

**Georgia State University**  
**ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University**

---

Kinesiology Dissertations

Department of Kinesiology and Health

---

Spring 5-17-2019

# Administrator Perceptions of the Organizational Effectiveness and Financial Conditions of Historically Black College and University Athletic Departments.

Kelly Elliott

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/kin\\_health\\_diss](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/kin_health_diss)

---

## Recommended Citation

Elliott, Kelly, "Administrator Perceptions of the Organizational Effectiveness and Financial Conditions of Historically Black College and University Athletic Departments.." Dissertation, Georgia State University, 2019.  
[https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/kin\\_health\\_diss/25](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/kin_health_diss/25)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Kinesiology and Health at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Kinesiology Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@gsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@gsu.edu).

## ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND FINANCIAL CONDITIONS OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS, by KELLY ELLIOTT, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Philosophy, in the College of Education & Human Development, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chairperson, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.

---

Timothy Kellison, Ph.D.  
Committee Chair

---

Brenda Pitts, Ph.D.  
Committee Member

---

Beth Cianfrone, Ph.D.  
Committee Member

---

DeQuan M. Smith, Ph.D.  
Committee Member

---

Richard Lakes, Ph.D.  
Committee Member

---

Date

---

Jacalyn Lund, Ph.D.  
Chairperson, Department of Kinesiology &  
Health

---

Paul A. Alberto, Ph.D.  
Dean, College of Education &  
Human Development

## **AUTHOR'S STATEMENT**

By presenting this dissertation as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the advanced degree from Georgia State University, I agree that the library of Georgia State University shall make it available for inspection and circulation in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I agree that permission to quote, to copy from, or to publish this dissertation may be granted by the professor under whose direction it was written, by the College of Education and Human Development's Director of Graduate Studies, or by me. Such quoting, copying, or publishing must be solely for scholarly purposes and will not involve potential financial gain. It is understood that any copying from or publication of this dissertation which involves potential financial gain will not be allowed without my written permission.

## **NOTICE TO BORROWERS**

All dissertations deposited in the Georgia State University library must be used in accordance with the stipulations prescribed by the author in the preceding statement. The author of this dissertation is:

Kelly Patricia Elliott  
Department of Kinesiology and Health  
College of Education and Human Development  
Georgia State University

The director of this dissertation is:

Dr. Timothy Kellison  
Department of Kinesiology and Health  
College of Education and Human Development  
Georgia State University  
Atlanta, GA 30303

## CURRICULUM VITAE

---

### EDUCATION

---

**Doctor of Philosophy**, Kinesiology and Health, Sport Administration

Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia, Expected Completion Spring 2019

Research Interests: Collegiate Athletics, Sport Sponsorship, Policy and Leadership

Major Advisor: Dr. Tim Kellison

**Master of Science**, Sport Management

Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2014

Thesis: Assessing the stringency of penalties for NCAA violations related to banned substances among the top Division I and II men's basketball programs.

**Bachelor of Science**, Physical Education in Sport, Sport Administration

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Pennsylvania, 2012

Minor: Business Administration

---

### REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

---

- 2018 Elliott, K. P., Cianfrone, B. A., & Kellison, T. (in press). Assessing spectator response to sport sponsorships at historically black colleges and universities. *Journal of Applied Sport Management*.
- 2018 Elliott, K. P., Kellison, T. B., & Cianfrone, B. A. (2018). NCAA drug testing policies and penalties: The role of team performance. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 11, 24–39.
- 2017 Elliott, K. P., & Kellison, T. B. (2018). Courting communities: The Atlanta Hawks' neighborhood basketball court renovation program. In E. C. Schwarz & J. D. Hunter, *Advanced theory and practice in sport marketing* (3rd ed.; pp. 15–17). New York: Routledge.

---

### MANUSCRIPTS IN REVIEW

---

Elliott, K. P., & Kellison, T. Budgeting for success: Comparing finances between Historically Black Colleges and Universities to their Predominantly White Institution counterparts. Under third review. 30 pages.

Patterson, C., Elliott, K. P., Kellison, T., & Cianfrone, B. A. Staff-to-facility imbalance within Division I FCS and no-football athletic facilities operations departments. Under review. 25 pages.

---

## MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

---

Elliott, K. P., & Kellison, T. Female leadership in college athletics: Has the SWA designation benefited the field? 35-page manuscript being finalized. Data has been collected and is currently being analyzed.

---

## SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS

---

- 2018 Elliott, K., Kellison, T., Cianfrone, B.A. (2018, April). Budgeting for success: Comparing expenses between Historically Black Colleges and Universities to their Predominantly White Institution counterparts. Oral presentation at the Collegiate Sport Research Institute, Columbia, South Carolina.
- 2017 Elliott, K., Cianfrone, B. A., Kellison, T., (2017, November). Connecting sponsors to fans: Assessing effectiveness of sport sponsorships at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Poster presentation at the Sport Marketing Association Conference, Boston, MA.
- 2017 Elliott, K., Cianfrone, B. A., and Kellison, T. (2017, April). An examination of NCAA drug testing policies and penalties. Oral presentation at the Collegiate Sport Research Institute, Columbia, South Carolina.
- 2014 Elliott, K., et al. (2014, April). Case Study Competition presentation at the Collegiate Sport Research Institute. Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 2012 Elliott, K., et al. (2012, April). Case Study Competition presentation at the Collegiate Sport Research Institute. Raleigh, North Carolina.

---

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

---

- 2018 Sport Finance, Undergraduate Course (Fall, 2018). Department of Kinesiology and Health, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.
- 2018 Sport and Society, Undergraduate Course (Spring, 2018). Department of Kinesiology and Health, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.

---

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

---

- 2015-Present **Assistant Commissioner:** Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
- 2013-2015 **Compliance Specialist:** Goldey-Beacom College
- 2012-2013: **Compliance Intern:** Villanova University Athletic Department

ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND  
FINANCIAL CONDITIONS OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY  
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS

by

**KELLY ELLIOTT**

Under the Direction of Dr. Timothy Kellison

**ABSTRACT**

Research has shown that in comparison to those of predominantly white institutions (PWIs), the athletic departments of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) generate significantly less revenue, and as a result, have fewer resources to allocate toward athletic aid, recruiting, operating, and head coach salary expenses. In general, HBCUs have storied pasts and often have strong football followings. At the Division I level, the neutral-site HBCU football classic games draw large crowds annually. Despite the popularity, it is widely reported that HBCUs struggle in athletic department funding. The financial struggle facing HBCU athletic departments can be explained using Resource Dependency theory. Specifically, as HBCUs are the most under-resourced member institutions of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the numbers prove how these institutions do not have the funds to invest in their programs. This study explores how major fiscal issues facing HBCU athletic departments compare to PWI athletic departments, how challenges HBCU athletic department heads face when setting budgets and allocating funds for revenue generating sports, non-revenue generating

sports, and operating costs compare to PWI athletic departments, and how the solicitation and generation of revenue compare between HBCUs and PWIs athletic departments. To gather this information, two different groups of participants were interviewed to obtain an independent and insider perspective of the challenges. These groups include independent contractors, conference office staff, and NCAA staff that work with both HBCU and PWI athletic departments but are not employees of HBCUs or PWIs. Phenomenology was the methodological approach for this study as each participant had the opportunity to discuss their unique view of the current financial state of HBCU athletic departments. Participants took part in semi-structured interviews framed around the research questions mentioned above. The empirical material collected from the interviews were transcribed and coded as common themes were found between participant responses. Specifically, events, actions, interactions, and emotions were compared and assigned a coding label so that they could be grouped. This study contributes to the growing body of literature addressing HBCU athletics by providing a holistic perspective of the current financial, budget, and revenue generation challenges facing the institutions.

**INDEX WORDS:** HBCUs, College Athletics, Finances



ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND  
FINANCIAL CONDITIONS OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY  
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS

by

KELLY ELLIOTT

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Kinesiology

in

Department of Kinesiology and Health

in

the College of Education and Human Development

Georgia State University

Atlanta, GA

2018

Copyright by  
Kelly Patricia Elliott  
2018

## DEDICATION

Throughout my time in the Ph. D., program, many people questioned how I managed both working full-time in the industry while completing my courses and research at Georgia State University. Although I sometimes also wondered how I managed, at the end of the day, I always knew the answer; it was the amazing support system that I have around me. Starting with my husband, I could not ask for a better person to stand with me through not just this process, but through our journey. You always took an interest in my work, even if it meant reading pages of manuscript drafts. I don't know that you will ever know how much those little things meant to me, but I know I couldn't have done this without you. This document, as well as everything I do in my life, will always be dedicated to the support and love that you provide for our family.

In addition to the unconditional support from my husband, I know that I would not have a competitive edge and drive if it was not for my three siblings and parents. Having people in your corner who are your biggest advocates and critics at the same time can make for a tough road, but without the honest feedback, completing this process might not have been possible. Our competitive nature has pushed us all to find success, and it always helps to know I have a corner of red-headed cheerleaders to fall back on when I needed the extra push.

Finally, to the little one that was literally right there with me through the hardest stint of the Ph. D. process, I will always unconditionally love you and appreciate you toughing out this process with me. From our walks to and from Peachtree Center to campus and the comprehensive exam and prospectus presentations, you were right with me and my little cheerleader. I can't wait to meet you; it will not be long now. Now that the work is done, it is time to play.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To begin, I would like to thank the HBCU athletic departments and administrators that I have had the pleasure of working with over the past four years. It has been an amazing opportunity to experience the unique culture and energy on these campuses. The idea for this research came from my time working with HBCUs, and I could not have completed this research without the help of some of the individuals I have met during my time working at an HBCU conference. Additionally, I want to make sure thank the individuals that took the time to provide interviews for this research. Their perspectives based on their experiences provided useful insight to the body of literature of HBCU athletics.

I would also like to thank my adviser and dissertation committee for their feedback throughout this process. The committee helped take my idea of expanding the current body of literature regarding HBCUs and grow it to provide a resource to some of these institutions that are struggling financially and not able to afford to pay for research on campus to improve their athletic departments. I am thankful for the time and energy spent by my committee to read these documents and ensure this project makes a useful impact not only the body of literature but in the industry.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Chapter 1 .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Preface.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Statement of Problem .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Purpose of Study .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Statement of Significance .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Theoretical Framework.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Key Terms.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Organization of This Dissertation .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Chapter 2 Review of Literature.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Current Financial State of HBCUs .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HBCU Athletics.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>The Beginning of HBCU Athletics.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Landscape of HBCU Athletics .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Financing HBCU Athletic Programs .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Divisional Analysis.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>HBCU Revenue.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Streaming and Television .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Institutional and Student Fees .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Ticket and Suite Sales .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Donations and Alumni Support .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Sponsorships .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Social Media.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Attracting Coaches and Student-Athletes to HBCUs.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Coaches .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Student-athletes.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Athletic Administrators at HBCUs.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Resource Dependency, Power, and HBCUs.....</b>	<b>44</b>

<b>Summary and Evaluation</b> .....	51
<b>Chapter 3 Methods</b> .....	55
<b>Methodological Approach</b> .....	55
<b>Participants</b> .....	56
<b>Selection Criteria</b> .....	57
<b>Recruitment Procedure</b> .....	58
<b>Interview Guide</b> .....	58
<b>Procedures</b> .....	61
<b>Subjectivities Statement</b> .....	63
<b>Chapter 4 Results</b> .....	65
<b>Independent Perspective</b> .....	66
<b>Background Information</b> .....	66
<b>Fiscal Challenges</b> .....	68
<b>Budget Challenges</b> .....	79
<b>Revenue Generation</b> .....	88
<b>Insider Perspective</b> .....	98
<b>Background Information</b> .....	98
<b>Fiscal Challenges</b> .....	99
<b>Budget Challenges</b> .....	108
<b>Revenue Generation</b> .....	115
<b>Summary</b> .....	121
<b>Chapter 5 Discussion</b> .....	124
<b>Comparing Literature on HBCUs</b> .....	125
<b>Fiscal Challenges</b> .....	131
<b>Budget Challenges</b> .....	134
<b>Revenue Generation</b> .....	136
<b>Implications</b> .....	138
<b>Suggestions for Future Research</b> .....	140
<b>References</b> .....	143
<b>Appendices</b> .....	157

**LIST OF TABLES**

<b>Table 1. Averages for Expenses Between all HBCUs and PWIs .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Table 2. 2017 FCS Conference Attendance .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Table 3. 2017 Division II Conference Attendance.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Table 4. Overview of Participants .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Table 5. Themes from Independent Perspectives on Fiscal Challenges .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Table 6. Themes from Independent Perspectives on Budget Allocations.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Table 7. Themes from Independent Perspectives on Revenue Generation .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Table 8. Themes from Insider Perspectives on Fiscal Challenges.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Table 9. Themes from Insider Perspectives on Budget Allocations .....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Table 10. Themes from Insider Perspectives on Revenue Generation .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Table 11. Similarities in Responses Between Independent and Insider Participants.....</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Table 12. HBCUs lead DII Twitter Rankings .....</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Table 13. HBCUs lead DII Facebook Rankings.....</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Table 14. HBCUs lead DII Instagram Rankings.....</b>	<b>129</b>

**List of Abbreviations**

CIAA.....	Central Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
HBCU.....	Historically Black College and University
MEAC.....	Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference
NCAA.....	National Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
PWI.....	Predominantly White Institution
SIAC.....	Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference
SWAC.....	Southwestern Athletic Conference



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **PREFACE**

Three years ago, I was offered a position to work at a Division II conference office. I was excited about the opportunity and could not wait for my first day. Before accepting the position, I had worked on campus at a few NCAA member institutions and understood the general perception of a conference office, what my responsibilities and tasks would be and who I would be reporting to on a daily basis. I felt prepared for the position and ready to take on the huge task very early on in my professional career. However, despite my eagerness, there was something about this position I was not ready for. Although I knew I would be serving as the liaison to the majority of committees on our member institution campuses, and I believed I had the skills to handle higher-level discussions, I was not fully prepared for the culture of the constituencies in my new conference. I was leaving a predominantly white institution (PWI) and entering my first experience as the Assistant Commissioner of a conference in which the majority of its members were historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

### **INTRODUCTION**

Research has shown that in comparison to those of PWIs, the athletic departments of HBCUs generate significantly less revenue, and as a result, have fewer resources to allocate toward athletic aid, recruiting, operating, and head coach salary expenses (Elliott & Kellison, 2018, Research in progress). As illustrated in Table 1, HBCUs are spending significantly less on athletic aid, recruiting, operating, and head coach salary expenses.

