

RACE APPROPRIATE SPORTS: IS GOLF CONSIDERED MORE APPROPRIATE
FOR WHITES COMPARED TO RACIAL MINORITIES?

A Thesis

by

ANTHONY C. ROSSELLI

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

August 2011

Major Subject: Sports Management

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Approved by:

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	Paul E. Keiper
Committee Members,	Ben Welch
Head of Department,	Richard Kreider

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ABSTRACT

Race Appropriate Sports: Is Golf Considered More Appropriate for Whites
Compared to Racial Minorities? (August 2011)

Anthony C. Rosselli, B.S., Texas A&M University

Co-Chairs of Advisory Committee: Dr. George B. Cunningham
Dr. Paul E. Keiper

For various reasons, certain races tend to play particular sports. Sports with low costs of participation (e.g., basketball and football) have higher percentages of minority participants relative to sports with high costs of participation (e.g., golf). In addition to the cost of participation being a deterrent, stereotypes can also play a role into who plays various sports. Certain races tend to feel most competent in a particular sport (e.g., African Americans in basketball). This study focuses on the degree to which stereotypes contribute to the under representative rates of minorities in golf, compared to their overrepresented White counterparts. Data were collected from 217 students at a large US public university. A pilot test was used to develop a scale depicting the “general golfer”. In the primary study, participants used a 7-point scale to rate the degree to which the “general golfer”, Whites, Asians, Hispanics, and African Americans exhibited these characteristics. Examples of these characteristics include “refined”, “etiquette”, and “skillfulness”.

The scale items were all reliable. The correlation between the general golfer and Whites was the strongest ($r = .50$), followed by Asians ($r = .36$), Hispanics ($r = .29$), and African Americans ($r = .23$). The correlation between the general golfer and Whites was

significantly stronger than correlations between the general golfer and African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians, t 's > 2.3 , p 's $< .05$. In addition, Whites were viewed as more appropriate for golf relative to racial minorities.

Stereotypes can influence which races people view as appropriate and not appropriate for golf. These stereotypes can in turn impact participation, or lack thereof, of certain races in golf. If certain racial groups are not considered appropriate for a sport in which mental strength, etiquette, and persistence are valued, this could also impact access to jobs in which these characteristics are also valued. In addition, these stereotypes can potentially lead to self-limiting behavior by the negatively affected races.

DEDICATION

To my wife Claire: thank you for supporting me through this journey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First I would like to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for providing me with a meaning and purpose to my life. I also would like to thank my wife, Claire, for her love and support during the long hours put into this research. Appreciation also goes to my parents, John and Irma Rosselli, and my brothers Gino and Joey for their encouragement. Finally, I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Cunningham, and my committee members, Dr. Keiper and Dr. Welch, for their guidance and support throughout this process. I have benefited from their experience and help in my research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
Theoretical framework	4
Contents of thesis	6
II LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
Defining race	7
Race in sport.....	8
Impact of race on sport participation.....	10
Problems associated with race and golf	12
Theoretical framework	14
Ethnicity/sub cultural hypothesis	15
Social dominance orientation	16
Research questions	17
III METHODOLOGY.....	19
Participants	19
Measures.....	19
Procedure.....	20
IV RESULTS.....	22
V DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	27
Conclusion.....	29

	Page
REFERENCES	31
APPENDIX A	36
VITA	39

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		Page
1	Means, Standard Deviations, Bivariate Correlations, and Reliability.....	24
2	Means, Standard Deviations, and t-scores	25

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Individuals play sports for various reasons. Some enjoy the thrill of competition and the joy of victory. Others participate merely for the health benefits regular exercise provides (LaChausse, 2006). Upon further inspection, the reasons why one person chooses to participate in a contact sport, such as basketball, versus a noncontact sport, such as gymnastics, can differ on a deeper level than simply exercise or pleasure. Research has shown that certain sports are considered by society as sex or gender appropriate. For example, among adolescents, football is considered unacceptable for girls and gymnastics is unacceptable for boys (Hannon, Soohoo, Reel, & Ratliffe, 2009). Males who participate in sports that are considered more feminine in nature are often ostracized and labeled a “sissy” (Elling & Knoppers, 2005). Females participating in masculine sports have their femininity called into question by their peers. In order to avoid such ridicule, many males and females avoid participation in sports that are considered inappropriate (Guillete, Sarrazin, & Fontayne, 2000).

The media also plays a role in defining the sex appropriateness of certain sports. Studies have shown that males are overrepresented in media coverage of sport, and females are greatly underrepresented (Bernstein, 2002). ESPN, America’s leading sports information television station, devotes a great majority of its broadcast time to men’s sport. The major focuses of its broadcasts are the most popular male sports: football, basketball, baseball, and hockey. These sports are traditionally categorized by society as

This thesis follows the style and format of the *Journal of Sport Management*.

masculine due to their aggressive nature (Koivula, 2001). The Top Ten Highlight portion of the program emphasizes and glorifies the violent aspects of football and hockey by calling vicious hits highlights. This type of coverage praises and inflates the extreme masculinity of these sports, and encourages the male appropriateness stigma of these sports.

