Often, my teams were predominately African American. When traveling outside of Detroit, we played teams that were predominately white. I was conscious of certain stereotypes. As African Americans and Detroiters, we were expected to be tougher and more aggressive than our counter parts from suburban areas. These stigmas were subtle but apparent. I recall ethnocentric comments made by other black teammates such as “you don’t lose to boys from the suburbs.” It was expected that predominately white teams from suburban areas would have players who were highly skilled shooters but unable to defend against a high pace tempo.

8.1.5.4 Social Stereotypes

As I reflect, these stereotypes have been perpetuated throughout history. Throughout my life, people held stereotypical views about abilities and roles on sports teams based on race. For example, many stereotypes have been associated with African Americans being viewed as being physically superior and intellectually inferior (Sartore & Cunningham, 2006). These ideologies may be unconscious by many people but result in explicit actions. A study conducted in the 1990s analyzed televised pro football games on several major networks. The study revealed that the comments made on-air by the announcers were biased in that most of the positive comments relating to physical characteristics or talents were describing black athletes. Eighty-two percent described black athletes, while 18 percent describe white athletes. Conversely, in regards to cognitive abilities and intelligence of the athletes, white athletes received 72 percent of the comments (Feagin, 2000). The white men were portrayed as “thinking men” and intellectually savvy. These images and stereotypes are often translated into professional fields, when the former athletes were seeking administrative positions. Systematic racism involves taking into account the history of how these stereotypes have been perpetuated and continues to surface in various capacities (Feagin, 2000).

I believe that stereotypical racial views of athletes are not as blatant as previous generations but are still relevant today. As I watch collegiate and professional sports, I noticed comments about athletes being “smart” on the court. I have noticed that there seems to be less racial bias relating to who fits this mold in basketball. However, football seems to be a different story. Although, there are more African American quarterbacks and head coaches than in the past, head coaches and quarterbacks still seem to be dominated by people who are not racial minorities. When I tell people that I played basketball at the University of Pittsburgh, people

wonder if I was on an athletic scholarship. Making this distinction highlights the relevance of social stereotyping in society. Unfortunately, if I received an athletic scholarship, there would be a greater risk that I would be viewed as a dumb jock. As a college student, I approached my academic responsibilities with seriousness. Other student-athletes who earned an athletic scholarship are also dedicated to excelling academically. In my opinion, often there is a stereotype that all collegiate student-athletes are not serious about their academic responsibilities.

8.1.5.5 Ethnic Pride

Overall, I am very proud of my racial and ethnic background. As an ethnic group, African Americans have overcome social injustice, blatant discrimination and institutional racism. We have demonstrated resilience and advancement. I am very appreciative of the sacrifices that were made by generations of African Americans who have paved the way for my generation. In particular, African Americans have excelled athletically, politically and socially which contributed to the movement of demanding equity. While there are a multitude of African American athletes who utilized sport to make issues of equity and social justice public, recently I have read about people who were inspiring to me. Rob Ruck, a professor in the History Department at the University of Pittsburgh, whom I have admired since my undergraduate studies, recommended readings that may be worthwhile when exploring African Americans who have historical significance. This was a unique experience. I was able to explore how throughout history African Americans have a tremendous role in the evolution of sports in the United States and throughout the world. I was also able to gain an understanding of the historical role of sports in the African American community.

8.1.6 Career Development Tasks

8.1.6.1 Career Aspirations in Elementary through High School

When I was in elementary school, I was interested in a variety of career fields. I envisioned myself being a doctor, business man, teacher or professional athlete. My imagination would allow me to consistently change these interests. My family routinely asked me about my favorite subjects in school and career field interests. Regularly, I entertained the question “what do you want to be when you grow up”. My family created an environment where I could develop a concern about my future career. My grandparents promoted academic excellence. They rewarded the grandchildren with two dollars for each A grade earned and one dollar for each B earned. We did not receive money for C grades. This helped to reinforce that grades were important and that we should strive to get the best grades possible.

In addition to paying us for acceptable grades, before my grandmother passed she consistently asked about whether I made a decision about which college to attend. Although, I was only in elementary school at the time, she engrained the idea that the University of Michigan was an excellent institution and that she wanted me to attend this university because my parents and aunt attended. Beyond promoting the University of Michigan, she set the standard of not questioning whether I was going to attend college. The real question was “Which college was I going to attend.”

I continued to shape my career aspirations throughout high school. I enrolled in the Math Science and Technology (MSAT) program at Martin Luther King Jr. High School. At this point in my life, I was interested in pursuing a career in a health field. I was interested in being a physician who worked with professional athletes or a dentist. I did not pursue internships or job shadowing opportunities in these fields in high school, so I did not have a realistic view of what

the job entailed. I knew that I was interested in subjects related to science in school. I wanted to earn a salary that would give me a comfortable life style. An important experience in my life was associated with having surgery on my knee.