Table 1. Averages for Expenses Between all HBCUs and PWIs

	<b>Athletic Aid</b>	<b>Recruiting Expenses</b>	<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>Head Coach Salary</b>
<b>Total</b>				
HBCU	\$2,017,406.84	\$70,547.62	\$825,112.79	\$556,053.03
PWI	\$4,043,471.83	\$220,739.63	\$1,827,771.96	\$1,182,698.63
	$F(1, 380) = 7.87, p < .001$	$F(1, 380) = 26.20, p < .001$	$F(1, 380) = 31.53, p < .001$	$F(1, 380) = 29.61, p < .001$
<b>DI FCS</b>				
HBCU	\$3,267,285.73	\$130,336.45	\$506,475.71	\$854,080.68
PWI	\$5,583,352.72	\$378,861.92	\$2,779,005.86	\$1,609,738.02
	$F(1, 122) = 13.64, p < .001$	$F(1, 122) = 26.16, p < .001$	$F(1, 122) = 27.88, p < .001$	$F(1, 122) = 16.92, p < .001$
<b>DI No FB</b>				
HBCU	\$1,500,418.50	\$82,409.50	\$946,368.00	\$552,537.00
PWI	\$4,892,775.95	\$279,083.22	\$223,6874.20	\$1,532,774.54
	$F(1, 92) = 3.41, p = .n.s.$	$F(1, 92) = 2.490, p = n.s.$	$F(1, 92) = 2.78, p = n.s.$	$F(1, 92) = 2.78, p = n.s.$
<b>DII</b>				
HBCU	\$1,072,286.89	\$22,723.39	\$393,247.79	\$322,139.61
PWI	\$2,314,031.92	\$62,680.20	\$837,600.90	\$625,603.03
	$F(1, 162) = 22.04, p < .001$	$F(1, 162) = 21.26, p < .001$	$F(1, 162) = 29.61, p < .001$	$F(1, 162) = 24.82, p < .001$

Notes: Elliott, K. P., Kellison, T. Cianfrone, B.A., 2018

In general, HBCUs have storied pasts and often have strong football followings. At the Division I level, the neutral-site HBCU football classic games draw large crowds annually. Despite the popularity, it is widely reported that HBCUs struggle in athletic department funding (Armstrong, 2001; Jones & Bell, 2016). With limited budgets, increased revenue streams could help stabilize athletic department finances. Funding challenges may be even greater at Division II HBCUs. However, one of the two HBCU DII conferences, the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC), has led Division II in football attendance for 13 consecutive seasons (Reddick, 2017). Even with crowds attending these games, athletic administrators at these institutions have not capitalized on the value of their fans and lag behind their peers

regarding revenue (Armstrong, 2001). The tables below report the data collected by the NCAA on annual football attendance. According to Tables 2 and 3 below, the Southwestern Athletic Conference leads Division I FCS in football attendance while the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference leads Division II in football attendance (NCAA Football Attendance, 2017). Both conferences are made up of majority HBCUs.

Table 2. 2017 FCS Conference Attendance

Rank	Conference	Total Teams	Games	2017 Attend.	Avg.
1.	Southwestern Athletic Conference	10	54	739,464	13,694
2.	Missouri Valley Football	10	58	620,411	10,697
3.	Big Sky	13	72	714,732	9,927
4.	Colonial	12	69	677,927	9,825
5.	Mid-Eastern	11	54	510,284	9,450
6.	Ivy	8	40	329,141	8,229
7.	Southland	11	60	472,342	7,872
8.	Ohio Valley	9	46	360,238	7,831
9.	Southern	9	48	375,683	7,827
10.	Patriot	7	37	182,266	4,926
11.	Big South	5	30	116,585	3,886
12.	Pioneer	11	61	188,381	3,088
13.	Northeast	7	35	92,142	2,633

*Notes: 2017 NCAA Football Attendance, 2017*

Table 3. 2017 Division II Conference Attendance

Rank	Conference	Total Teams	Games	2017 Attend.	Avg.
1.	Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference	10	48	341,607	7,117
2.	Mid-America	12	34	348,955	5,208
3.	Lone Star	9	53	254,032	4,793
4.	Gulf South	9	49	224,020	4,572
5.	Great Lakes Intercol.	9	50	198,452	3,969
6.	Great American	12	66	235,866	3,574
7.	Central Intercollegiate	12	57	180,560	3,168
8.	Great Northwest	5	26	78,143	3,006
9.	South	8	43	120,741	2,808
10.	Pennsylvania	16	94	243,487	2,590
11.	Great Lakes Valley	8	43	110,149	2,562

12.	Northern Sun	16	92	220,345	2,395
13.	Rocky Mountain	11	58	129,762	2,237

*Notes: 2017 NCAA Football Attendance, 2017*

A better understanding as to why HBCUs have not capitalized on potential revenue streams could help these institutions compete on a better financial footing.

In recent years, many HBCU athletic departments have undergone significant changes. For example, in 2015, NCAA Division II institution Paine College dropped its football program (Logue, 2016). A year later, Stillman College moved from an NCAA institution to an NAIA institution and cut all but four sport programs. In 2017, Savannah State University announced plans to drop from a Division I institution to Division II. When major changes like those highlighted above occur at HBCUs, a lack of resources and fiscal responsibility are often the reasons given to dissatisfied students, alumni, and fans. For example, Paine College's suspension of its football team was explained as a strategy to "firmly establish the financial health of the college" (Davis, 2015, para. 3). Similarly, Savannah State's move to Division II came because "it wasn't financially feasible to continue playing in NCAA Division I" (Heath, 2017, para. 2). HBCU administrators cite funding university programs as the top challenges facing their universities (Arnett, 2014).

With the challenges mentioned above facing HBCUs, it is vital to evaluate how the lack of resources might further distance HBCUs from their PWI peers. Major budget shortages are facing HBCUs, and it is important to understand how these budget shortages are impacting athletic programs on campus. Additionally, the need for HBCU athletic departments to find available revenue streams to keep their programs competitive in the NCAA membership is apparent. Understanding the differences in available revenue streams between HBCU and PWI athletic programs could further help address the financial uncertainty at HBCUs.

## Statement of Problem

HBCU sports are considered culturally distinct (Armstrong, 2002) and their consumers are rarely studied (Cianfrone, Pitts, Zhang, Byrd, & Drane, 2010; Stone, Cort, & Nkonge, 2012). HBCU athletic fans are loyal attendees, and social and entertainment factors were indicators of attendance, showing there is more to these events than strictly the competition on the playing field. HBCU athletic department funding is a much-needed area of inquiry (Li & Burden, 2009), given the financial state of their athletic departments and lack of widespread sponsorship support. In recent years, many HBCU athletic departments have undergone significant reductions in their athletic department programming. For example, NCAA Division II institution Paine College dropped their football programs (Logue, 2016). Stillman College dropped from an NCAA institution to an NAIA institution, cutting all but four sport programs. Additionally, Savannah State University decided to drop from a Division I institution to Division II. With these changes in HBCU athletics, many wonder if Division I HBCUs, struggling to maintain an equal financial footing, should continue to try to compete against other Division I PWIs (Trahan, 2016). When programs are cut at these HBCUs, a lack of resources and fiscal responsibility are often the reasons given to students, alumni, and fans. HBCU administrators state that funding university athletic programs are difficult due to participation costs and small enrollment (Savage, 2017). Limited funding results from HBCUs' commitment to serving low-income students and small endowments, leading to low operating costs (Gasman, 2009). An understanding of this financial picture is important, as smaller operating costs lead to less available resources for athletic departments.

With the financial challenges facing HBCUs, it is important to have a greater understanding of the similarities and differences that exist between HBCU and PWI athletic

departments. Without this information, HBCU administrators will only have one side of the big picture of college athletics, and not fully understand where their institutions are in financial comparison to other NCAA member institutions. The NCAA is made up of 1,117-member institutions, and research into what sets HBCU athletic departments apart from the rest of the membership can help identify possible solutions to the growing financial disparity in college athletics. Recent research has found HBCUs spend less annually on operating expenses, head coach salaries, recruiting, and athletic aid when compared to their peer institutions. Additionally, these institutions fall short in the race for revenue and report significantly less earnings than their peers (Elliott, Kellison, & Cianfrone, Research in progress). This financial picture indicates research is needed to have a better understanding of the fiscal, budget, and revenue-based challenges faced by both HBCUs and PWI athletic departments.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore financial challenges facing HBCU athletic departments, specifically addressing revenues and expenses between HBCUs and their PWI peers. In this study, both an insider and outsider perspective were used to guide research. The insider perspective came from individuals that work at HBCUs. The outside perspective came from people who work with HBCUs (not an HBCU employee), thus providing a perspective not clouded by any preexisting emotions or commitment to any specific HBCU. The individuals that provided the outside perspective work with both PWIs and HBCUs and had an understanding of not only the issues of HBCUs, but how they differ from their PWI peers. The consideration of this perspective was based on a current proposal submitted by the NCAA Board of Governors as an association-wide proposal to be voted on during the NCAA 2019 Convention. The proposal sponsored by the Board of Governors would add five independent members to the board of

governors, increasing the size of the board from 20 to 25 members. If passed during the 2019 Convention, the five independent members will not be permitted to be employed by NCAA member institutions. The rationale for this proposal was based on the fact “major nonprofit associations typically include outside board members to provide objectivity, relevant experience, perspective, and wisdom. Board members with those qualities will provide valuable insight to the NCAA as it works towards the restoration of public confidence in college basketball and college sports in general” (2019 Convention, p. 2). Following the importance placed by the NCAA on including outside board members to provide a unique perspective to association membership, I employed a similar approach in this study. Attaining the perspective of an independent party that does not work at an NCAA member institution provided additional insight on financial struggles that might otherwise not have been provided from participants working on campus that might be partial toward their member institution.

In previous studies, researchers have looked into the current administrative, coach, and student-athlete perspectives of operating an HBCU athletic department (e.g., Bopp & Sagas, 2012; Bozeman & Fay, 2013; Jones & Bell, 2016; Robbins, Gilbert, & Clifton, 2015; Theune, 2016). However, research into the differences between HBCUs and PWIs can help HBCU administrators understand where they are in relation to their peers and understand changes that could improve the athletic departments.

As noted by Jones and Bell (2016), research on intercollegiate athletics specifically focused on HBCUs has been “noticeably absent” (p. 49). As research has shown HBCUs tend to receive a fraction of the grants received by PWIs, additional inquiry is needed to see how the reduced grant funding can impact athletics (Toldson, 2016). This study analyzed the financial picture of HBCU athletic departments specifically from interviews with participants that work at

or with HBCUs. To understand the financial picture of HBCU athletic department I offer the following research questions:

1. How do major fiscal issues facing a typical HBCU athletic department compare to PWI athletic departments?
2. How do challenges HBCU athletic department administrators face when setting budgets and allocating funds for revenue generating sports, non-revenue generating sports, and operating costs compare to PWI athletic departments?
3. How does the solicitation and generation of revenue compare between HBCU and PWI athletic departments?

### **Statement of Significance**

Research into the differences and similarities between HBCU and PWI athletic departments can help HBCU administrators understand where they are in comparison to their peers and identify where improvements can be made. In recent years, HBCUs have noticed internal changes, including the increasing of non-black students, specifically Latino and Asian students, and the growing percentage of females in the student body (Gasman, 2016). The demographic changes are important as the number of males in the student body at HBCUs continues to decrease, it is crucial to look at motivators for why these students chose their path in higher education. One possible reason cited as a motivation was “the existence of athletic programs” (Gasman, 2016 p. 7). The student desire for an athletic program indicates athletic programs might be a necessary part of the recruitment and retention process at HBCUs. However, the need for an athletic department might be an issue as HBCUs continue to evaluate and restructure athletic programs to focus on the dwindling financial resources at their institutions.



## Theoretical Framework

This study used the epistemological framework of constructivism. Constructivism is built on how individuals build or construct reality (Crotty, 1998). There is no meaning or interpretation until an object is given meaning by people and people build that meaning through experiences. Experiences shape how an individual reacts to an object or idea. Additionally, individuals do not have the same experiences and therefore do not understand or bring meaning to the object in the same way. When thinking about participants involved with HBCU athletics, all participants have come to HBCU athletics with different resumes and experiences. The meaning that each of the participants gives to the experience is structured differently. Specifically, pertaining to college athletics, individuals have experiences with both HBCUs and PWIs, the meaning they bring to the financial situations at HBCUs will be a cumulation of their experiences from working with all types of institutions, big/small, public/private, HBCU/PWI, etc. As previous research has shown the recycling of the same HBCU employees in college athletics between HBCU member institutions and conferences, it can help the field understand the bigger picture of experiences, perceptions, and recommendations from individuals who have seen more types of institutions.

The interpretivist theoretical perspective guided research. Interpretivism is looking at the world through the experiences of the participants being studied (Chowdhury, 2014). Greek philosopher Epictetus found it was the opinions about action that alarm or disturb a person (Chowdhury, 2014). Epictetus's initial framework has continuously evolved, but it is the groundwork of interpretivism. Interpretivism is looking at the world through the experiences of the participants being studied (Chowdhury, 2014). Specifically, to college athletics, the experiences of individuals who work with HBCUs could have different perspectives and

recommendations to help these institutions financially. Cultures can be understood by analyzing people's thoughts and ideas (Chowdhury, 2014). This perspective means by understanding the current culture of HBCUs from participants that work at or with HBCUs, these institutions can benefit by learning what makes them different from their peer and how they can structure themselves for financial success. HBCU athletic departments are a tight group, and it can be difficult for an observer to understand how HBCU athletic departments react to a certain value or idea. However, if researchers can pinpoint the different thoughts and perspectives participants have about HBCU as they work with HBCU athletics, in conjunction with our member institutions, the researcher will be able to find what makes HBCU athletic departments financially and culturally similar or different to their peer institutions.

In summary, getting perspectives from those currently in the field of college athletics, specifically from those working at and with HBCUs, can help researchers better understand HBCUs' place in the NCAA membership. Once institutions have a better understanding of where they are, they can work to find revenue streams that will work best for their institution. Despite the umbrella term of an HBCU member institution, there is a lot of diversity between these institutions. There might not be a one size fits all plan to helping HBCUs levy their financial struggles, however, the more perspectives from the field, the better these institutions can work to survive in the competitive NCAA membership financially.

### **Key Terms**

The following key terms will be used throughout the document. First, a historically black college and university (HBCU) is a college or university established prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that was originally founded to educate the African-American community.

Conversely, a predominantly white institution (PWI) is a college or university that was not labeled an HBCU prior to 1964 with the majority of the student bodies typically made up of white students.

To compare HBCU and PWIs, both an insider and outsider perspective was used. An outside perspective is from an individual that is not employed by an HBCU or PWI. The individuals that provide this perspective work with NCAA member institutions but are not on payroll at these institutions. This designation is consistent with language proposed by the NCAA in an effort to expand their board of governors to include a more holistic perspective on issues concerning NCAA member institutions.

Finally, revenue and non-revenue generating sports will be discussed. Revenue generating sports are sports that receive revenue from attendance and ticket sales. For example, men's basketball and football would be considered revenue generating sports. Conversely, non-revenue generating sports, or Olympic sports, do not generate revenue from ticket sales and attendance directly. An example of a non-revenue generating sport is cross country.

### **Organization of This Dissertation**

The remainder of this dissertation continues as follows. In Chapter 2, my review of literature begins with the history and current financial state of historically black colleges and universities. The growth of HBCUs and the leadership and financial challenges facing these institutions is discussed as it relates to the current state of these institutions. Following, the discussion will flow into the history and current state of HBCU athletic departments and the struggles that these departments face in the current climate of college athletics. An analysis of the current literature on Division I and Division II athletics is reviewed as it relates to HBCU athletic departments. The literature review chapter contains previous research in revenue,

sponsorship variables, athletic department employees, student-athletes, and resource dependency as it relates to HBCU athletic department finances. Each of the elements of this chapter provides the foundation from which the study's research method will be conducted.