Sport participation also varies among different ethnic groups and races. Certain racial and ethnic groups prefer participating in specific sports and activities (Greendorfer, 1994). A look at the professional sport leagues in America will demonstrate this idea. The National Football League (NFL) and National Basketball Association (NBA) each have a large percentage of racial minority participants, 67% and 82% respectively are African Americans (Lapchick, 2010a, b). Major League Baseball (MLB), National Hockey League (NHL), and Professional Golfers Association (PGA) have traditionally been composed of White males. Sports that do not cost a great deal of money to participate in, such as basketball and football, have a large percentage of racial minority participants. This is likely due to the lower amount of discretionary income that minorities have to spend on leisure activities (Hibbler & Shiner, 2002). Sports with high costs of participation, such as golf, hockey, and baseball, have a larger percentage of White participants than minorities.

Eitzen and Sage (2009) discuss the idea that culture plays a part in sport participation among races. What a culture deems acceptable or popular will likely influence members of that culture's participation rates in certain sports. To emphasize this point, Ogden and Hilt (2003) state that basketball has become the main sport in

African American culture. They claim that African American youth are more likely to gravitate towards basketball because the culture values it above other sports. To further support this ideology, Harrison, Lee, and Belcher (1999) discovered that African Americans perceive themselves to have the highest competency in basketball, relative to other sports. Whites showed greater perceived competency in golf and baseball than African Americans.

Role models and icons also contribute to this construct. The African American community largely reveres Michael Jordan as an icon and hero. Jordan, arguably the greatest basketball player of all time, and an African American, was the face of the NBA in the 1990's. Jordan's shoe and clothing line is a worldwide brand and symbol of success (Kellner, 2001). His impact on the participation of African Americans in basketball cannot be denied. Similar associations can be made with Whites and golf participation. Jack Nicklaus, Ben Hogan, and Arnold palmer, all White males, are commonly referred to as three of the greatest golfers of all time. Each golfer, similar to Jordan, has his own line of clothing, clubs, and instructional merchandise that can be purchased by his fans. The presence of a role model can influence one's participation in sport.

Given that individuals choose their sporting activities based on social pressures and cultural influences, an interesting topic for research is whether or not certain sports are considered race appropriate. Research has clearly shown that society views certain sports as gender appropriate, but is there merit to the idea that certain sports are also race appropriate?

Theoretical framework

The ethnicity or sub cultural hypothesis provides a framework for the underrepresentation of various ethnic groups in sport. According to Floyd, McGuire, Shinew, and Noe (1994), this theory states that:

Minority underparticipation or intergroup variation results from differences between racial or ethnic groups in values systems, norms, and socialization patterns. This explanation suggests that regardless of socioeconomic standing, cultural processes are more important in explaining variation between blacks and whites in leisure participation patterns (p. 159)

This theory supports and helps to explain the findings by Ogden and Hilt (2003) and Harrison et al. (1999), which show certain groups to be more prone to play certain sports. It can be an effective guide in evaluating which sports and activities cultures value.

Social dominance orientation (SDO) can provide insight as to why an individual would view golf as appropriate for certain races and inappropriate for others. According to Heaven and Quintin (2003), SDO can be defined as an individual's tendency to prefer hierarchal social structures over more egalitarian ones. SDO has shown to be the strongest correlate of most forms of prejudice (Heaven & Quintin, 2003). Utilizing this construct, an individual who views one race as inferior would likely deem sports that are considered upper class, prestigious, and refined to be appropriate for certain races. Where a people group views themselves in the societal hierarchy could influence their choice of sport participation.

The realm of golf provides an example of sport appropriateness, in particular the existence of private clubs. Golf is historically considered a White social space. The creation of the private club has allowed the wealthy to display their upper class status with the aura of exclusivity. Davidson (1979) states that membership to private clubs has nothing to do with golfing ability, and social considerations are the determining factor. In a typical private club setting, new members are invited by old members. Membership initiation fees can be quite expensive, and additional monthly fees also increase the cost of membership. This high cost is not easily attainable to lower socioeconomic status individuals. As Cunningham (2011) describes, racial minorities, in general, do not have as much discretionary income as Whites. This fact coupled with the stereotype that golf is a “rich White man’s game” can potentially cause minorities to feel that golf is not an appropriate sport for them to participate in.

Minorities have historically been underrepresented in golf participation. A study by the National Golf Foundation (2010) revealed that minority golfers composed 21% of the total golfers from 2007 to 2009. This study also states that minorities make up 33% of the American population. The purpose of this thesis is to discover if persons perceive golf as a race-appropriate sport for some (e.g., Whites) but not others (e.g., Asians, African Americans, and Hispanics). Results would have implications for participatory decisions among persons from various races.