In high school, I earned money by cutting grass and cleaning the offices at a nonprofit organization named Don Bosco Hall. My father was the director there so he gave me a job working there. During my senior year, I also worked at Frank's Nursery and Crafts. My role was to load the customer's vehicles with heavier purchases including mulch, marble rock and trees. I also cleaned the store and watered plants in the greenhouse. Working these jobs allowed me to have money for social activities. These jobs helped me to develop skills related to professional etiquette, timeliness and customer service. Just as importantly, these jobs helped me to confirm that if I worked hard, I could excel by doing quality work. My manager at Frank's Nursery and Crafts reinforced the idea that hard work led to accolades and acknowledgement by supervisors. In return, he allowed me to work extra shifts and be paid over-time when I needed extra money to pay for social activities and events during my senior year of high school.

Once I arrived at the University of Pittsburgh in the fall of 2002, I attempted the prerequisites for the physical therapy major in the School of Rehabilitation Science. I had a very demanding schedule during the first semester. I was enrolled in chemistry, English composition and microeconomics. I passed all of my courses but earned a C in the chemistry course and micro economics. My expectations were that I wanted to at least earn a B average in all my classes because I knew that gaining admission into graduate school was competitive. During the second semester, I failed the infamous Foundations of Biology course. Often, this course was referred to as a "weeder" course because of the vast amount of students wanting to pursue majors related to health fields at the University of Pittsburgh. This course was often a prerequisite for

many of the majors related to the health fields. Many students were not able to earn a B grade to be competitive for their desired majors, programs and schools. I fit snugly into this category.

This experience was a turning point in my academic career. It forced me to reevaluate my career options. I had discussions with my parents and my academic advisor for athletics. They suggested that I reflect on attributes within the health fields, particularly sports medicine that sparked an interest for me. After a long deliberation, I decided that the overarching motive was to find a field where I could help people and continue to be involved in sports. I decided that I wanted to pursue a social work degree. My mother, father, stepmother and aunt were social workers. During a career fair hosted by the athletic department, I was introduced to the director of admissions for the School of Social Work. Our discussion confirmed that the Bachelor in Arts in Social Work (BASW) degree was a worthwhile pursuit. This degree would allow me to get a job helping people and my background as an athlete would allow me to work in the sports field. The social work program was a great fit. I enjoyed the courses. In addition, through the field placement requirement, I was able to intern with our athletic department through their life skills programming for student-athletes.

My struggle with biology and chemistry were great experiences. I learned to persevere when faced with academic challenges. I learned how to study and adjust to my learning style. I was also afforded the opportunity to study with a great friend at the time, Celeste France. She had similar ambitions of being admitted into the School of Rehabilitation Science. We spent countless hours in the Hillman library studying for exams and completing our respective projects. Our friendship eventually grew and we began to date. Over time our relationship matured and we ultimately were married. She helped me to develop a discipline academically, but also encouraged me to pursue my dreams even if a profession in sports medicine was not

realistic. She provided encouragement and inspiration for me to push further academically and to continually develop personally. I am grateful that I was fortunate to build a relationship with someone who offered tremendous support, encouragement and love and continues to do so today.

During my field placement with the athletic department, I was responsible for coordinating the community service initiatives for the student-athletes. I also assisted with other commitment areas of the program including career and leadership development. I planned on applying for community relations jobs for professional sport teams. I also wanted to work for the NBA's community initiative called "NBA Cares." During my senior year, I applied for multiple internships including the NCAA internship. Additionally, I wanted to pursue a master degree in social work. I approached an associate athletic director who managed the compliance and student life office asking about opportunities to be a graduate assistant. She mentioned that this position did not exist, but that I needed to continue to work hard and there may be some opportunities in the future. I was very fortunate to be able build a relationship with her. Eventually, she created a position which allowed me to pursue a master degree. More importantly, she became my mentor. I was very fortunate because she was one of the best in the profession. I learned many practical lessons about professionalism but she also reinforced that building meaningful relationships is key. I became very close with everyone in the unit. We developed very strong relationships. We were very supportive of each other and had great chemistry. We even attended family functions outside of work.

As a graduate assistant, I was given more responsibilities. I completed a master's degree in social work and decided to further my education. After multiple discussions with Celeste, I decided to enroll in the higher education management doctoral program in the School of

Education. Simultaneously, our life skills program received funding from an alumnus who would eventually fund two additional full time positions working with the program. I had a full time job doing something that I tremendously enjoyed. During my senior year of undergrad, I expressed interest in helping athletes develop academically. Eventually I was approached by one of my former academic counselors, who was the Director of the Academic Support Services for Student-Athletes, about a job opportunity. I decided to pursue this position because it would expose me to another aspect of student development. The location of my office was literally across the hall from my old office but not working in the unit that meant so much to me was a difficult decision.