In Chapter 3, I discuss my research method, in which I employed a qualitative strategy that includes interviews from both an inside and outside perspectives of participants that work at and/or with HBCUs. Phenomenology was used as each participant had the opportunity to discuss their unique view of the current financial state of HBCU athletic departments. My project included semi-structured interviews with individuals that are not employed on by an NCAA member institution. The interviews were either a one-hour face-to-face or phone interview. My subjectivity statement in which I discuss my bias as an employee of a college athletic conference will follow.

Continuing, Chapter 4 offers a discussion on the results from the semi-structured interviews conducted with participants. Specifically, for both the independent and insider participants, the discussion begins by describing each of the participants and their experience working in college athletics. Following, the results are broken down into participant's perspectives on fiscal challenges, budget challenges, and revenue generation between HBCUs and PWIs. The chapter concludes with a summary of the differences between responses from independent and insider participants.

Finally, Chapter 5 will offer an overall discussion on how the results of this research compare to preexisting literature on HBCU athletics. The discussion is further broken down to address each of the research questions regarding fiscal challenges, budget challenges, and revenue generation between HBCUs and PWIs. Following the discussion, the implications of this

research will be addressed for both academics and practitioners. Lastly, suggestions for future research will be discussed.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In this literature review, I offer a discussion on HBCUs and their athletic departments. The first section offers a discussion of HBCUs in general, followed by a section specifically discussing HBCU athletics. The third section is an analysis of HBCU athletic department revenues and expenses. After the financial analysis, the last sections offer an overview of recruitment efforts of HBCUs for coaches and student-athletes, ending with a discussion of how a resource dependency perspective can help explain HBCUs in the NCAA membership discussion.

#### **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)**

The Higher Education Act of 1965 defines HBCUs as “any historically Black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans” (Higher Education Act of 1965, 1965, p. 143). Built for providing educational opportunities for black men following the civil war, many question whether HBCUs have a place in today’s society (Bracey, 2017). Originally, HBCUs opened their doors with the mission to “provide access to higher education for African Americans, who were previously enslaved and later segregated in the United States” (Clement & Lidsky, 2011, p. 150). To understand the place these institutions have in today’s society, it is important to understand the history of HBCUs and how they came about in our society.

Before delving into the literature about HBCUs, it is important to understand that, even amongst themselves, HBCUs are diverse with both public and private institutions, and with large and small student bodies (Clement & Lidsky, 2011). The first HBCU, Cheyney University, opened its doors for students in 1837, followed by Lincoln University in 1854 (Bracey, 2017). Both of these institutions are located in Pennsylvania. Prior to the Civil War, only three

institutions offered education to black men, including both Lincoln University and Cheyney University, in addition to Wilberforce University, located in Ohio (Albritton, 2012). An HBCU was not founded in the South until 1865 when Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University following a merger with Clark College) opened its doors (Bracey, 2017).

HBCUs became prevalent in the south following the Morrill Act of 1862, which required states to either admit black students to pre-existing state-funded institutions (i.e., land grant funded), or finance schools for black students to enroll (Bracey, 2017). With the high racial tensions in the south at the time of this legislation, many states decided to open separate institutions for black students, initiating the financial disparities between HBCUs and their peer PWIs. With this newly passed legislation, Alcorn State University opened in 1871, becoming the first HBCU to use the legislation. Unfortunately, an unintended consequence of the legislation resulted from the government still having control over the allocation of funds to both the original institution and the supposed “separate but equal” HBCU created to satisfy the newly passed legislation (Bracey, 2017). This legislation meant states were still able to control how funds were spent between the PWIs and HBCUs. The result was funds being spent building campuses for PWIs while as little funding as possible was going to their HBCU peers (Albritton, 2012). It is important to note, that although many HBCUs began to open doors in the late 1800s, none were formally accredited until 1928 (Bracey, 2017). Accreditation was crucial for the institutions to continue receiving federal funding.

HBCUs served an undereducated population following the Civil War, as many black men were illiterate and needed basic education skills (Albritton, 2012). It is important to note that HBCUs welcomed all qualified students to attend their institutions and were “nonjudgmental in terms of who should be educated” (Bracey, 2017, p. 8). As HBCUs were the first opportunity for

black men to learn, they became sites of resistance, empowerment, and social uplift, as these men were finally educated and able to fight for equality (Albritton, 2012).

Additionally, as black men became more educated, they fought to earn seats of leadership and decision making within their institutions (Albritton, 2012). As these institutions held a financial footing, HBCU alumni and the black community wanted to take the roles of teachers, deans, presidents, and trustees. This change meant that seats originally held by the church missionaries (typically from northern churches) were asked to step aside so the HBCUs could run themselves. In the height of HBCU enrollment, before the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision, 90% of all black college students attended HBCUs. This statistic demonstrates the original purpose of these institutions was being met.

Following the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision, the enrollment at HBCUs has continued to decrease, as black college students were given the opportunity to enroll in PWIs (Albritton, 2012). Following the decision, there was a divide between African American leaders over the right course of action for the education of black students as some leaders were opposed to sending black students to predominantly white institutions too soon (Brawley, 2017). However, despite the criticism of some leaders, the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision meant fewer students and consequently less tuition dollars to HBCUs. However, despite the drop in enrollment, even at the time of the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision, HBCUs were considered a better atmosphere for the low-income family and first-generation college students. Aiding in the decrease in enrollment at HBCUs, the Education Act of 1965 required PWIs to increase minority enrollment. This legislation meant even fewer students would plan to attend HBCUs, as they had additional college education options. Even with the decreasing enrollment of HBCUs, some staggering percentages serve justification for them keeping their doors open.



Firstly, blacks attending HBCUs have better grades and are more likely to complete their degrees compared to black students at PWIs. This finding indicates HBCUs still serve society by providing means for which black students can succeed in higher education.

One important note about HBCUs is their acceptance to students of any demographic that met qualifying entrance into their institution (Bracey, 2017). Additionally, many professors at HBCUs were originally white. HBCUs are known for providing a “welcoming environment for black students, who are able to thrive in a context of acceptance and mutual support” (Bracey, 2017, p. 1). The welcoming environment is important for black students as many of them come to these institutions from low-income backgrounds, especially during the earlier stages of these historic institutions.

With the changes that have occurred over the years at HBCUs—decreasing enrollment and the demographics of students and educators—it is important to understand the financial impact on these institutions. The next section offers a discussion on the current financial state of HBCUs. Unfortunately, in most cases, HBCUs have encountered financial struggles through their dwindling enrollment and lack of external funding. These challenges are analyzed in detail below.

### **Current Financial State of HBCUs**

HBCUs are facing painful financial struggles as enrollment continues to decrease and fears of dwindling support from the government administration increase (Camera, 2017). During the early years of HBCUs, many of the institutions relied on funding from church organizations (Albritton, 2012). As mentioned above, as HBCUs gained a financial footing, they asked church leaders to step aside in the hopes of holding leadership positions and self-running their institutions. However, the decreasing enrollment proved problematic for these institutions,

specifically because they are “heavily dependent on tuition income” (Stewart, 2017, p. 11). HBCUs only receive a small percentage of overall grants from the federal government, and the dollar amount allocated to HBCUs has been decreasing (Arnett, 2014). HBCUs continue to find themselves in trouble with accreditation issues that could cause the institutions to shut down permanently. In a 2014 study, HBCU administrators stated financing university programs as their top challenge (Arnett, 2014). Financial volatility may be especially problematic for HBCUs because they have traditionally been a home for many first-generation and low-income students (Camera, 2017). Many of these students rely on tuition assistance like Pell grants and direct loans, but these forms of financial aid are becoming less common at HBCUs (Arnett, 2014). The need for HBCUs in the country is validated by the increasing number of testimonies from HBCU graduates claiming they would not be where they are today if not for their four years at an HBCU (Camera, 2017). These testimonies affirm the need for HBCUs, but their financial state does not look promising.

One strategy many HBCUs have implemented in response to these budgeting issues is to increase their focus on fundraising and alumni relations. Despite this effort, the last major gift to an HBCU was in the 1980s, indicating that potential donors are not investing in HBCUs (Stuart, 2017). With the limited external funding, it has been suggested that they earmark funds for academics and remove funding for athletic programs (Savage, 2017). Removing athletic programs could ensure the survival of the institution, but could also take away from the student experience in college. Suggestions also call for a reevaluation of the academic programs offered on campus at HBCUs. The consolidation of academic programs should ensure only the programs that prepare students for work after graduation are offered (Savage, 2017). Consolidating

academic programs indicates not only athletics and extracurriculars on campus will be cut, but also some of the academic offerings at the institutions.

A recent example of an HBCU that was forced to close its doors is Morris Brown College. The historic HBCU was established in Atlanta in 1881. However, as the college sought to grow its public profile through promotional campaigns, replacement funds were not raised, and the institution was forced to make cuts, eventually leading to the school's loss of accreditation in the early 2000s (Wheatley, 2017). Losing accreditation proved fatal as institutions with no accreditation are not able to award federal financial aid. As mentioned previously, many of the students that HBCUs attract rely on this type of funding, as they come from low-income families.

The unfortunate example of Morris Brown College seems to foreshadow the possibilities for other HBCUs as enrollment is dropping and the tuition dollars are not coming into the institutions. Today, many of the buildings on Morris Brown College's campus have fallen into disrepair, including Alonzo Herndon Stadium, the college's football stadium and a competition venue for the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. With the example from Morris Brown College, a college that invested heavily on athletic programs and facilities, there comes a need to reevaluate where HBCUs are allocating money and if the allocation to athletics can hurt the institution.

Although achieving accreditation was a success for many HBCUs in the early days, it was the downfall for many of their peers. Factors that lead to financial downturns in HBCUs were cited as, "consolidations, and mergers, including diminished financial support from northern philanthropists and church groups and the rise of accreditation agencies for colleges and universities" (Clement & Lidsky, 2011, p. 150). Even today, many years after the Great Depression, HBCUs are having the same accreditation and financial issues. Paine College has

been fighting accreditation issues with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for over two years and is constantly attempting to prevent their doors from closing (Stirgus, 2018). This struggle to save accreditation could cause the institution to shut down permanently, leading to lost jobs and students having to transfer to other institutions. Unfortunately for the institution, they are set to know their fate during the summer of 2018.

As mentioned above, in the discussion to curb financial hardships on these institutions, mergers and consolidations have been offered as solutions to the growing financial uncertainty (Albritton, 2012). Although not all suggested mergers came to fruition, a recent merger of Albany State University (HBCU) and Darton College (PWI) was complete in 2017 and kept the Albany State University name. This consolidation was the first in the state of Georgia to combine an HBCU and a PWI (Davis, 2016). Declining enrollment at both institutions was the cause of the consolidation. The president of Albany State University maintained the role as leader, with the president of Darton College moving on to take the helm of Fort Valley State University, another HBCU in Georgia. More consolidations might be on the way for HBCUs as these institutions continue to struggle with enrollment and decreasing revenue from tuition. In addition to state legislators considering full mergers and consolidations, some HBCUs and PWIs have worked to partner and create joint programs for students (Albritton, 2012). Mergers and consolidations mean students from HBCUs have the opportunity to enroll in academic programs offered outside of their campus, while still having the chance to participate in the culture of an HBCU.

With the financial burden to maintain quality academic programs on campus, there is also pressure to preserve the historic nature of campus buildings and structures (Clement & Lidsky, 2011). Another financial shortcoming to HBCUs, is many of these institutions are home to

buildings marked on their campuses as historically significant by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. According to Clement and Lidsky (2011), although it can be exciting for institutions to have these historical buildings on campus, it can be a financial burden to college presidents as these buildings might no longer function with the campus's structure and are often vacant "eyesores" on campus. Although there are grant programs available to HBCUs to help with the upkeep and maintenance of these buildings, many HBCU presidents are not taking advantage of them (Clement & Lidsky, 2011). As presidents miss out on these grant opportunities, it is important to note the institutions are not capitalizing on revenue available to their institutions.

Whether there is a lack of communication, education, or resources from the leadership of these institutions, revenue streams need to be addressed at HBCUs to understand the reality of the financial picture. The analysis of external revenue streams available to HBCUs does not look promising, and HBCUs find themselves losing accreditation and struggling to keep their doors open. Despite the financial struggle, HBCUs are still providing students with athletic programs on campus. The next section provides an analysis of HBCU athletics, beginning with a history of HBCU athletics, followed by a discussion of the current state of HBCU athletics, and concluding with a financial picture of HBCU athletic departments.

## **HBCU Athletics**

### **The Beginning of HBCU Athletics**

The beginning of HBCU athletics began as early as 1892 when the first HBCU football game was played between Livingstone and Biddle (now known as Johnson C. Smith) (Dent, 2012). Since that date, the history of black student-athletes has grown to what it is today. When forming the original association for African American colleges, nine institutions met on the

campus of Hampton University to discuss the formation of intercollegiate competition for their member institutions, and in 1912, the Colored Intercollegiate Athletic Association was formed. (Jeffers, 2002). This association provided black student-athletes their first opportunity to compete in intercollegiate athletics.

Originally, the Colored Intercollegiate Athletic Association was formed with only four-member institutions: Hampton Institute (Hampton University), Howard University, Shaw University, and Virginia Union University (Jeffers, 2002). Today, the association—rebranded the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association in 1950—is home to many more institutions and holds one of the most attended athletic events in the country annually, creating a huge economic impact to the host city (Jeffers, 2002). The CIAA basketball tournament is important for the financial success of the conference, as the member institutions of the conference can reap the financial benefit from participation in the tournament. For example, the success of the tournament has led to over \$20 million in scholarship funds for CIAA member institutions (CIAA, 2018). However, it is more than the athletic showcase during the week of the tournament that brings fans to the host city for the event. It is the friendships and fellowships that are formed. This reality proves these HBCU athletic events are culturally distinct events. Even students that attend PWIs will travel for this event to embrace the fanfare of family reunions, networking, and social events.

The basketball tournament is important to mention as the tournament itself is an icon of change for HBCUs. In the beginning of the tournament, that, as mentioned above, is one of the most attended athletic events in the country, the association had trouble finding a host willing to host an African American group, and as a result, the student-athletes slept on the floor of the gymnasium because hotels would not let the institutions book rooms (Jeffers, 2002). From the

poor beginnings of the tournament in 1946 to the multi-million-dollar corporate sponsorships and television deals that the tournament brings in today show how successful HBCU athletic programs can be in today's society.

The growth of the CIAA proves the success of HBCUs but also leaves the question about why the individual member institutions are not striving financially in the athletic department. When the association changed its name in 1950, it lost a good portion of its membership after some of the institutions moved on to form the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC). Additionally, student-athletes were lost as a result of integration and the opportunity to play at more well-known and better funded PWIs. Despite these changes, the annual basketball tournament sponsored by CIAA generated an estimated economic impact of \$50.5 million in 2012 in the host city of Charlotte, NC (Dent, 2012). One hundred years after the formation of the conference, the association proves the potential of HBCU athletic programs.

After a perceived successful beginning for HBCU athletics, additional academic and athletic options for African American student-athletes following integration resulted in less talent at HBCUs. The CIAA proved financial stability in their basketball tournament, but individual HBCUs did not all realize these same financial fortunes. The next section offers a discussion of the current landscape of HBCU athletics. Specifically, there will be an analysis of the four HBCU conferences and their member institutions.