The following research questions are the focus of this paper:

RQ1: Are the attributes people associate with golf related to those associated with different racial groups?

RQ2: Do people perceive golf as more appropriate for some races over others?

RQ3: Does SDO influence how people view golf as appropriate for different races?

Contents of thesis

The thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter I introduces and explains the purpose of this study. It also provides an overview of the relevant research and theories associated with this thesis. Chapter II consists of a literature review of relevant research. Chapter III discusses the methods utilized in the study. Chapter IV analyzes the results of the data, hypotheses tests, and the research questions. Chapter V explains the future implications of the study, directions for future research, and conclusion.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is organized into five sections which discuss relevant literature and provide a rationale for the current study. The first three sections analyze the current research related to race in sport, how race impacts participation in sport, and the problems associated with race and golf. The fourth section describes the theoretical framework, the ethnicity or sub cultural hypothesis, as well as how a person's SDO affects how they view sport appropriateness. The fifth and final section discusses the research questions and hypotheses.

Defining race

The term race, as defined by Adair and Rowe (2010), is “simplistically applied to skin color and stereotypical assumptions about identity and status associated with racialized appearance” (p. 251). Limiting the term to simply a biological viewpoint has its flaws. Coakley (2009) expands upon this basic definition and describes race as a creation of culture. He states that the meanings society gives to different biological characteristics are ultimately how race is viewed. This definition is more realistic and applicable to everyday life. As Cunningham (2011) describes, “the meanings people attach to race have substantial implications for everyone. The way people are treated, the social systems that are created, and privileges afforded to members of certain social groups are often centered around race” (p. 71).

A look at earnings, healthcare, education, and housing by race helps to illustrate the impact of race in society. Cunningham (2011) provides a general overview of these

issues as they relate to race. According to the author, African Americans and Hispanics have median incomes of \$29,423 and \$33,676. These figures are considerably less than their Asian and White counterparts who earn \$52,285 and \$45,900 respectively. Similar disparities are seen in healthcare, education, and housing. Compared to Whites and Asians, racial minorities are more likely to live in poverty. As a result, they have lower access to healthcare, graduate from high school and college at lower rates, and live in areas where air pollution is high (Cunningham 2011). The correlations between race and general well being cannot be denied. For the purposes of this thesis, I will adopt the definitions of race by Coakley (2009) and Cunningham (2011).

Race in sport

The topic of race in sport has been researched and analyzed from many perspectives. To gain a basic understanding of the historical context of race in sport, I will focus this section on how minorities have overcome barriers and become a large factor in America's three largest sports: football, baseball, and basketball.

According to Leeds (2003), professional sports are commonly referred to as having paved the way for integration in the rest of American society. Jackie Robinson's entrance into the MLB in 1947 was a landmark accomplishment for the desegregation of America's pastime. Prior to integration, minorities, in particular African Americans, were greatly underrepresented in professional sports. Minority baseball players were forced to create their own league to compete in because they were not allowed to compete with Whites in the professional league. Burgos (2009) describes the scenario for Latino and African American baseball players prior to desegregation. The author

states that prior to Jackie Robinson, Latinos and African Americans endured exclusion from organized baseball due to its color line. As such, the Negro League was a place for people of color to display their athletic talents and enjoy competing at a high level.

Similar associations can be made with basketball. Martin (1993) describes the game of basketball in the U.S. after World War II as a White sport. Most African Americans were excluded from organized participation, and many southern colleges refused to play against teams with African Americans players. The premier professional basketball league, the NBA, which began in 1947, did not integrate until 1950. Before this time, African Americans played in other leagues, such as the American Basketball League (ABL) and American Basketball Association (ABA) (Ransom, 1992). Since then, African Americans have changed the face of collegiate and professional basketball. According to Lapchick (2010a), African Americans currently comprise a majority of the players in the NBA, approximately 82%.

According to Holland (1995), professional football had been integrated since the 1920's. However, African American players were few and team owners successfully banned Blacks by 1932. The author states that it was not until after World War II that Blacks and other minorities were officially part of the professional landscape. Since then, African Americans have enjoyed great success as players. Research by Lapchick (2010b) shows that 67% of the players in the NFL are African Americans.

Despite making progress in professional sport as players, racial minorities have yet to make significant advancements in administrative positions. Findings by DeHass (2007) and Lapchick (2008) illustrate this point. According to the authors, the

percentage of senior administrators in the NBA, NFL, and MLB who are White are 77%, 83%, and 93% respectively. Cunningham (2011) states that these percentages are overrepresentative of the U.S. population, in which 64.7% are White, and that minorities are also underrepresented in head coaching positions relative to their percentage of participation as players. For example, during the 2007-2008 season, people of color represented 80% of the players in the NBA. During this same time, racial minorities represented only 40% of head coaches (Cunningham, 2011).