I became an academic counselor working in the Academic Support Services for Student-Athletes (ASSSA) office at the University of Pittsburgh. I worked predominately with the football team and women's track team. Recently, I transitioned into a new position at the University of New Orleans. I am an Assistant Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Enrichment. My career has been fulfilling and challenging. Most importantly it is engaging and aligned with my interests. My life experiences and academic regiment have prepared me to be competent in this field.

8.1.7 Conclusion

There were multiple purposes for me to include a reflection piece on life experiences that have shaped my identity and worldviews. In particular, I wanted to flush out ideas and describe significant experiences that may have influenced my worldview. The reflection allows the reader to have insight on why I may have considered the framework implemented in this study. Major themes that have shaped my high athletic identity include exposure to sports at an early age,

reinforcement of the importance of sport by family members and the acknowledgment of the importance of sports in my residential and cultural communities. I was fortunate to have the influence of variety of role models; my parents being the most influential. These roles models helped to shape my view on the importance of education and pursuing my professional aspirations.

My parents, wife and mentors helped me identify which professions were attainable and realistic. They also helped me develop confidence in pursuing my professional goals. Throughout my life there have been a variety of factors that have helped shape my role identity. My views on the role of sports, race, gender, spirituality and career have been heavily influenced by family, my support network, faculty mentors, professional mentors and role models. Chief values that have been consistent in my life are working hard, being a person of integrity and building lasting relationships. In addition to these values, I have also been influenced by societal factors including the media and hip hop culture. I continuously have transactions with my social environment and reciprocally, I influence systems within my environment. This study is an attempt to identify factors within the sample's environment that have influenced their worldviews, in particular their career development attitudes.

9.0 APPENDIX C

9.1 SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

This section includes the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS) and the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI). The Career Development Inventory can be accessed at www.vocopher.com.

Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)

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

Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)

1. Overall, being black has very little to do with how I feel about myself.
2. It is important for black people to surround their children with black art, music and literature.
3. Black people should not marry interracially.
4. I feel good about black people.
5. Overall, blacks are considered good by others.
6. In general, being black is an important part of my self-image.
7. I am happy that I am black.
8. I feel that blacks have made major accomplishments and advancements.
9. My destiny is tied to the destiny of other black people.
10. Blacks who espouse separatism are as racist as white people who also espouse separatism.
11. Blacks would be better off if they adopted Afrocentric values.
12. Black students are better off going to schools that are controlled and organized by blacks.
13. Being black is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.
14. Black people must organize themselves into a separate black political force.
15. In general, others respect black people.
16. Whenever possible, blacks should buy from other black business.
17. Most people consider blacks, on average, to be more ineffective than other racial groups.
18. A sign of progress is that blacks in the mainstream of America more than ever before.
19. I have a strong sense of belonging to black people.
20. The same forces which have led to the oppression of blacks have also led to the oppression of other groups.
21. A thorough knowledge of black history is very important for blacks today.
22. Blacks and whites can never live in true harmony because of racial differences.
23. Black values should not be inconsistent with human values.

24. I often regret that I am black.
25. White people can never be trusted where blacks are concerned.
26. Blacks should have the choice to marry interracially.
27. Blacks and whites have more commonalities than differences.
28. Black people should not consider race when buying art or selecting a book to read.
29. Blacks would be better off if they were more concerned with the problems facing all people than just focusing on black issues.
30. Being an individual is more important than identifying oneself as black.
31. We are all children of a higher being, therefore we should love all races.
32. Blacks should judge whites as individuals and not as members of the white race.
33. I have a strong attachment to other black people.
34. The struggle of black liberation in America should be closely related to the struggle of other oppressed groups.
35. People regardless of their race have strengths and limitations.
36. Blacks should learn about the oppression of other groups.
37. Because America is predominately white, it is important that blacks go to white schools so that they can gain experience interacting with whites.
38. Black people should treat other oppressed people as allies.
39. Blacks should strive to be full members of the American political system.
40. Blacks should try to work within the system to achieve their political and economic goals.
41. Blacks should strive to integrate all institutions which are segregated.
42. The racism blacks have experienced is similar to that of other minority groups.
43. Blacks should feel free to interact socially with white people.
44. Blacks should view themselves as being Americans first and foremost.
45. There are other people who experience racial injustice and indignities similar to black Americans.

46. The plight of blacks in America will improve only when blacks are in important positions within the system.
47. Blacks will be more successful in achieving their goals if they form coalitions with other oppressed groups.
48. Being black is an important reflection of who I am.
49. Blacks should try to become friends with people from other oppressed groups.
50. The dominant society devalues anything not white male oriented.
51. Being black is not a major factor in my social relationships.
52. Blacks are not respected by the broader society.
53. In general, other groups view blacks in a positive manner.
54. I am proud to be black.
55. I feel that the black community has made valuable contributions to this society.
56. Society views black people as an asset.

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