### **Landscape of HBCU Athletics**

Before diving into the changing landscape of HBCU athletic departments, it is important to describe the HBCU member institutions in the NCAA structure. To begin, there are four HBCU conferences in the NCAA membership, two in Division I and two in Division II. Making up the Division I conferences are the 10-member Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC),

and the 13-member MEAC. The Division II conferences are the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC), made up of 14-member institutions, and the aforementioned CIAA, made up of 12-member institutions. It is crucial to understand the changing landscapes of these conferences, as there have been many changes to the make-up of these conferences since the formation of the first conference, the CIAA, in 1912.

The first non-HBCU to join an HBCU conference was Chowan University in 2007. Chowan University, a Baptist-based institution looking for the best fit for their athletic program, entered into the CIAA and was met with open arms from the Commissioner of the conference, who stated, “The color of power is green” (Associated Press, 2007, p. 1). Chowan’s fit in the conference was a financial one, as the member institution made sense for the geographic footprint of the conference. The acceptance of Chowan into the CIAA was met with positive accolades from the commissioners of other HBCU conferences, including the SWAC and MEAC (Associated Press, 2007). Following Chowan’s move to the CIAA, Spring Hill College, a Roman Catholic, Jesuit institution, was officially accepted for membership in the SIAC in 2012. The athletic director at Spring Hill College expressed the belief that the conference was a good fit for their institution. The geographic footprint and emphasis on academic values at the member institutions helped the institution make the decision (Inabinett, 2012). The Commissioner of the SIAC reported Spring Hill College was acknowledged by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for being a front runner in integration, integrating much earlier compared to peer institutions in the South (Inabinett, 2012). With changes to these historical conferences, it is important to research their ability to compete on a successful level with their peer institutions. These conferences are obviously attractive to institutions outside of the HBCU landscape. However, it is important to understand how their athletic programs seem to suffer financially.



Much of the research on the differences in HBCU athletic departments has occurred in the past 20 years. HBCU athletic contests are more than just athletic events; they are overarching social experiences, including events such as battle of the bands, parades, and college fairs (Cianfrone et al., 2010). As an example of the spectacle often associated with HBCU sporting events, many HBCUs attribute a large portion of their annual revenues to the “football classics” held yearly at neutral sites against rival teams. An example of this profitable endeavor is the oldest HBCU classic, the Tuskegee Morehouse Classic, featuring Tuskegee University and Morehouse College and held annually in Columbus, Georgia. This classic has been played every year since 1902, and the success of the classic has generated revenue that helps support the rest of the schools’ athletic department budgets for the year (Seymour, 2006). Despite the economic windfall that some of these events provide, many HBCU athletic departments have reported budget shortages (Trahan, 2016).

With the limited budgets at HBCU athletic departments, many coaches in these departments have reported high levels of stress. Job security and lack of resources are cited as two main factors that caused stress for coaches in HBCU athletic departments (Robbins et al., 2015). Additionally, the financial strain at HBCUs can be problematic for athletic administrators when trying to attract the best coaches and student-athletes (Cooper & Hawkins, 2012; Robbins et al., 2015).

As mentioned previously, consumers of HBCU athletic teams are rarely studied (Cianfrone et al., 2010; Stone, et al., 2012). Below, I highlight the existing literature on HBCU funding and athletic administration. Specifically addressing revenue and expenditures.

### **Financing HBCU Athletic Programs**

Over the past ten years, expenditures have increased significantly among HBCUs. However, there has been little research on exactly how expenditures in HBCU athletics have increased. (Jones & Bell, 2016). Specifically, Jones and Bell (2016) called for more research on specific reasons HBCUs are spending more on athletics in areas such as coach salaries, scholarships, athletic aid, and operating expenses. Further understanding of the expenses could help HBCU athletic administrators better understand how to allocate funds. Although there is a need for increased research, little practical implications are given in the existing body of scholarship. Additional research into helping institutions better allocate or raise additional funds could help the field. With the increased expenses comes the challenge for athletic department administration to secure revenue sources. As discussed above, signature events like the Tuskegee Morehouse Classic can generate significant revenues used to subsidize a large portion of competing teams' athletic budgets. However, despite the success of some classic games, not all teams competing in neutral-site competitions have realized increased revenue. New classics are proving to be less profitable, as they cannot draw the attendance of the more well-known classics (Seymour, 2006).

An additional factor causing the downfall of these neutral-site classics is the increasing popularity of guarantee games against top Division I programs, in which institutions are choosing to play instead of HBCU classics because they receive a large payout (Greenlee, 2012). For example, in 2013, Florida A&M University was paid \$900,000 (more than one-half of its annual football budget) to play Ohio State in football; they lost the game, 76–0 (Hruby, 2017). Despite the physical risks of playing these guarantee games, exposure for student-athletes, the

ability for coaches to get a better understanding of their team's performance, and the revenue generated from these games can outweigh these risks (Nocera, 2016).

Despite the popularity of the classics and the guarantee games HBCU programs play in annually, it is widely reported that HBCUs struggle in athletic department funding (Nocera, 2016). For example, after announcing her university's move from Division I to Division II, Savannah State President Cheryl Dozier cited the decision will help maintain fiscal responsibility for the students and institution (Suggs, 2017). Originally a Division II NCAA institution, Savannah State University was not able to capitalize on football revenue in Division I as they failed to field a competitive program. Their history as a Division I institution left a dismal overall football program record of 22–140 (Suggs, 2017). This statistic is not surprising as according to the Equity in Athletics Data Analysis database, Savannah State University allocated the least funds to football expenses when compared to all other institutions in their Division I conference. Move over, they spent the second lowest amount in total expenses at their previous Division I conference. Their lack of funding prevented success and pushed them back to Division II where they could be more competitive financially. Beyond athletic program funding struggles, Savannah State University was forced to cut non-tenured faculty for the 2019-2020 academic year to compensate for dwindling student enrollment (Kurtz, 2018). The decision to cut faculty members indicates the financial struggles for the HBCU are not only impacting athletics but the entire institution.

One way to drive additional revenue is through a dedicated marketing strategy. However, as reported by Li and Burden (2009), the majority of HBCUs do not employ a marketing or external relations employee in their athletic department. Although research has shown employing a marketing or external relations employee in athletics is crucial to securing sponsorships, most

HBCUs do not have a designated employee for this task. A lack of funding is preventing many of these institutions from hiring the needed personnel. Similarly, Jackson, Lyons, and Gooden (2001) similarly found that most HBCU athletic departments are not putting effort into developing a marketing department or employees to put themselves in a better position to solicit corporate sponsors. Although past studies have focused on the lack of financial resources at HBCUs, it remains unclear how HBCUs specifically compare financially to their peer institutions and the extent, if any, to which a financial deficit exists. Additional research to the field can help provide resources to these institutions that do not have marketing or external relation employees in place at their institutions. Additionally, the majority of these studies have focused on Division I institution athletic departments, additional research into smaller, HBCU athletic departments in the Division II landscape could also prove useful to the existing body of scholarship on HBCU athletics. The next section offers a discussion on the divisional differences that occur amongst HBCUs in the NCAA membership.

### **Divisional Analysis**

The number of participants attending an event has surfaced as a factor leading to sponsorship success (Berrett & Slack, 2001). As noted previously, many HBCU athletic contests are highly attended; for example, the SIAC has led Division II in football attendance for 13 consecutive seasons (Reddick, 2017). Thus, with the number of fans attending HBCU athletic contests, they become an ideal candidate for corporate sponsorship. Even with crowds attending these games, athletic administrators at HBCUs have not capitalized on the value of their fans to increase revenue (Armstrong, 2001). The lack of research on HBCU fans means there are still opportunities out there for these institutions to find revenue streams and gain a financial footing.

Despite the highly attended HBCU Division II football games, questions have been raised about why Division I HBCU athletic programs remain under the Division I classification when they are not stacking up financially (Trahan, 2016). However, history and pride have been cited as two reasons for HBCU Division I institutions to remain under the Division I classification (Trahan, 2016). It is not only the HBCU Division I institutions that find trouble competing against their peer institutions, HBCU Division II institutions experience the same financial woes in comparison to their peer institutions on their competition schedule. Two examples of institutions that had to recently make cuts are Paine College and Stillman College, both of which originally played Division II football in the SIAC. Stillman College not only cut football but also cut every other sport program in their athletic program except for men's and women's basketball. Although the cuts seem dramatic, the president of Stillman College claimed athletics were still important to the institution historically, and men's and women's basketball were kept at the institution in the hopes of rebuilding the athletic department in the future (Logue, 2016).

Recently, on the Division I landscape, Howard University decided to leave the MEAC to join the Big South Conference. The MEAC is one of two HBCU conferences made up of mostly HBCUs. One of the reasons stated by Howard University in their decision to switch conferences was the travel cost for the institution as well as the travel time for the student-athletes at Howard University (Carter, 2017). It is important to note, Howard University was a successful member institution of the MEAC, consistently winning football and basketball conference championships. This move was cited as a financial decision, thus proving the need to analyze financial reporting and expenditures by HBCU athletic departments.

In Division I and II institutions, institutions are permitted to offer scholarships to student-athletes, and over the years, athletic aid expenditures by institutions have been growing

(Wolverton, Hallman, Shifflett, Kambhampati, 2015). Although the scholarships given by institutions are growing, only between 1–2 percent of students at colleges and universities receive athletically related financial aid, totaling one billion dollars a year (Ziff, 2017). With the number of scholarships increasing, there can be an opportunity for the powerful institutions that have the revenue and financial resources to pull away further and create a bigger divide from the lower funded institutions.

Despite the scholarship potential, not all athletes are benefiting at HBCUs, especially the female athletes (Theune, 2016). That is, while Title IX legislation has increased opportunities to participate at HBCUs, black female student-athletes are receiving fewer scholarships at HBCUs than in previous years. This can be attributed to the growth in non-black student-athletes at HBCUs receiving scholarships. Overall, the number of black student-athletes participating at HBCUs has decreased with the increase in white student-athletes (Bell & Jones, 2016). Based on this current trend, additional research into the differences in scholarship spending at HBCUs may help identify inefficiencies that can be corrected to prevent the closing of doors for black women student-athletes and work to increase athletic aid opportunity.

Scholarships and travel expenses can be highlighted as two financial burdens for HBCU athletic departments. With these growing expenses, it is important to understand available opportunities for revenue. Below, I outline specific revenue streams that might prove beneficial for HBCUs.

### **HBCU Revenue**

One of the largest revenue streams for HBCUs is tuition from students; however, in recent years, students who historically attend these institutions have struggled to obtain federal loans, leading them to drop out of HBCUs (Camera, 2017). With the growing importance of

tuition dollars, HBCUs must find ways to maintain retention rates and bring new students to campus. Unfortunately, even if HBCUs realize growth in enrollment, that might not translate to a strong increase in revenue from tuition, as a good portion of students enrolled at HBCUs receive a significant amount of financial aid (Motley, 2018). A high percentage of students enrolling at HBCUs come from low-income families and are often forced to rely on financial aid from the institution to pay tuition. Recruiting these students forces institutions to cut potential revenue from tuition. Beyond the revenue streams from tuition and government grants, HBCUs do not realize high alumni or donor giving at their institutions (Motley, 2018). While some institutions have noticed an increase in alumni donations over the past couple of years, others have indicated the need to put more effort into this area in order to generate revenue from alumni and individual donors on par with their peer PWIs. Without this key source of revenue, these institutions may be forced to cut costs to institutional programs like athletics.

Beyond the shrinking tuition dollars at HBCUs, these institutions also receive smaller amounts of federal, state, and local grants in comparison to PWIs (Toldson, 2016). According to Toldson (2016), “The annual revenue total for grants and contracts for the average [traditionally white institution] would rank in the top-10 among HBCUs” (p. 97). This statistic indicates that the average PWI would be in the mix of the HBCU top government grant revenue earners. To show the disparity between the government grant revenue dispersed between HBCUs and PWIs, the top government grant earner, Johns Hopkins University collected nearly \$1.6 billion in 2014 compared to the top HBCU grant earner, Howard University, which collected just over \$57 million in the same year (Toldson, 2016).

In addition to government grants, HBCUs have access to the Historically Black

College and University Capital Financing Program. The program offers loans to HBCUs to help refinance capital projects, renovate existing facilities, or build new facilities (Motley, 2018). Although this program has been proven successful at select HBCUs, it can be difficult for all HBCUs to access additional capital markets as their financial health does not produce low-interest rates. HBCUs are at a disadvantage with their credit ratings, and research suggests HBCUs should try to work with private partners to enter capital funding. Although working with private partners can seem enticing for HBCUs, it can take time for the institutions to realize their investment in these endeavors. As institution financial constraints impact programming offered on campus, it is important to understand how HBCUs are generating revenue.

**Streaming and television.** Television streaming has become a significant source of revenue for college athletic departments (Hobson & Rich, 2015). An example is the University of Texas athletic department's Longhorn Network, which generates over \$180 million per year (Thamel, 2017). Additionally, three Division I conferences have launched their own television networks to add revenue to member institution departments (Hobson & Rich, 2015). However, although these models are working at the power five institutions, it is creating a further divide between powerhouse Division I institutions and other collegiate athletic institutions. The best college athletic programs have been getting the most opportunity with television and earning the revenue that comes with having programs on a national platform (Cheslock & Knight, 2015). While the most profitable schools continue to grow their revenue base, those institutions unable to strike lucrative television deals must scramble to find revenue streams that equal their growing expenses.

Much of the literature related to streaming and television deals focuses on competitive Division I institutions. The lack of research on other levels leaves questions for smaller



institutions, including HBCUs, about their opportunity to create lucrative revenue streams using streaming and television. Additionally, it is important to compare peer institutions—those competing in the same conference or division—to identify disparities (if any) between specific categories of institutions like HBCUs.

Although much of the research on television rights and streaming has occurred on the Division I landscape, Division II has entered into revenue generating contracts with television partners; specifically, HBCUs have entered the game of earning revenue from television. Examples of two successful HBCU partnerships with television are the recent partnership between the SIAC and ESPN and the continuation of the existing partnership between the SIAC and Aspire. In the fall of 2017, ESPN agreed to a multi-year partnership with the SIAC to stream six football games each season in addition to the already existing partnership the SIAC had with Aspire to stream three football game (Williams, 2017a, 2017b). The partnership provides revenue to the conference, directly benefiting its 14-member institutions in addition to providing a platform to sell sponsorships and increase revenue. Although the dollar figures awarded for this partnership might not be comparable to the funds received by the power five conferences and institutions, the partnership shows there is an opportunity for smaller institutions, including HBCUs.

**Institutional and student fees.** The majority of college athletic departments rely heavily on contributions from the institution (Matheson, O'Connor, & Herberger, 2012). Thus, student fees continue to be a major internal revenue stream for college athletic departments. A study completed by Morton (2017) compared successful athletic teams (as defined by the Directors' Cup standings) and student fees allocated toward athletics and found there was not a positive relationship between investing student fees in athletic programs and ensuring a winning team.

The research did note, however, that there could be measures of success beyond team performance realized from allocating student fees to athletics.