Impact of race on sport participation

Sport participation also varies among different ethnic groups and races. Certain racial and ethnic groups prefer participating in specific sports and activities (Greendorfer, 1994). Sports that have low costs of participation (e.g., basketball and football) have a large percentage of racial minority participants. This is likely due to the lower amount of discretionary income that minorities have to spend on leisure activities (Hibbler & Shiner, 2002). Sports with high costs of participation, such as golf, hockey, and baseball, have a larger percentage of White participants than minorities. Considering that, as of 2002, African Americans and Hispanics were more likely to live in poverty than Whites or Asians, it is no wonder that sports costing high amounts of money to play are underrepresented by these groups (Cunningham, 2011).

Eitzen and Sage (2009) discuss the idea that culture plays a part in sport participation among races. What a culture deems acceptable or popular will likely influence members of that culture's participation rates in certain sports. To emphasize this point, Ogden and Hilt (2003) state that basketball has become the main sport in

African American culture. They claim that African American youth are more likely to gravitate towards basketball because the culture values it above other sports. To further support this ideology, Harrison, Lee, and Belcher (1999) discovered that African Americans perceive themselves to have the highest competency in basketball, relative to other sports. Whites showed greater perceived competency in golf and baseball than African Americans. In addition, research by Harrison and Belcher (2006) demonstrated that certain sports, such as football and basketball, are viewed as more appropriate for African Americans, and sports such as golf and hockey as more appropriate for Whites.

Research concerning stereotypes and performance bring another dimension to race in sport participation. Beilock, Jellison, McConnell, and Carr (2003) discovered that negative stereotypes poorly affect the performance of the stereotyped athlete. In their study, the authors had proficient male golfers perform a putting test. The authors told the athletes either a negative stereotype about male golfers (“men are poorer putters than women”) or control information (“putting performance differs as a function of skill level”). The athletes who received the negative stereotype performed significantly worse than the control athletes. Another example of the effects of negative racial stereotypes on performance is a study by Stone, Lynch, Sjomeling, and Darley (1999). The authors found that, when told that the golf task related to sports intelligence, African Americans performed more poorly than African Americans who did not receive the same information. If minorities constantly hear that their success in sport is due to their natural athletic ability, it should be no surprise that they participate at lower rates in sports that require large amounts of mental strength.

In a similar study, Harrison et al. (1999) asked participants to indicate in which sports they felt were self-descriptive and which were not self-descriptive. The participants were then asked a series of questions, one of which asked the participant to state in which sport they felt most competent. The results of the study concluded that African Americans perceive themselves to have the highest competency in basketball, relative to other sports. Whites showed greater perceived competency in golf and baseball than African Americans. Negative stereotypes affecting performance are not exclusively regulated to the sport realm. Steele and Aronson (1995) found that African American students perform worse academically than White students in testing situations where negative stereotypes about African Americans are relevant.

Racial stereotypes are not new in American society. Many of these stereotypes remain in circulation due to the media's influence on society. Eastman and Billings (2001) state that, in televised sporting events, Black men players tend to be stereotyped as naturally athletic, quick, and powerful, while White men players are praised for their hard work, effort, and mental skill. These stereotypes can help explain the underrepresentation of minorities in golf. Mental strength is widely recognized as a key component of a successful golfer. Constant media descriptors of African Americans succeeding based on their natural athletic ability can deter African Americans from participating in sports where mental skill is paramount.

Problems associated with race and golf

Race and stereotypes also influence participation in golf: the context of the current study.

Historically, minorities have been under-represented in American golf. Even with the great success shared by several minorities in the game (e.g., Lee Trevino, Tiger Woods, and Chi Chi Rodriguez), minority participation rates are low. A study by the National Golf Foundation (2010) revealed that minority golfers composed 21% of the total golfers from 2007 to 2009. This number is under-representative of the U.S. minority population, which is 33%. There are many possible explanations for this ranging from cost to discrimination. Each is significant to the explanation of this reality.

The game of golf has a history of discrimination against minorities. From the exclusive practices of private country clubs to the high costs associated with playing the game, the realm of golf favors White male participation. Despite the availability of public courses, which are open to any paying customer, Mitchelson and Lazaro (2004) state that many public courses give the impression that they are intended to be private and exclusive. Many public courses have dress code requirements. These requirements can include, but are not limited to, collared shirt, slacks, no t-shirts, and no denim pants. For an individual who has limited discretionary income, this can be a problem. Not only does the person have to pay money to play golf, but he or she also has to make sure to dress a certain way just to have access to the game. Green fees, money paid by a golfer to play at a public course, average \$46 per round at American public golf courses (National Golf Foundation, 2009). This cost can be prohibitive for low-income individuals. Minorities, excluding Asians, are much more likely to live in poverty than Asians and Whites (Cunningham, 2011). With median incomes of \$29,423 and \$33,676, African Americans and Hispanics have considerably less expendable income than their

Asian and White counterparts (Cunningham, 2011). This helps to explain why minority participation in sports with low costs of participation is high. To support this idea, Yaprak and Unlu (2010) state that “wealthy people have lifestyles that routinely include participation in golf, tennis, skiing, sailing, and other sports that are self-funded and played at exclusive clubs and resorts” (p. 365).