As expenses continue to rise for college athletic departments, some administrators are leaning on student fees to cover the revenue gap (Hosick, 2005). Although institutions are attempting to drive revenue through other outlets, student fees are needed to cover expenses. The critique of using student fees to cover athletic expenses can especially be seen at smaller institutions where all students are forced to pay student fees toward athletics, even if they do not attend any sporting events (Hosick, 2005). Another common critique of funding athletic departments through student fees is the students paying the fees are sometimes also required to pay admission to sporting events in addition to paying student fees. As student fees continue to fund athletics, athletic departments are likely to continue to face criticism of the college sport model and the commercialization of college sports. Some students feel that they should not be paying for programs that they do not participate in on-campus (Centor, 2005). Students attending the institutions for primarily academic reasons may not see the benefit in financially supporting an athletic department when there are other financial needs at the institution. Despite this perception and criticism from some students, when students are asked about their willingness to pay more in student fees to support football programs, an overwhelming majority agree to financially contribute to supporting their institution's football program through student fees (Hosick, 2005). According to Hosick (2005), students want to say they graduate from a football institution. This account indicates that although there are critics of using institutional fees to support athletics, some institutions may find enough support to continue using the method as a revenue stream.

**Ticket and suite sales.** One solution college athletics departments have put into place to avoid increasing student fees to cover athletic expenses is to increase the cost of tickets (Hosick, 2005). Ticket prices have been an under-studied area in college sports, and ticket prices can vary based on internal and external factors at each institution (Morehead, Shapiro, Madden, Reams, & McEnvoy, 2017). College athletic administrators can benefit from understanding how to price their admission fees better to maximize revenue. Additional research may be especially helpful for administrators of HBCUs, where smaller budgets and less staff are typically available to consider potential ticket prices and determine how to make the most revenue from ticket sales. However, despite the limited staff at HBCUs, these institutions have had strong football attendance over the past decade. With the strong football attendance, HBCUs should be competitive with peer institutions in ticket revenue.

Another game day revenues can come from offering luxury suites to fans. Like ticket prices, there has not been much research into the pricing of luxury suites. Mayer, Morse, and DeSchriver (2017) found conference affiliation, suite capacity, county income, tickets included, competition, and winning percentage all positively impacted the price of luxury suites. The added option for fans could increase bottom lines for institutions, especially for HBCUs, as their football games are branded as an overarching social experience (Cianfrone et al., 2010) in which fans attend for entertainment (Armstrong, 2001). Based on this evidence, HBCUs could use additional premium seating options for fans, adding experience and increasing financial support for the institution.

**Donations and alumni support.** College athletic departments understand the value of keeping wealthy alumni and donors close to campus. This fact can be seen as athletic programs host special events and reserve private seating areas at athletic contests for the alumni and donors

that give the highest contributions (Cheslock & Knight, 2015). As athletic programs continue to find success and donors and alumni continue to provide support, a divide between institutions that have and have not is apparent. Among HBCUs, there have been very few alumni or donors that have made major contributions back to their institutions (Stuart, 2017). As HBCUs continue to receive little help from alumni and donors, they will continue to fall further behind in the race for revenue for their athletic department. Additionally, research has shown HBCUs typically do not employ marketing or external relation employees within their athletic departments to help further promote outreach to alumni and donors (Li & Burden, 2009). While larger institutions employ multi-person teams for alumni relations and donations, HBCU athletic departments might not be helping themselves by investing in donation lines for their department. The current study will help HBCUs understand where they are in relation to their peers in terms of generating revenue from alumni and donors. With the reality that smaller HBCUs are not competing financially with power five conferences and institutions, it is important to understand how revenue generation compares between these institutions and their peers.

**Sponsorships.** Sponsorship revenue is an important income stream for athletic departments. In the 2014–15 academic year alone, college athletic sponsorship exceeded \$1.1 billion (Andrews, 2015). However, among HBCUs, there has not been much investment in creating marketing departments to solicit sponsorships (Jackson, et al., 2001). This lack of investment is an unfortunate finding as these institutions have unique characteristics and a loyal fan following. Additional staff in a marketing or external relations department may be a necessity if organizations are to be competitive and strategic in their attempts to secure partnerships (Berrett & Slack, 2001).

Sponsorship fit has been found as a key in forming a partnership (Johnson & Paulsen, 2013). Sponsorship fit can work for HBCUs as they bring a unique culture value proposition; however, it might take initial investments from the institution to make this possible. For example, in separate studies of black sports consumers, Armstrong (1999, 2001) found marketing campaigns that employed a “cultural approach” (Armstrong, 1999, p. 283) were more valued by consumers. These value propositions can help HBCU athletic departments drive revenue by offering on field and game day promotion entertainment opportunities to sponsors.

Additionally, previous research showed the number of fans attending an event was an important variable in securing sponsorships (Berrett & Slack, 2001). Moreover, fans attending collegiate athletic football games are more willing to purchase products from sponsors they feel show more goodwill toward their team (Dees, Bennett, & Villegas, 2008). Marketing fan consumer behavior can help departments increase sponsors and consequently generate more revenue. The opportunity for signage at athletic contests has also been noted as an important selling point for sponsorships (Weight, Taylor, & Cuneen, 2010). Athletic contests are an opportunity for departments to sell signage space and generate revenue. However, little research comparing the ability of HBCUs and PWIs to generate sponsorship revenue in relation to their peers has been completed. Research into the differences between sponsorship revenue at peer institutions can show if HBCUs are truly lacking in capitalizing on this important revenue stream.

**Social media.** Social media has been an increasing platform for institutions to boost revenue through sponsorships. Social media helps departments engage with fans and keep them a part of the revenue generating process beyond attending one game (O’Hallarn, Morehead, & Pribesh, 2017). However, beyond cultivation and engagement with fans, departments can also

use social media platforms to help sponsors reach a wide audience, in addition to providing coveted analytics from sponsor advertisements and promotions. An example of this endeavor is the Home Depot Retool Your School Campaign created as a partnership between Home Depot and HBCUs. Home Depot works with the four HBCU conference offices (i.e., CIAC, the MEAC, the SIAC, and the SWAC) to promote their Retool Your School campaign on the member institutions' social media pages (The "Rules", 2018). During the campaign, each HBCU must generate votes for its institution's proposed campus project using engagement on social media, specifically hashtags on Twitter. At the end of the campaign, the institutions with the most votes are awarded funds for their institution to complete their proposed Retool Your School project on campus. This campaign generates great promotional opportunities for the sponsoring organization, Home Depot, and can be used by institutions as a model to use social media to generate revenue through digital advertisements for corporate sponsors.

As institutions move toward social media for additional revenue, athletic departments might need to add more employees to keep up with the demand of juggling all of the social media platforms. An example is the University of Texas's investment into personnel to ensure they can tell their story through social media platforms (Thamel, 2017). Athletic departments are employing entire social media teams within athletic departments to include full-time employees, student workers, and even volunteers to try and tell their team's story. Despite the perceived benefit of using social media to promote programs and sponsorships at larger institutions, smaller institutions might not be able to capitalize on social media-promoted ticket sales, as past research shows social media metrics are not an indicator of attendance or ticket revenue (Popp, McEvoy, & Watanabe, 2017). HBCU athletic departments continue to lead social media among small colleges; however, as these institutions are struggling financially, the emphasis placed on social

media might need to be reevaluated if research shows there is no connection between the amount of social media engagement and increased ticket sales.

As HBCUs continue to seek revenue opportunities, it is vital to understand how their athletic consumers value sponsors of these revenue streams. Specially, it is important for HBCUs to understand their fanbase. Thus, cognitive, affective, and conative responses must be studied in relation to sponsorship outcomes. As previous literature indicates HBCUs are struggling to maintain a financial footing, it is important to understand any and all potential revenue streams available to these institutions. For example, sponsorships and partnerships could be key to the success of HBCU athletic departments. Consequently, if HBCUs can communicate the unique aspects of their fans to corporate sponsors, there is an opportunity for lucrative deals that can lead to a major increase in revenue. RQ 3 specifically addresses how HBCUs and PWIs differ regarding revenue generation for their athletic departments.

### **Attracting Coaches and Student-Athletes to HBCUs**

#### **Coaches**

Minority head coaches at all levels of collegiate football are reportedly underrepresented (Bozeman & Fay, 2013), despite a reported positive increase in black collegiate football coaches (Bopp & Sagas, 2012). Consequently, it is important to look at HBCU football programs and understand some stressors for these coaches and why they are not moving on to higher sought-after collegiate football coaching positions. One reason reported by Auerbach (2016) is that the overall record of many HBCU coaches may suffer from participating in guarantee games that, while important for the program's financial picture, nearly always results in lopsided losses. In other words, after piling up losses as the coach of a small-budget Division I and II football

programs competing against Division I FBS programs, these coaches might be overlooked by hiring committees focused on overall records.

### **Student-Athletes**

From a young, high school perspective, many male, black students do not even mention the possibility of attending an HBCU whereas their female peers see themselves attending these institutions (Hubbard, 1999). For instance, the boys interviewed in Hubbard's (1999) case study were more focused on the institutions they believed would offer them an athletic scholarship. This early research was completed interviewing low-income and first-generation college students. However, expanding this participation pool to include more students from all financial backgrounds could help understand the bigger picture behind why students are selecting to attend HBCUs. Proving a college athletic scholarship serves as a motivating factor for black, male high schools students. At the student-athlete level, Cooper and Hawkins (2002) interviewed male, black student-athletes at HBCUs and found most of the student-athletes' primary college choices were PWIs. The authors hypothesized that the higher visibility of and resources available at PWIs contributed to student preference. Additionally, integration in higher education opened, and PWIs began recruiting black students at a higher rate, many HBCUs had to compete for athletic standouts that would otherwise have chosen an HBCU to spend their collegiate career as these were originally the only opportunities available (Gaither, 2013). In summary, as more PWI coaches began recruiting black students to their teams, HBCU coaches began to lose recruits to more developed and resourced athletic programs.

Despite the increased competition with PWIs for recruits, HBCU student-athletes find a special connection with their HBCU and believe their choice of an HBCU provided an “emphasis on academic excellence, family atmosphere and high expectations of achievement



beyond graduation” (McKindra, 2008, p. 1). This perception indicates that although there is a lack of resources and funding, there are other benefits of HBCUs that make them attractive to prospective student-athletes.

Student-athletes admit they had a challenging time balancing academic and athletic responsibility at HBCUs (Cooper & Hawkins, 2002). This research is consistent with later work by Robbins, Gilbert, and Clifton (2015), who found the lack of funding at HBCUs caused teams to travel by bus on long rides, typically across state lines. Furthermore, coaches at HBCUs typically must monitor study hours on these long trips, adding responsibilities to their already long list of duties (Robbins et al., 2015). The financial strain at HBCUs is noticeable and can be an issue when trying to attract the best coaches and student-athletes.

There has also been a decline in first-generation college student-athletes competing at NCAA institutions (Farrey, 2017). With this decrease in the overall student-athlete population, the number of first-generation college student-athletes at HBCUs is growing. This reality is based on coaches having to recruit certain student-athletes based on the prediction of the student-athlete having the ability to balance athletics with coursework, ensuring a good academic performance (Farrey, 2017). With the added stress for coaches to recruit not only great athletes but also students that can perform well in the classroom, comes the need for institutions to make their athletic programs desirable for incoming student-athletes. Given that HBCUs are enrolling first-generation college students at an increasing rate, there is a growing demand for academic support services that can aid in maximizing students’ chances for success.

From an academic perspective, student-athletes at HBCUs have performed staggeringly lower than their peers at PWIs, as outlined by the poor graduation rates (Charlton, 2011). One recent example of HBCU student-athlete finding themselves in an unfortunate academic situation

when three of the HBCUs competing in the Division I SWAC were banned from post-season competition in 2014 following their dismal academic progress rate (Bannister, 2014). The institutions cited lack of academic resources on campus, including not having the required compliance software to help the institutions succeed (Bannister, 2014). The research indicated many of the current employees in these athletic departments were walking into a mess streaming from a lack of proper record keeping in the department. This unfortunate incident showed HBCUs need to invest more into academic support to help student-athletes remain eligible in the classroom and remain on track to graduate.

However, despite the overall low performance in academic success at HBCUs, it is proven that when an HBCU puts the academic support and structure in place for student-athletes to succeed, graduation rates can rise (Charlton, 2011). Specifically, Charlton (2011) completed a case study of a single HBCU that had a high graduation rate. The research found putting an emphasis in academic areas, and rewarding student-athletes at a yearly banquet and at half-time for academic success proved to lead to academic success. Rewarding academic achievement shows there is a model for HBCUs to follow. However, the entire department and staff, including coaches, need to be involved in promoting a successful academic culture.

### **Athletic Administrators at HBCUs**

Differences have been found between athletic directors at HBCUs and PWIs. Specifically, athletic directors at HBCUs are younger, have more graduate degrees in comparison to their peers, have more coaching/teaching responsibilities, are paid much less (Quarterman, 1992). These differences mean athletic directors at HBCUs have more responsibility, and at a younger age, are expected to wear many hats on campus, beyond leading the department.

Athletic administrators at HBCUs have found themselves in a tough spot as the NCAA membership voted in 2004 for academic reform measures that would penalize member institutions with postseason bans and minimized scholarships if their student-athletes did not meet academic progress rate minimum requirements (Davis, 2006). This NCAA legislation indicated trouble for many HBCUs that, as mentioned previously, recruited first-generation college students that many of the HBCUs did not have the academic support resources in place to ensure success. Despite the majority membership vote by the NCAA membership to start cracking down on academic progress, some HBCU leaders decided to allow student-athletes to continue playing in their postseason conference tournament despite not meeting minimum requirements.

The decision by athletic administrators at HBCUs can also prove controversial as key campus leaders in the Division I SWAC decided to keep teams eligible for postseason conference competition after receiving a postseason ban in 2014 by the NCAA for poor academic progress rates (Bannister, 2014). This decision indicates although these institutions are low budget and under-resourced, they put an emphasis on the importance of athletics at their institutions.

HBCUs have realized challenges recruiting the best student-athletes and coaches for the position. During times of struggle, athletic administrators have had to make tough decisions to keep athletic programs on their campuses. With the apparent desires for these institutions to fund athletic programs on campus, it is important to understand how HBCUs fit in the NCAA membership. To understand the placement of HBCUs in the NCAA membership, the following section uses a resource dependency perspective to analyze their financial struggle in the membership.

### **Resource Dependency, Power, and HBCUs**

Unfortunately, much of the research on HBCUs and their athletic departments has lacked a strong theoretical base. Without the inclusion of theory, the work lacks credibility, and the body of scholarship remains stagnant. Additionally, although there has been strong research complete on HBCU athletics and their financial struggles, much of this research has been complete solely on the Division I level. Although many HBCUs are part of the NCAA Division I membership, unfortunately, this still leaves the two HBCU Division II conferences with little research in the current body of scholarship. This limitation could prevent the growth of knowledge of the smaller HBCUs that still try and compete within the NCAA membership. With the lack of a theoretical foundation in current HBCU literature, it could be beneficial to reach to other disciplines to apply existing theory to the field. To expand theoretical literature in HBCU athletics, a resource dependency perspective is explained in detail below as it relates to HBCU athletics.