Private country clubs present another avenue of discrimination in golf. Davidson (1979) states that membership to private clubs has nothing to do with golfing ability, and social considerations are the determining factor. In a typical private club setting, new members are invited by old members. Membership initiation fees can be quite expensive, and additional monthly fees also increase the cost of membership. This high cost is not easily attainable to lower socioeconomic status individuals. This fact coupled with the stereotype that golf is a “rich White man’s game” can potentially cause minorities to feel that golf is not an appropriate sport for them to participate in. Ryan (1997) further illustrates this exclusive social space by stating “For the most part, the country club was created by wealthy, white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs) between 1880 and 1930, when economic, racial, cultural and ethnic lines divided the United States into ‘us’ and ‘them’” (p. 495).

Theoretical framework

Two theoretical perspectives—the ethnicity/sub cultural hypothesis and social dominance theory—can help to further explain racial minorities’ golf participation and the related stereotypes people hold.

Ethnicity/sub cultural hypothesis

The ethnicity or sub cultural hypothesis provides a framework for the underrepresentation of various ethnic groups in sport. According to Floyd, McGuire, Shiness, and Noe (1994), this theory states that:

Minority underparticipation or intergroup variation results from differences between racial or ethnic groups in values systems, norms, and socialization patterns. This explanation suggests that regardless of socioeconomic standing, cultural processes are more important in explaining variation between blacks and whites in leisure participation patterns (p. 159)

This theory supports and helps to explain the findings by Ogden and Hilt (2003) and Harrison et al. (1999), which show certain groups to be more prone to play certain sports. It can be an effective guide in evaluating which sports and activities cultures value.

In the Black community, basketball is often seen as a means to the American Dream. African American youth are flooded with images and advertisements of successful Black athletes who have risen to fame. As a result, many families within the Black community are more likely than other ethnic groups to push their male children toward becoming a professional athlete (Edwards, 1984). Furthermore, Sellers and Kuperminc (1997) state that the overrepresentation of African American men in collegiate and professional football and basketball contribute to this ideology.

This perspective is also applicable to golf. It should be no surprise that, in sports where minorities are underrepresented, such as golf, participation rates are low and

cultural importance is minimal. After all, racial minorities do not see similar others participating in the game's highest levels, and common stereotypes associated with golf (e.g., upper class, White man's game) might not match those associated with racial minorities. As a result, community and familial support to participate in golf is also likely to be low. Collectively, these dynamics are likely to contribute to racial minorities being less likely to participate in golf, and stereotypes surrounding the sport confirming these effects.

Social dominance orientation

Social dominance orientation (SDO) can provide insight as to why an individual would view golf as appropriate for certain races and inappropriate for others. According to Heaven and Quintin (2003), SDO can be defined as an individual's tendency to prefer hierarchal social structures over more egalitarian ones. SDO has shown to be the strongest correlate of most forms of prejudice (Heaven & Quintin, 2003). Sidanius, Pratto, and Mitchell (1994) describe SDO as "the basic desire to have one's own primary in-group be considered better than, superior to, and dominant over relevant out-groups" (p. 153). The authors further state that SDO also affects the behaviors of in-group members against out-group members. These behaviors can include, among others, negative stereotyping, active discrimination, and willingness to use violence against out-group members.

Utilizing this construct, an individual who views one race as inferior would likely deem sports that are considered upper class, prestigious, and refined to be appropriate for certain races and inappropriate for others. SDO also helps to explain the reasoning

behind the exclusivity of private country clubs, which are mainly comprised of wealthy White Americans. Since membership to most private clubs is by invitation only, members of the club will likely invite those who are similar to themselves, thus promoting their dominance and power over out-groups. Where a people group views itself in the societal hierarchy could influence its choice of sport participation.

Research questions

Drawing from the reviewed literature, I seek to determine the relationship between the attributes of golf and the perceived appropriateness of golf for different races. I predict that, based on common racial stereotypes, certain attributes, specifically mental strength, ability to concentrate, upper class, etiquette, and refined will favor Whites and Asians. As such, it would not be surprising for the results to show that golf is viewed as appropriate for White and Asians, more so than African Americans and Hispanics.