From a resource dependency perspective, the resources an organization has determined their overall power (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977). Organizations will always compete for limited resources, and there will always be competition between the group with the most resources and the groups with fewer resources leading to the organization with the most limited resources having power. The resource dependency theory, developed by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik, acknowledges that resources are a basis for power and organizations depend on resources. For example, Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) indicate that organizations will compete for resources that are in scarce supply, and not necessarily abundant resources. The resource dependency theory assumes three principles of the organization: (1) organizations are assumed to be partnerships that involve social exchanges formed to influence and control behavior; (2) the

organization's environment contains scarce and valued resources essential to organizational survival; and (3) organizations are assumed to work towards acquiring control over resources that minimize their dependence on other organizations and to acquire control over resources that maximize the dependence of other organizations on themselves (Ulrich & Barney, 1984). Confirmation of these power struggles in action can be seen by observing intercollegiate athletics, specifically the NCAA structure. In the NCAA structure, schools in the Power Five, elite, conferences keep getting richer, as those schools in smaller divisions, Divisions II and III, lose resources yearly to the big-name institutions, thus making them dependent on the Power Five institutions and the money they can generate for the NCAA membership. Strictly looking at overall NCAA revenue redistributed to each NCAA member institution, Division II only receives 4.37 percent of the total revenue pie (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2018). Moreover, Division III institutions only receive 3.18 percent of the total revenue generated by the NCAA. This statistic is a staggeringly low percentage, as Division III institutions make up the largest membership of the NCAA, thus indicating the institutions that make up a smaller portion of the division, but have more resources can dictate the culture of the entire membership. A resource dependency perspective explains this phenomenon as the rich are able to get richer and control the resources as the less resourced groups, Divisions II and III in this example, must adapt to the culture. This reality is an unfortunate occurrence as some of the smaller resourced institutions might not be able to share perceptions of how they feel the association should run. This situation is proven as the schools with the money can dictate television contracts, media deals, and overarching revenue streams, redirecting the revenue back to themselves.

Even within the Division I structure, there can be a disparity between the higher resourced Division I institutions and the lower resourced institutions. Specifically referencing

money earned through the yearly Division I March Madness basketball tournament, Division I allocates the funds garnered through their annual basketball tournament back to Division I membership based on the institution's team performance in the men's basketball tournament over a six-year period ("National Collegiate Athletic Association," 2018). As with the Division II and III institutions, if an institution's team does not make the tournament, they lose out on most of the profits. This current financial payout policy for the tournament leads to teams that can produce winning programs annually reaping the benefits of the men's basketball tournament. This model demonstrates that even within social classes—Division I in this case—there can still be a power struggle over the struggle for revenue and the lower resourced institutions falling to the culture and prestige set by the more resourced institutions. This phenomenon pushes the need to examine the power struggle between the resourced and under-resourced institutions in the NCAA membership to see what can be done and how the lower resourced institutions can try and have their voices heard in the legislative process.

Specifically addressing HBCUs, the most under-resourced member institutions of the NCAA compared to their PWI peers, the numbers prove how these institutions do not have the funds to invest in their programs. According to information obtained from Equity in Athletics Data Analysis, HBCUs are spending significantly less compared to their peer institutions on recruiting, operating, total expenses, and head coach salaries (EADA, 2018). With the lack of funding, internal power struggles have grown in HBCU athletic departments about their placement in the NCAA structure, whether they should try and compete in Division I or move to a different division (Trahan, 2012). There are HBCUs in Division I and Division II groups of the NCAA membership structure, and in both groups, HBCUs fall behind their peers in available financial resources. This reality creates imbalance, especially in the Division I category because,

as mentioned above, these institutions are securing funds from the annual basketball tournament by the team's ability to make the tournament. If Division I HBCUs do not have the funds to compete with fully funded Division I programs, their ability to make the tournament becomes bleak and the institutions do not realize the revenue the NCAA earns from the television contracts and sponsorships associated with the tournament. Furthering the ability of the rich institutions to continue to get richer, leaving the under-resourced institutions stuck in "their place" in the NCAA structure.

Viewing the NCAA structure through resource dependency, the membership has worked on developing programs and grants to give the underserved members an opportunity to grow in the structure. Although this can be seen as a positive occurrence, and optimal for the membership, many institutions, especially those in the elite power conferences, have the potential to control the programs and grant dollars. One stride taken by the NCAA membership is the current NCAA Presidential Pledge. Under this campaign, all presidents in the NCAA membership, including all three Divisions, are asked to sign a pledge, "to promoting diversity and gender equity in intercollegiate athletics" (ncaa.org, 2018, p. 1). This pledge campaign was created out of the lack of minorities holding leadership positions in all divisions of the NCAA structure. The goal of the pledge is to promote diversity in hiring practices on campus in the goal of having more minorities in roles in intercollegiate athletics. Although this pledge might be seen as a step in the right direction by key leaders in the NCAA Presidents Council, the results of the pledge might not have a direct impact on giving lower resourced institutions the ability to hire additional staff. This pledge does not help the under-resourced institutions, especially HBCUs that already hire the most majority diversity candidates among NCAA member institutions, from forging a path to the table with their powerhouse peers. This path leads to the overarching

problem of the “haves” in the community of intercollegiate athletics creating programs that still ensure they have the control of the membership. According to institutional power, “while in power, a dominant coalition has the ability to institute constitutions, rules, procedures, and information systems that limit the potential power of others while continuing their own” (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977, p. 18). The continued separation between HBCUs and PWIs in terms of financial resources can further emphasize the limited power HBCUs have within the NCAA membership.

This separation certainly indicates that even the presidential pledge initiative by the NCAA might not directly solve the problem of the over-resourced institutions having the power, it at least starts the conversation and puts the conversation in the right direction moving forward. With the growth of the NCAA membership, more attention will need to be paid toward ensuring constructive conversations are occurring between those institutions that have the resources and power in the organization and those that do not.

Thinking about the NCAA, although the competition for power is inevitable with the growing membership body, it should not necessarily be cause for negative concern by the power elites to keep their prestigious role in the membership, but rather an opportunity to strengthen the entire membership body. As Klein and Diniz Pereira (2016) suggest individual organization members within a network will have to evaluate their dependency on the network continuously and the advantages the network can provide. For example, even at the elite Division I NCAA member institutions, there could be severe negative consequences if an institution decides to leave the NCAA membership. Thus, scarce resources they can accumulate through their membership in the NCAA structure are dependent on their membership with the organization.



Applying resource dependency theory to HBCUs can be examined by looking at EADA. Looking at the database, results indicate HBCUs are lacking financially and do not have the same resources as their peer institutions. What this means is the lack of resources between them and their peers will always create a power imbalance. In the NCAA structure, it is visible that power plays a role in creating a further divide between the institutions that have resources and those that do not. Typically, the institutions with more wealth can invest in producing winning teams and gain power in the NCAA structure. Once an institution gains power in the NCAA membership, there is a prestige that comes with that goal that cycles back to the institution's ability to increase their current wealth. What this means is a vicious cycle of good fortune for the schools on top and using contested resources to increase the distance between the institutions at the bottom of the food chain, specifically HBCUs.

Until an analysis on the perceptions, experiences, and opinions of the underserved and those that have worked with the underserved members of the NCAA structure is complete, little progress can be made to help the under-resourced institutions climb the ranks in the NCAA and get to the decision-making table. Research into athletic resources at smaller NCAA institutions, especially HBCUs, has been absent in recent literature and research in this area can help find outcomes to the current conflict (Jones & Bell, 2016). Power struggles will always exist in the NCAA membership because there will always be an arms race between member institutions to gain more money, prestige, and power in the membership. However, the resulting competition does not have to be a negative result for the membership. Instead, the membership should look for ways to use the perceptions and opinions of all members of the association when making decisions, especially in the allocation of financial resources. Like mentioned previously, there is

an unequal distribution of funds between the NCAA membership, especially into the Division II and III structures.

Some organizations and programs such as the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association have been established under the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics umbrella to help advance careers of minority applicants. These types of programs help give a voice to the underrepresented individuals in the NCAA membership. Though constructive, and positive discussions these programs can be used to capture the voice of a greater diversity of the NCAA membership to make more effective decisions for the entire membership.

By looking at HBCUs in the NCAA membership through a resource dependency perspective, it can become clear that it is important for HBCU leaders to evaluate how they might be able to work toward achieving more resources thus leading to increased power. Applying distributed justice theory to the phenomena of limited resources HBCUs have in the NCAA membership might provide a promising outlook for HBCUs. When allocating resources, athletic directors and senior woman administrators in intercollegiate athletics believed need because of lack of resources was consistently rated as fairer than most in the distribution of resources (Patrick, Mahony, & Petrosko, 2008). This finding indicates there is a sense of support to those in the membership in need of additional resources, specifically HBCUs as it relates to this study. When examining the justest way to allocate resources on the institutional level, equality of treatment, need, and equality of results were rated as the most just among coaches in the NCAA membership (Hums & Chelladurai, 1994). These outcomes believed most just on allocating resources at the member institution level might apply to the external allocation of resources as well and further analysis to understand the fairest way to allocate resources within the NCAA membership can help strengthen the membership. An important note found in

previous literature is that men were more likely to perceive revenue production as fair, whereas women preferred equality (Patrick et al., 2008). The gender discrepancies found between the fairest way to allocate resources indicates the need to involve diverse perspectives in the discussion of expenses and revenue at NCAA member institutions.

### **Summary and Evaluation**

Following research into the financial picture of HBCU athletic departments, studies completed showed HBCUs had a valuable fan base but were lagging behind their peers regarding revenue. Specially, athletic administrators at HBCUs should understand peer institutions are spending most in athletic aid and least in recruiting (Elliott, Kellison, & Cianfrone, 2018). In some cases, this spending strategy may reflect the contrasting goals across institutions; in other cases, institutions struggling competitively can try and follow this spending model and allocate their funds for success. As research shows, HBCU are spending significantly less compared to peers in all categories of expenses including recruiting, coaching salaries, scholarships, operating expenses, and overall expenses. If desired, administrators can use these differences and understand where the biggest gaps in funding are to target revenue streams to be more competitive financially. For example, as most institutions spend the most funds on athletic aid, HBCU athletic administrators should target revenue streams that will specifically benefit growth in athletic aid expenses. Targeting athletic aid can mean creating publications and increasing donor relationships for a better understanding of how HBCUs lack in that area and how support can help.

Additionally, the research shows HBCUs are structured as the “have nots” of the NCAA membership. Looking at this phenomenon through a resource dependency perspective, HBCUs will stay stagnant in their place in the NCAA structure unless more discussion and research are

put into place to help these institutions gather the same resources as peers. At some administrative levels, strategies for reform have already been put into place. For example, as mentioned previously, the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association has aided in this endeavor by providing professional development opportunities for minorities working in the NCAA membership. Through constructive and positive discussions, these programs can be used to make decisions that are more inclusive and representative of the entire NCAA membership. These programs consequently will help HBCUs communicate the needs of their institutions.

Additionally, the gap in overall expenses might call for HBCUs to reevaluate their position in the NCAA structure. As the results of this research indicate, HBCUs are not on a level financial footing with their peer institutions, but there may be other options to consider. One such example is the so-called HBCU College Basketball League, a proposed league whose athletes—all full-time students—would earn \$50,000–\$100,000 per year and “be allowed to endorse products, sell autographs, sign with agents, accept gifts from boosters, declare for the NBA draft, and event be drafted by NBA teams without losing their eligibility” (Hruby, 2017, para. 8). In addition to providing competition with the NCAA, the league would “boost the flagging fortunes of the nation’s [HBCUs]” (para. 1). While a proposal like the HBCU League is unlikely to be adopted in the immediate future, HBCUs may be led to realign by moving to divisions and leagues that are more economically equitable. Some have questioned if Division I HBCUs, struggling to maintain an equal financial footing, should continue to compete against other Division I PWIs (Trahan, 2016). Athletic department administrators should understand these gaps and determine if they are competing in a division that is best for their institution financially and competitively.

One interesting note is the lack of discussion in the current research about HBCUs and Division III. In the Division III structure, there are no athletic aid expenses, as student-athletes are not eligible to receive athletic grants-in-aid. As mentioned previously, HBCUs are spending the most dollars on grant-in-aid expenses when compared to recruiting, operations, or coaching salaries. Further research should look to understand why HBCUs continue to compete at the Division II level, where they are expected to give student-athletes scholarships. Those funds could be spent in other areas that could produce more competitive teams.

Additionally, HBCU athletic administrators have a strong and potentially lucrative fanbase as their fan's attitude, brand awareness, brand loyalty, goodwill, and trust impact positive word of mouth (Elliott et al., 2018). These consumer behavior variables are important as HBCU administrators can use these attributes to communicate the value of their fan base to potential corporate sponsors to increase revenue streams. HBCU fans moderately identified with the team and university identification indicating HBCU fans have a higher psychosocial involvement to their team and university compared to peer institutions, leading to higher fan attendance (Armstrong, 2002; Elliott et al., 2018). This attendance indicates there might be a strong value proposition for corporate sponsors.

Purchase intentions and positive WOM are important sponsorship outcomes for corporate sponsors of college athletics, and the more an athletic department can convey how their fans react to sponsors of the team, the more successful the athletic department might be in attracting a sponsor. Brand loyalty is a predictor of both purchase intentions and positive WOM (Armstrong, 2002; Elliott et al., 2018). The more financial benefit corporate sponsors can gain from partnerships, the more competitive the institution will be in securing the sponsorship dollars. Institutions should create signage and marketing plans to connect consumers to the team to

increase team identification amongst consumers and indicate to corporate sponsors the relationship between the high team identification and purchase intentions.

HBCU athletic departments should use previous research to leverage their football consumers to create lucrative sponsorship deals with corporate partners. HBCUs have a strong following that can provide a financial advantage to corporate sponsors. The key is to communicate these strengths and work with corporate sponsors to create the right partnerships that can lead to the best deals for both the corporate sponsor and institution. Despite these positive attributes, based on the review of current literature, it does not seem as if HBCU athletic departments are using their resources to increase revenue. With this current financial situation, it is important for further research to understand why HBCU athletic administrators are falling behind their peers, but not taking advantage of potentially lucrative revenue streams. To help fill the gaps in research related to HBCU athletic department funding, the purpose of this study was to understand not only the current state of financial challenges facing HBCU athletic departments but specifically why they are lagging behind their PWI peers.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Methodological Approach

In this study, I used qualitative methods to explore both insider and outsider views of the HBCU athletic department financial picture as it relates to revenue and expenses. The interviews were framed around the following three broad questions:

1. How do major fiscal issues facing a typical HBCU athletic department compare to PWI athletic departments?
2. How do challenges HBCU athletic department heads face when setting budgets and allocating funds for revenue-generating sports, non-revenue generating sports, and operating costs compare to PWI athletic departments?
3. How does the solicitation and generation of revenue compare between HBCU and PWI athletic departments?

The results from this study can help give college athletic administrators resources for understanding financial differences between HBCUs and their peers. With the empirical material collected in this survey, athletic administrators can use the feedback from the participants to convey these unique challenges for HBCUs and potential opportunities to increase revenue streams.

This study used phenomenology as the research methodology. Phenomenology is “primarily concerned with systematic reflection and analysis of the structure of consciousness and the phenomena that appear in acts of consciousness” (Menon, Binha, & Sreekantan, 2014, p. 172). Phenomenology is a useful methodology as everyone looks at the world differently and the experiences that an individual has shapes the way the individual looks at the world (Crotty, 2007). Through phenomenology, I relied on participant perspectives through interviews to provide an understanding of the differences between working with athletic departments at PWIs and HBCUs. Participants all come to the table with different perspectives of an event or culture.