While there is a large body of research into Black and White racial stereotypes, access discrimination of Blacks by Whites, and recreation and leisure participation by Blacks and Whites, less is known about Hispanics and Asians. This study will help to examine how people view these two minority groups with respect to golf. Hopefully this will act as a stepping stone into future research of these two minority groups.

The following research questions are the focus of this paper:

RQ1: Are the attributes people associate with golf related to those associated with different racial groups?

RQ2: Do people perceive golf as more appropriate for some races over others?

RQ3: Does SDO influence how people view golf as appropriate for different races?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains three sections explaining how the study was conducted. The first section details how participants were selected. The second section describes the method for measuring the outcomes of the data collection. The third section will explain the procedure for obtaining the results.

Participants

The participants of this study were comprised of male and female students ($N = 217$) from five undergraduate physical activity classes at a large public university in the United States. The demographics of the participants are as follows: 102 were females, 115 were males; 9 were African Americans, 16 were Asians, 24 were Hispanics, 4 were Native Americans, 142 were Whites, 19 reported themselves as a race other than what was listed on the questionnaire, and 3 did not report their race; 67 of the participants were in their first year of college, 54 were Sophomores, 30 were Juniors, 64 were Seniors, and 1 was a Graduate student; the participants ranged in age from 18 to 32 years of age, and the median and mean were both 20 years old; 151 of the participants reported never playing golf, 30 reported rarely or sometimes playing golf, 31 reported playing golf often, and several did not report how often they play golf.

Measures

The participants were asked to complete a questionnaire where they were asked to express their feelings about the characteristics of the general golfer, their related feelings about those characteristics as exhibited by different racial groups, and questions

to analyze their SDO. The participants were also asked to provide demographic information.

In order to generate the characteristics of the general golfer, as utilized in the questionnaire, a small group was assembled for a pilot study ($N = 40$). These participants were asked to list what they felt were the characteristics of the general golfer. The results of these responses were tallied and the seven most commonly occurring characteristics were utilized for the questionnaire.

The measure utilized in this study was a seven point Likert scale. The participants were asked to indicate how closely they associate the common attributes of golf with different racial groups on a scale of 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). A second question asked how closely the respondents associate different racial groups with golf on a scale of 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). A final set of questions asked respondents to indicate their feelings related to SDO measures on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). An example of this type of question is, "I think it is probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and others are at the bottom." The questions for the SDO measure were adapted from the list of items in Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle (1994).

Procedure

Five physical activity classes from a large University in the United States were selected based on availability and willingness of the instructor. The instructor's permission was obtained before distributing the surveys to the students. The students were handed a cover letter explaining the purpose, anonymity, time requirement,

confidentiality, and benefits of the study. The cover letter also provided the researcher's contact information (see Appendix A). The students were also provided a questionnaire concerning their feelings towards golf and different racial groups, as well as questions pertaining to their SDO (see Appendix A).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The questionnaires produced 212 usable surveys. The results of the data were first analyzed for reliability. With the exception of the characteristics of golf as exhibited by Asians, all were reliable (see Table 1). As such, caution should be used when making claims regarding Asians in this study.

RQ1 asked “Are the attributes people associate with golf related to those associated with different racial groups”. Correlations were run between the mean scores for the attributes exhibited by the general golfer and each of the different races. Table 1 shows these correlations. As expected, relative to other races, the characteristics of golf were correlated the highest with Whites at a level of $r = .50$. In addition, Asians were the second highest correlated group of the four races with a level of $r = .36$. Tests to determine if the correlations between the races were significant were run as well. The magnitude of the association between Golf and Whites was significantly stronger than it was for Golf and Hispanics ($t = 3.49, p < .001$), Golf and African Americans ($t = 3.99, p < .001$), and Golf and Asians ($t = 2.29, p < .05$). There were no differences in strength of association between Asians and Hispanics ($t = 1.06, p > .05$), Asians and African Americans ($t = 1.86, p > .05$) or Hispanics and African Americans ($t = 1.1, p > .05$).

RQ2 asked “Do people perceive golf as more appropriate for some races over others”. A paired samples t-test was run to examine the differences in means among the races. The question on the survey asking “How closely do you associate the following groups with people who play golf” was used for analysis. All but the difference between

African Americans and Asians was significant at the .001 level. Individuals perceive golf as slightly more appropriate for Asians than African Americans. In addition, golf is perceived as more appropriate for African Americans than Hispanics. Whites, relative to all other races, are viewed as the race golf is most appropriate for. Finally, golf is viewed as more appropriate for Asians than Hispanics. Table 2 demonstrates the results of this test.

RQ3 asked “Does SDO influence how people view golf as appropriate for different races”. The mean SDO scores were correlated with the responses to the question “How closely do you associate the following groups with people who play golf” to obtain these results. While SDO not prove to be a significant predictor of golf appropriateness for certain races, it did show that as SDO increases, the likelihood that an individual will perceive golf as appropriate for Whites does increase relative to African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians. Table 1 demonstrates this.

Table 1 – Means, Standard Deviations, Bivariate Correlations, and Reliability

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. General Golfer	---									
2. Whites	.50**	---								
3. Hispanics	.29**	.49**	---							
4. African Americans	.23**	.36**	.69**	---						
5. Asians	.36**	.50**	.37**	.37**	---					
6. Whites & Golf	.22**	.29**	.08	.09	.34**	---				
7. Hispanics & Golf	.03	.06	.34**	.33**	.07	-.08	---			
8. African Americans & Golf	.08	.06	.1	.32**	.17*	.09	.38**	---		
9. Asians & Golf	.07	.08	.23**	.27**	.2**	.11	.44**	.40**	---	
10. SDO	.09	.21**	-.03	-.25**	.11	.12	-.18**	-.16*	-.18**	---
<i>M</i>	5.32	5.04	4.33	4.34	5.3	6.23	2.66	3.37	3.47	2.8
<i>SD</i>	.87	.83	.81	.93	1.03	.99	1.38	1.52	1.5	1.13
<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	.84	.90	.88	.90	.67	----	----	----	---	---

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 – Means, Standard Deviations, and t-scores

<u>Pair</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>t(df)</u>
<u>Pair 1</u>			29.43 (210)*
Whites	6.23	.99	
Hispanics	2.66	1.38	
<u>Pair 2</u>			23.90 (210)*
Whites	6.23	.99	
African Americans	3.37	1.52	
<u>Pair 3</u>			23.47 (210)*
Whites	6.23	.99	
Asians	3.47	1.50	
<u>Pair 4</u>			-6.36 (210)*
Hispanics	2.66	1.38	
African Americans	3.37	1.52	
<u>Pair 5</u>			-7.64 (210)*

Table 2 – Continued

<u>Pair</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>t(df)</u>
Hispanics	2.66	1.38	
Asians	3.47	1.50	
<u>Pair 6</u>			- .83 (210)
African Americans	3.37	1.52	
Asians	3.47	1.50	

*. $p < .001$

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study proved to support the notion that certain sports are viewed as racially appropriate. As in research by Harrison and Belcher (2006), golf was viewed as more appropriate for Whites relative to Hispanics, African Americans, and Asians. Reasons for this can vary from social stereotypes to the large amount of White golfers in the media. The majority of professional golfers, commentators, and analysts are White. The manner in which golf is marketed is also targeted towards White consumers. The majority of the commercials and advertisements shown on television display White males as the main consumers of the game. It should come as no surprise that Whites are the race that golf is most commonly associated with and deemed most appropriate for.

The second item on the questionnaire explicitly asks the respondent to rate how closely they associate different racial groups with golf. Once again, although not statistically stronger than the African American mean, the Asian mean was higher than the Hispanic and African American mean. Had the participants been asked to express to what degree the general female golfer exhibits the characteristics of golf, the Asian mean could potentially have been higher. When individuals are asked to think of golf, they likely think of the PGA tour, which is comprised of predominantly White males. The PGA tour tournaments make up the majority of nationally broadcast golf tournaments on television. The Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tournaments, which rarely make the national television broadcast, have seen a large percentage of winners who are

Asians. Therefore, a gender specific beginning question could potentially have led to different results in both the correlation between the characteristics of golf and Asians, as well as the explicit association between golf and Asians.

SDO influenced perceptions of golf's appropriateness for different races. While SDO was not related to the association between golf and Whites, it was negatively associated with other races and golf. Thus, the higher one's social dominance, the less likely she or he was to associate golf with racial minorities. As previously stated, the higher the level of SDO, the more likely a person is to view certain races as superior to others. As Heaven and Quintin (2003) state, SDO has also shown to be a strong predictor of prejudice. Therefore, it should not be surprising that the more prejudice a person displays, the less likely they are to view golf as appropriate for African Americans, Hispanics, or Asians relative to Whites.

Future research should continue to look into the role stereotypes play on the perceived appropriateness of sports for different races. Research has shown the positive and negative effects stereotypes can have on sport performance and self perception (Beilock et al., 2003; Stone et al., 1999; Harrison et al., 1999). It would be interesting to see the effect that positive and negative stereotypes have on non-participants' perception of appropriateness of sports for different races.

There were several limitations to this study. While the participants of this study were willing volunteers and their identities kept anonymous, they could have also responded in socially desirable manners. Method variance is also a concern, as all items were collected on a single questionnaire. Finally, many of the participants reported that

they never or rarely played golf. As such, their knowledge of the characteristics of golf could be limited, and their responses also affected. This would, however, also point to the prevalence of cultural norms and stereotypes in shaping their responses.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides a look into the common perceptions and associations of golf. The game of golf continues to be viewed as a “rich White man’s sport”. While strides have been made by minorities in the game as players (e.g., Lee Trevino, Tiger Woods, Chi Chi Rodriguez, etc.), the disparity between Whites and racial minorities continues to be seen. Racial minorities continue to be under-represented as recreational golfers, head pros, and professional golfers. Reasons for this can include, but are not limited to: lack of discretionary income, access discrimination, lack of professional role models, and cultural preferences (Cunningham, 2011; Mitchelson and Lazaro, 2004; Yaprak and Unlu, 2010; Davidson, 1979; and Ryan, 1997).