Without knowing the perspective of these individuals, the current financial state of HBCU athletic departments could continue to stay stagnant in the vastly changing college athletic environment. Phenomenology intends to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of participants. This research used the methodology to interview participants and find themes that emerge about administrators in HBCU athletics and identify values these individuals find important to HBCU athletic departments, how HBCU athletic departments financially compare to PWIs, and how HBCU athletic departments are using the revenue streams they have in their department.

Although phenomenology gives researchers the unique view of the participant's perspective in the research, there are limitations. In this study, I used one-on-one interviews as each participant is unique. Phenomenology can be difficult to generalize as it can depend on the participants in the research. Additionally, research from Nurani (2008) mentions participants might want to tell the researcher what he or she wants to hear during an interview. In this study, participants have a connection to HBCU athletic departments and might hide the truth or over or under share opinions. Participants might have also felt embarrassed to share information or tend to over or under share (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). To try and counter some of these limitations to the methodology, I ensured all participants that there were no wrong answers, and everyone is welcome to share opinions without feeling the need to agree or conform to the view of the room. Additionally, participants and the researcher reviewed a promise of confidentiality.

### **Participants**

Interviews in this study were conducted with participants from two groups. Each group included five participants. The first group gave an insider perspective and included participants that work at HBCUs to include athletic directors, senior level staff, and presidents. The second



group gave an outside perspective and included conference office employees, NCAA staff, and consultants that work with HBCUs. When selecting the number of participants for an interview study, the researcher should turn attention to a deep focus on a select number of participants rather than trying to get as many responses as possible. The intent of an interview study should be, “the chance to look in detail at how selected people experience the world” (Brinkmann, 2013, p. 59). Thus, the more in-depth the interviews are with each participant, the fewer participants will be necessary for the study (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016). The sample size selected for this study represents various groups of people that work at or with HBCU athletic departments, but ensured little saturation in the data collected, giving the researcher an opportunity to focus in depth on each interview. According to Hancock and Algozzine (2017), a researcher should select a key individual in the situation whose knowledge and opinions may provide important insights regarding the research questions. To meet this objective, the list of interviewees will all have experience and expertise with HBCU and PWI athletic departments.

### **Selection Criteria**

Purposive sampling was used to select participants for this study. Key individuals were identified whose knowledge and opinions provided important insights regarding HBCU athletics (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Specifically, in this study, HBCU athletic directors, HBCU HBCU senior level staff, HBCU conference employees, NCAA employees, and NCAA contractors were solicited for the study. Individuals with no working experience with HBCUs were not included in this study. Key stakeholders were determined by years of experience, expertise, and job responsibility regarding working at or with an HBCU. The first group of participants included athletic directors, presidents, and senior level administration working on campus at HBCUs. The outside perspective came from the second group, people who work with

HBCUs (not an HBCU employee), thus providing a perspective not clouded by any preexisting emotions or commitment to any specific HBCU. These perspectives come from individuals that work with both PWIs and HBCUs as a way to understand not only the issues of HBCUs but how they differ from their PWI peers.

### **Recruitment Procedure**

Empirical material was collected from semi-structured face to face and phone interviews with participants. The researchers used purposive sampling and obtained phone numbers to reach out to potential participants through staff directory pages on college, NCAA, and conference office websites. Once phone numbers were obtained, the student principal investigator reached out to consultants, HBCU senior level staff, HBCU athletic directors, conference employees, and NCAA staff members that work at or with HBCUs asking if they would be willing to participate in about an hour long semi-structured interview about their perceptions and experiences working at or with HBCUs. The principal student investigator followed the script in Appendix B when reaching out to participants.

### **Interview Guide**

The participants selected for this study participated in semi-structured interviews to address the research questions. This method was chosen because of the exploratory nature of the research questions and the participants' expertise in identifying responses for both HBCUs and PWIs. Additionally, semi-structured interviews offer the opportunity for the researcher to ask follow-up questions for important points made by the interviewee (Brinkmann, 2013). The qualitative results are helpful in identifying similarities and differences that might have been overlooked in previous studies of HBCU athletic departments. Each participant participated in about a one-hour in-depth interview based on the three guiding research questions. Below, I list

the questions that guided the interview acknowledging the interviews strayed from these questions based on the responses of the participants. The first question of the interview asked the participant to describe their experiences working at or with both PWIs and HBCUs before diving into answering the research questions below.

1. How do major fiscal issues facing a typical HBCU athletic department compare to PWI athletic departments?
  - a. What challenges do you see facing HBCU athletic departments?
  - b. If challenges, what challenges differ from PWI athletic departments?
  - c. Are any of these challenges similar?
  - d. Have you noticed any attempt to rectify any of these challenges?
  - e. What do you think is the best course of action to help institutions face these challenges?
  - f. What would you recommend to HBCU athletic administrators facing these challenges?
  - g. Would you give the same advice to PWI athletic administrators?
2. How do challenges HBCU athletic department heads face when setting budgets and allocating funds for revenue-generating sports, non-revenue generating sports, and operating costs compare to PWI athletic departments?
  - a. What budget challenges have you seen on HBCU campuses?
  - b. If challenges, are these challenges similar and/or different from budget challenges you have seen in PWI athletic department.
  - c. Do you notice budget differences between revenue generating and non-revenue generating sports at HBCUs?

- d. If differences, do these same differences occur at PWI athletic departments?
  - e. How have you seen HBCUs allocate their operating costs? Do you agree/disagree with these allocations?
  - f. Do you think the way HBCUs and PWIs allocate funds are similar or different?  
Please explain.
  - g. What would you recommend to HBCU administrators allocating funds and setting budgets?
  - h. Would you give the same advice to PWI athletic departments?
3. How does the solicitation and generation of revenue compare between HBCUs and PWIs athletic departments?
- a. What revenue streams have you noticed HBCU athletic departments using to generate revenue?
  - b. Are these similar/different to PWIs?
  - c. What challenges do you see preventing HBCU athletic departments from generating additional revenue?
  - d. Are these challenges similar/different to PWIs?
  - e. What would you recommend to HBCU athletic administrators trying to find additional revenue streams?
  - f. Would you recommend the same advice to PWI athletic administrators?
  - g. Based on your experience working with both PWIs and HBCUs, what in your opinion is the biggest deficit regarding revenue for HBCUs? In other words, where are they missing out?

## Procedures

Interviews were conducted face-to-face, if possible. However, if not possible, phone interviews were used. In total there were two face-to-face interviews and eight phone interviews. Face-to-face interviews can be beneficial to research as the researcher can examine body language and expression in addition to the dialogue from the interviewee (Brinkmann, 2013). However, Brinkmann (2013) notes that despite the additional information gathered from the face-to-face interviews, these types of interviews can be cost prohibitive and might restrict participants to certain geographic locations that are easy for both the interviewer and interviewee to access. To ensure the inclusion of relevant and qualified participants in this study, I used phone interviews when the location of a participant prohibits face-to-face interviews.

Before beginning the conversation, each participant reviewed an informed consent document. Agreeing to participate in the interview was an acknowledgement of the informed consent form as the researcher did not want to keep additional identifying information on file. To further conceal the identity of participants, pseudonyms for participants were used (Taylor, 2016). Each of the one-on-one interviews was recorded, and before beginning the interview, each participant was asked if they consent to being recorded. After the interview was complete, the researcher had the recordings transcribed and stored on a password-protected computer. The transcription followed a reconstruction transcription to “clean up” the conversation with each interviewee (Brinkmann, 2013). Both the audio recording and transcription were filed in the password-protected computer.

The interviews were scheduled around each participant’s schedule. The researcher was in a quiet, private office when conducting the interviews to ensure participants were as comfortable as possible while ensuring names and identification remain anonymous (Taylor, 2016). Once

transcripts were available, they were emailed to the participants to check for accuracy. Taylor (2016) argues having participants review transcripts can strengthen the quality of the study and build credibility. Additionally, to build the credibility of the study, select informants were asked to review a draft of the final report to ensure a thorough understanding of collected data. To additionally address the trustworthiness of the study, measures were taken to ensure transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study. To address the transferability of the data, the final report included a great detail of the phenomena described by participants in the study to allow for future comparisons of the data (Shenton, 2003). Consequently, to address dependability, interviews with multiple individuals from each of the two groups—insider and independent—were conducted. Additionally, a detailed methodology of the study was reported to allow for future research to repeat the study (Shenton, 2003). Finally, confirmability was addressed by my subjectivity statement and statement of limitations following the study. This admission of shortcomings strengthens the integrity of the study (Shenton, 2003).

Following the approval of the transcripts, the researcher analyzed the interviews to look for common themes as it relates to each of the research questions. The data were coded, and sub-coded as common themes were found between participant responses. Specifically, events, actions, interactions, and emotions were compared and assigned a coding label so that they could be grouped (Brod, Tesler, & Christiansen, 2009). The process for coding the empirical material followed a data-driven coding process. This process allowed the researcher to begin the coding process without codes (Brinkmann, 2013). Beginning the analysis process without predetermined codes helped expand the knowledge and find nuances in the data provided by the participants. To aid the researcher in coding the empirical material, NVivo 12 was used to categorize the empirical material and to ensure a comprehensive and accurate analysis.

### **Subjectivities Statement**

Throughout my professional career, I have always had a role working in college athletics. However, even before beginning my freshman year of college, I had a passion for college athletics. I love how the field is competitive, driven, and dynamic. I remember the recruiting process and playing my first collegiate contest. However, beyond my desire to play the sport I love on a competitive playing field, I found enjoyment in the administrative structure of collegiate athletics. I was a team captain and served as the Student-Athlete Advisory Representative for my team. Serving my team in those two roles gave me additional insight into the workings of a collegiate athletic department. There are many dimensions to these departments, and my career has focused on finding best practices to help these dimensions run efficiently. The different departments, marketing, communications, compliance, athletic training, and development all need to work together and play a role in a successful department. I began my career working in an athletic department but have since moved on to a conference office that has a membership of 14 institutions. With the amount of time and energy I have spent in the field of college athletics, I am determined to find better and more efficient ways for collegiate athletic programs to succeed. As I mentioned previously, I love the field and want to see it grow.

As researched the views of participants that work at or with HBCU athletics, I am etic to my work as I am involved in sponsorship acquisition in my current position and use the experiences of others and observation to form my hypothesis about the subject. Morris, Leung, Ames, and Lickel (1999) describe etic research as more likely to involve brief, structured observations. As summarized by Morris et al., the goals and methods of this research also align with my etic perspective. My research aims to both describe the behavior of participants from a “vantage external to the culture, in constructs that apply equally well to other cultures” as well as

“describe the ways in which cultural variables fit into general causal models of a particular behavior” (Morris et al., 1999, p. 783). I am looking to find not only the differences and similarities between HBCU and PWI athletic departments but use these comparisons to find ways to help HBCU athletic departments succeed.

I have always been involved in college athletics, and my research is designed to help the field continue to make smaller college athletic departments better, specifically to this study HBCUs. I know my passion and excitement about college athletics can overwhelm my work, and I need to seek evidence to ensure correct interpretations of the phenomenon. Reflecting upon my role in working with HBCU college athletics is not an easy task. However, I have found every athletic department has a value that can stand out and the better the school is at understanding their value, the better they are at structuring themselves for success.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS**

This chapter is drawn from semi-structured one on one interviews conducted with two groups of participants comprised of athletic administrators who work with and or at HBCUs. The first group included five participants that work with HBCU athletic department from an independent perspective (i.e., they are not employed by an HBCU). This group includes consultants, NCAA staff members, and conference office employees. The second group was made up of five participants that work at HBCUs and included athletic directors, associate athletic directors, and vice presidents.

During each of the interviews, the athletic administrators used their experiences and perceptions to describe current phenomena in HBCU athletic departments, specifically regarding finances. This chapter is broken down into two different sections: results from interviews with the independent participants and results from interviews with inside participants. Each section is further divided into three subsections addressing each of the three research questions below:

1. How do major fiscal issues facing a typical HBCU athletic department compare to PWI athletic departments?
2. How do challenges HBCU athletic department heads face when setting budgets and allocating funds for revenue-generating sports, non-revenue generating sports, and operating costs compare to PWI athletic departments?
3. How does the solicitation and generation of revenue compare between HBCU and PWI athletic departments?

For each of the semi-structured interviews, NVivo 11 was used to help determine common themes and sub-themes for each of the three areas of fiscal issues, budget challenges, and revenue generation. Results are reported in each for these categories. An overview of each of the participants is listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Overview of Participants

Participant Type	Pseudonym	Years of Experience	Working Role
Independent	Eleanor	4+	Director
Independent	Francis	18+	Consultant
Independent	Penelope	20+	Consultant
Independent	Olivia	20+	Consultant
Independent	Theodore	4+	Director
Insider	Fitz	20+	Vice President
Insider	Finn	18+	Assistant Athletic Director
Insider	Lynn	20+	Director of Athletics
Insider	Josie	20+	Director of Athletics
Insider	Briel	20+	Associate Athletic Director/Senior Woman Administrator

### Independent Perspective

#### Background Information

Before diving into the results provided by the semi-structured interviews with the independent participants, it is important to understand the background of each of the participants being interviewed and their relationship with HBCU athletic departments. The information on each of the participants is below.

First, Eleanor is a former student-athlete at an HBCU, and she works with Communications at a Division II conference office. Through her experience, she oversees communications amongst the 13-member institutions that make up the conference. Through her experience as a student-athlete, she traveled and competed against HBCU and PWI athletic

programs. Now at the conference office, she works with both HBCU and PWI athletic administrators and through her interactions sees the financial differences and similarities between HBCUs and PWIs.

Second, Francis spent most of her career working with PWIs and Hispanic serving institutions. She then worked for the NCAA and now serves at a conference office. She currently serves on the NCAA Membership Committee and sees issues of membership and challenges for both HBCUs and PWIs. While working at the NCAA office, she served as the conference contact for an HBCU athletic conference.

The third participant, Penelope, began her experience in college athletics working as a women's basketball coach at a Division II institution. She then transitioned to an administrator and worked her way to becoming director of athletics at a PWI. Working on NCAA Division II management council was her first experience working with HBCUs. She started her own consulting company and now helps institutions transitioning into NCAA Division II membership. Through this role, she is able to understand the differences between PWI and HBCU athletic departments, especially regarding financial resources. Her most notable experience working with HBCUs was running championships for an HBCU athletic conference. This opportunity gave her the biggest understanding of the differences in resources between HBCUs and PWIs.

Continuing, Olivia began her experience as a basketball coach at a PWI and transitioned to an athletic director of a PWI. Her experience with HBCUs began as a consultant and running championships for an HBCU conference. Running championships for an HBCU conference gave her an understanding of the differences and similarities between HBCUs and PWIs.

The final participant, Theodore, was a former student at an HBCU institution, he participated as part of his institutions marching band giving him experience working first hand within an HBCU athletic department. Following his participation with the band, he took on the role of social media coordinator for the athletic department and traveled with the football team to capture social media. Now, he works at an HBCU conference office overseeing marketing for the 13 member institutions in the conference.

Each of the participants above participated in a one-hour semi-structured interview detailing phenomena associated with fiscal challenges, budget allocations, and revenue generation. Results for each of these categories are in the next section, beginning with fiscal challenges.

### **Fiscal Challenges**

In the empirical material collected regarding fiscal issues from the independent participants, two overarching themes were identified: challenges and opportunities. The sub-themes for each of these themes are located in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Themes, Subthemes, Examples of Codes, and Frequencies from Independent Perspective of Fiscal Challenges.