Negative stereotypes and perceived appropriateness of golf for Whites do not help to increase minority participation in golf. The stereotype that African Americans are naturally athletic, quick, and powerful, while Whites are praised for their hard work, effort, and mental skill is commonly used in televised sporting events (Eastman & Billings, 2001). These stereotypes can help explain the underrepresentation of minorities in golf. Mental strength is widely recognized as a key component of a successful golfer. Until these stereotypes are changed, minorities will likely continue to gravitate towards sports in which the stereotypes associated with them are common and valued (e.g., African Americans and basketball). If certain racial groups are not

considered appropriate for a sport in which mental strength, etiquette, and persistence are valued, this could also impact access to jobs in which these characteristics are also valued. In addition, these stereotypes can potentially lead to self-limiting behavior by the negatively affected races.

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APPENDIX A



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Department of Health and Kinesiology

Dear TAMU Student:

Your participation in a survey of endorser effectiveness is needed. As a sport management researcher at Texas A&M University, I am conducting research to understand people's attitudes toward golf and golfers. In total, some 150 persons will be asked to participate in this study.

Participation will require about 10 minutes answering the questionnaire. You may refuse to answer any question on the survey if it makes you feel uncomfortable. All data will be dealt with anonymously, and no individual taking part in the study will be identified. That is, no participant will be identified in any sort of report that might be given or published. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Further, there are no risks associated with participation. Finally, you will benefit from participating in the study by helping to further the understanding of athlete endorser effectiveness.

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board - Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, the Institutional Review Board may be contacted through James Ross, Research Compliance Specialist (j.ross@tamu.edu; 979-458-4067).

Hopefully you will find time in your busy schedule to participate in this study. If you have any comments or concerns with the study, please contact me at the correspondence given below. Thank you for your time and participation. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Mr. Anthony Rosselli
Texas A&M University
Department of Health and Kinesiology
TAMU 4243
College Station, TX 77843
(832) 692-6207
trosselli@hlkn.tamu.edu

Directions. Please respond to the following items. There are no right or wrong answers.

To what degree does the general golfer exhibit the following characteristics?

	Not at All						Very Much
1. Skillfulness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Mental strength	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Persistence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Ability to concentrate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Upper class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Etiquette	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Refined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

To what degree do Whites generally exhibit the following characteristics?

	Not at All						Very Much
1. Skillfulness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Mental strength	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Persistence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Ability to concentrate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Upper class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Etiquette	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Refined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

To what degree do Hispanics generally exhibit the following characteristics?

	Not at All						Very Much
1. Skillfulness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Mental strength	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Persistence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Ability to concentrate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Upper class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Etiquette	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Refined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

To what degree do African Americans generally exhibit the following characteristics?

	Not at All						Very Much
1. Skillfulness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Mental strength	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Persistence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Ability to concentrate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Upper class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Etiquette	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Refined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

To what degree do Asians generally exhibit the following characteristics?

	Not at All						Very Much
1. Skillfulness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Mental strength	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Persistence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Ability to concentrate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Upper class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Etiquette	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Refined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How closely do you associate the following groups with people who play golf?

	Not at All					Very Much		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. African Americans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Asians	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Hispanics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Whites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Which group do you most closely associate with golf?

African Americans _____ Asians _____
 Hispanics _____ Whites _____

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. I think no one group should dominate in society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. I think it is probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and others are at the bottom.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. If certain groups stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. I believe we should strive to make incomes as equal as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. I think we would have fewer problems if we treated people more equally.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. I think that to get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on other groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. I think group equality should be our ideal.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Inferior groups should stay in their place.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Please tell us a little about yourself?

Sex: Female _____ Male _____ **Age:** _____ years

Race: African American _____ Asian _____ Hispanic _____
 Native American _____ White _____ Other _____

Class: First Year _____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____
 Senior _____ Graduate _____

How often do you play golf? _____

VITA

Name: Anthony C. Rosselli

Address: Department of Health and Kinesiology
TAMU 4243
College Station, TX 77843-4243

Email Address: trosselli@hlkn.tamu.edu

Education: B.S., Kinesiology, Texas A&M University, 2009
M.S., Sports Management, Texas A&M University, 2011

Professional Experience: January 2010 - present: *Graduate Teaching Assistant*,
Dept. of Health and Kinesiology, Texas A&M University