Theme	Example of Code	# of Times Coded
Opportunity	President and director of development need to work to include athletic department in capital campaigns.	39
Sub-theme – Students	Don't think that HBCUs use their student's talent to their advantage.	8
Sub-theme – Marketing	They (HBCUs) were not trying to engage their fans; they were not trying to connect to their alumni in the same way.	16

Sub-theme – Strategic Planning	Expand master’s programs so they (HBCUs) have more graduate assistants.	15
Challenges	Typical HBCU administrator within the athletic department is spread thin due to financial constrictions.	57
Sub-theme – Advancement	Lack of support from their (HBCU) alumni.	20
Sub-theme – History	HBCU institutions are trying to diversify some but not lose their meaning or the fact they started as an HBCU.	10
Sub-theme – Administration	The administration is a little out of touch with our student-athletes.	14
Sub-theme – Global Issues	All institutions are struggling and trying to find ways to get themselves out of the red, and I think that HBCUs have recognized that as well.	8
Sub-theme – Fan Experience	Low attendance at athletic events.	5

**Challenges.** Amongst the fiscal challenges discussed facing HBCU athletic departments, the sub-themes of advancement, history, administration, global issues, and fan experience emerged. The following sections outline the results from each of the sub-themes identified.

**Advancement.** The most common theme involved advancement, working with the office of advancement and trying to raise funds for the department of athletics. The most common issue discussed throughout the interviews was the perceived lack of alumni giving at HBCUs. It was gathered that all participants believed there was a lack of involvement from alumni and that their experience was that alumni at HBCUs were not in the habit of giving back to their institution in comparison to alumni of PWIs. This discussion was consistent with previous research from Stuart (2017) addressing the lack of alumni giving at HBCUs. Olivia mentioned the following addressing alumni giving at PWIs:

There is years and years of experience of cultivating alumni relations, cultivating alumni donations, promoting the athletic department. This has been engrained in what has been happening for a much longer period of time at PWIs.

From the perceived perceptions of the participants, it did not appear that there has been a lot of historical interaction or experience working with fundraising and corporate sponsorships at HBCUs. When asked why this may be the case, participants mentioned the type of majors and graduates of HBCUs. Specifically, Penelope stated the following:

A lot of HBCUs from my perspective are educating educators, they are faith-based institutions that have alumni that are not making as much money. Wealthy white folk are able to give more because of the majors they are able to offer as opposed to educators and preachers, or at some of the SIAC schools the kids grow up to be ministers or major in sociology, and therefore, have a different level of being able to give back.

The empirical material collected shows the possible challenge HBCU athletic departments face when trying to raise money from alumni. However there can be additional challenges on campus as athletic departments try and raise money through fundraising and campaigns. From the independent participants' perceived perception, there seemed to be an internal conflict between athletic employees and the institutional advancement employees over which donors are for athletics and which donors are for the entire institution. For example, the office of institutional advancement might identify donors that they are targeting to give to the institution's general fund. The office of institutional advancement might not want athletic departments reaching out to the same identified donors to create the sense of "double dipping" with donors. Francis mentioned that she has heard athletic directors voice their concerns about wanting to raise money for athletics, but being told the office of advancement does not want them raising money because

they are working on a capital campaign. As an overarching view, the differences between HBCU and PWI athletic departments is the amount of money they can bring in from alumni giving and sponsorships. However, through the interviews, it can be surmised that there is a perception that perhaps PWIs put more emphasis on selling their product and telling their story. Penelope reasoned that there was a little bit of a historical context as to why this might be the case:

I think there was a time where people thought, that is a white businessman, he is not going to give to an African American University. You need to dispel that because there are great stories to be told on every campus and you need to sell these to the community.

Similar to Penelope's statement regarding the historical context of HBCU fundraising in the community, all of the independent participants mentioned historical challenges that are possibly still causing fiscal issues for HBCU athletic departments today. Starting at the mission and purpose, participants mentioned the original mission of HBCUs was the purpose of creating educational opportunities and that although some HBCUs are trying to diversify, there is still an attempt to hold onto the fact that they started as an HBCU. Additionally, when it comes to attracting fans, Theodore mentioned how HBCUs historically did not have to compete for fans, but they are now facing competition:

HBCUs come from this space where at one moment we were all we had so you were naturally given that attention from your community. But as time when on, whether you can blame it on integration or access to television or whatever, folks began to see the disparity and they would look at their HBCUs and hope that we would one day match that, but it became evident that our HBCUs were not investing in the same things that PWIs were.

Beyond the dwindling fan base that Theodore mentioned is occurring at HBCUs, participants mentioned the fact that many question whether HBCUs have a place in today's society.

Participants noted that some people in society are saying they are not important as students have the opportunity to enroll at PWIs or HBCUs, thus suggesting HBCUs no longer serve their original purpose. Additionally, when it comes to working with local businesses and potential sponsors, Eleanor noted that businesses do not partner or donate to HBCUs because they are not seen as diverse and inclusive:

With society constantly questioning the purpose of HBCUs, local and even national vendors and businesses don't partner or donate to these institutions because they are not seen as diverse and inclusive. In comparison to PWIs, I believe they have an easier task of marketing themselves, whereas HBCUs are playing catchup by fighting the stereotypes.

Diversity and inclusion were one of the stereotypes participants noted that HBCUs need to fight when trying to work with corporate partners.

**History.** Additionally, when it comes to historical challenges facing HBCUs, most participants mentioned that HBCU students are most times first-generation college students that come from backgrounds with little financial support. The discussion around the demographics of the students at HBCUs was consistent with previous research from Arnett (2014), Albritton (2012), and Bracey (2017). The consistency of this acknowledgment coupled with the continued mention of the overall lack of resources stemming from the beginnings of these historic institution has led to the fiscal challenges facing HBCU athletic departments.

**Administration.** From an administrative perspective, all participants noted that HBCU athletic departments were understaffed. Penelope noted: "with the overworked staff comes lack



of attention to detail.” In this statement, she was referring to the unfortunate occurrence of HBCUs finding themselves in NCAA infraction cases.

From an athletic administrator perspective, a few of the participants mentioned how the athletic administrators are out of touch with the student-athletes. For example, Eleanor noted:

The student-athletes have given up hope in their administration, and it doesn't mean as much because athletes feel as though they are not a priority to their administration if they are not bringing in revenue.

Theodore made similar mention to the emphasis placed on revenue sports at HBCUs. It could be surmised through the interviews with participants that HBCUs might not be making the investment into non-revenue generating sports and are losing out on revenue opportunity. Some potential revenue generating opportunities that could come from non-revenue generating sports include ticket sales and sponsorships. Although these administrative challenges were distinguished as facing HBCUs, it is important to note that all participants acknowledged similar fiscal challenges facing PWI athletic departments.

One notable similar challenge is getting the administration on board with athletics. The participants all mentioned how athletics was dependent on what the institution wanted to do, this included facility upgrades and scholarships. Additionally, Francis mentioned that it is often out of the hands of athletic administrators in the decision to add or remove a sport program.

**Global issues.** Across the board, all participants touched on the sub-theme of global issues that emerged through the interviews. The greatest challenge noted facing both HBCUs and PWIs across the board was enrollment. The participants explained that they believed HBCUs and their PWI peer institutions were enrollment driven and depended on revenue before allocating funds toward athletics. This discussion of relying on tuition is consistent with previous literature

from Stewart (2017) indicating HBCUs are dependent on revenue from tuition. Eleanor commented on her time as a student-athlete and encountering other student-athletes that faced similar issues at a PWI:

I encountered different student-athletes from various backgrounds that went through the same things and had similar problems in relation to scholarships or resources regardless of it we went to a PWI or an HBCU. Some of the school's financial issues are not HBCU specific.

One common mention from participants was the cut to government spending on education impacting both PWI and HBCU campuses. Participants acknowledged a decline in state funding is a fiscal challenge facing NCAA member institutions across the board, and that athletic departments, in general, are starting to have to run themselves like a business. For example, they are starting to have to be self-sustaining and not rely on funds from the institution to support athletics. This discussion from participants expands upon research from Arnett (2014) reporting government spending toward HBCUs has been decreasing.

*Fan experience.* Although these similar fiscal challenges faced both HBCU and PWI athletic departments, fan experience could be surmised from discussion with participants to be lacking at HBCUs, impacting their finances. As Theodore mentioned regarding the foundation of HBCUs being the only opportunity for African American students and the community when it came to college sport, now that those students have other opportunities, HBCU athletic programs are no longer as successful competitively as they once were. Theodore outlined the financial implications of this challenge, “fans naturally draw toward success, which is a natural thing, and that is just something I learned from working at an HBCU.” From Theodore's statement, it could be surmised that HBCUs are still trying to attract the same fans they had when they produced

professional athletes on a more frequent basis. Participants continually mentioned that fan experience at HBCU athletic contests was lacking, probably due to limited resources. However this lack of fan experience has created low fan attendance.

**Opportunity.** Opportunity was a common theme discussed during the interviews with independent participants. Through the interviews, the sub-themes of students, marketing, and strategic planning emerged. The next sections offer the results provided by participants for each of sub-theme identified.

**Marketing.** The most common sub-theme that emerged was marketing. From the interviews with participants, it could be surmised that their perception was HBCUs were missing out on opportunities to engage with alumni. Pep rallies, digital advertising around a game, and working with local newspapers to advertise athletic events were suggestions made from participants. One example presented through Penelope's interview was one of the HBCU athletic directors she works with going out into the community and simply telling the story of her student-athletes on campus, both about their success in the classroom and on the field. Penelope noted in her interview: "HBCUs in particular need to do a better job telling the story of their success of their student-athletes, on the field and in the classroom. Not just to alumni. Need to sell stories where they live and work." Her statement suggests that perhaps some HBCUs are not engaging with their community. Having an athletic director take the time and go out into the community could possibly help HBCU athletic administrators go beyond fundraising initiatives using only their alumni base and build relationships with corporate partners.

Beyond reaching out into the community to begin fundraising initiatives, the empirical material collected from the interviews suggested more community engagement and building a good fan atmosphere was key. Specifically, Theodore noted in his interview: "They (financially

successful athletic programs) really cared about the aesthetics about their program, and it really created a comfortable atmosphere for their fans.” In referring to the aesthetics, the opportunity HBCUs have to use their athletic websites to market their athletic events was noted. When asked about comparing HBCU and PWI athletic programs, one of the areas where HBCUs have the opportunity for growth is their athletic website. Having an updated website with scores, schedules, and locations of contests can help develop community and fan engagement. As described throughout the interviews, this is a free opportunity for HBCUs to use that can increase fan engagement. Although it is commonly reported that HBCUs are leading in social media rankings (DII Social Media, 2018), the other area that participants indicated HBCUs could possibly improve was with their overall use of social media. Similar to the athletic department website, participants indicated social media is a free resource that some HBCUs are perhaps not taking advantage of to market their athletic programs.

*Strategic planning.* The second most common theme that emerged as far as opportunities HBCUs may have to help with some of the fiscal challenges they face are based on strategic planning. Having a better understanding of the overall athletic budget and working with external groups on campus were noted as opportunities that have helped peer campuses that HBCUs might be missing out on to help with fiscal challenges. As far as having a strategic plan, Francis noted that some NCAA member institutions are using athletics to enhance revenue:

Some institutions in our conference currently that are using athletics to greatly enhance enrollment. They have very large squads, JV squads, and that is helping enrollment of the entire institution. We saw that in the membership committee where 75% of enrollment of an institution was athletics.

One of the important notes from the interviews was for the administration to understand what it costs to educate the students versus the cost of tuition. The gap in this figure could possibly help the institution allocate more dollars to athletics. Understanding enrollment-based revenue can help increase numbers by adding junior varsity squads. For example, Eleanor noted how PWIs have used junior varsity squads to increase funding toward athletic programs: “I think PWIs allocated funds differently and on a more even platform as they have their JV teams that could support their primary sport programs.”

Additionally, knowing the overall budget was noted as important for HBCUs athletic administrators. Francis mentioned that during her time as an athletic director on campus, it was important to know the entire athletic budget and to even make herself an important part of the institution’s overall fiscal budget. This understanding would include being self-reliant and keeping spreadsheets of all revenues and expenses so that the institution’s administration is clear on the athletic department’s spending. Additionally, it was suggested that one of the most important things for HBCU athletic administrators is to make data-driven decisions when it comes to managing the finances and being creative. For example, Eleanor mentioned the possibility of expanding master’s programs and increasing Graduate Assistant positions in athletics to help fill some of the gaps created by the thin full-time staff. It was also noted that it is important for the athletic director to be included in the president’s council to provide guidance and information regarding athletics. Francis mentioned that even if the president does not take the advice of the athletic director, the athletic director will at least have a head’s up for any budget or sport program cuts.

When it comes to relaying some of the fiscal challenges to the coaching groups, participants noted it was important to be transparent with coaches. The participants noted that

coaches can provide valuable insight as far as letting an athletic director know what they might be able to do without for a season if they know funding toward the athletic department, in general, has been cut. Specifically, Francis noted, “when I worked with my coaches, they were often able to tell me, well this is an area that x...” Additionally, having a good relationship with the office of advancement on campus was recurring advice to HBCUs given throughout the interviews. One area of advancement that was noted as a key target moving forward for HBCUs was creating and growing endowments.

*Students.* Finally, in terms of opportunity, there was a lot of discussion throughout the interviews with the independent participants about using students to help with some of the fiscal challenges facing HBCU athletic departments. Participants all noted the perceived importance of using students on campus to help with marketing the athletic programs. For example, Penelope mentioned that finding some good student-athlete representatives and putting them on the road to meet with the community members and alumni could be a great way to connect and share the athletic department’s story. Olivia mentioned that students on campus are another free resource that athletic departments are not taking advantage of to deal with fiscal challenges, specifically staffing limitations:

I don’t think that HBCUs use their student’s talent to their advantage as many athletes are walking these campuses with the next best talent and instead of giving them the opportunity for growth with mentors in place, they resort to the safe methods of using whatever method they currently have in place.

Olivia’s statement suggests that many HBCUs may be missing out on using the free resource of their students on campus to help with marketing their athletic contests. Theodore added to the discussion as he mentioned how student-athletes could even help with building media around the

team. Using students was described as beneficial to HBCUs as students bring talent, interest in athletics, and new perspectives. Additionally, it was noted that students on HBCU campuses are the best way to get information spread by word of mouth.

The overall sentiments from the fiscal challenges suggested that although there are still possible challenges facing HBCU athletic departments, they seem to be getting better. The next section discusses budget allocations and budget challenges facing HBCUs.

### **Budget Challenges**

In the empirical material collected regarding budget challenges from the independent participants two overarching themes were identified, issues and solutions. The sub-themes for each of these are located in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Themes, Subthemes, Examples of Codes, and Frequencies from Independent Perspective of Budget Challenges.

Theme	Example of Code	# of Times Coded
Issues	The football alumni association is raising funds just to make sure the team has their meals after their games, but they are not necessarily campaigning to raise money for turf or tracksuits.	71
Sub-theme – Gameday	They do not have credit cards to put hotel rooms on.	22
Sub-theme – Scholarship	The issue that I have seen is that they (HBCUs) have enough scholarships for their revenue sports, but the scholarships begin to dwindle when you get to the non-revenue sports.	5
Sub-theme – Priorities	They (PWIs) are focused more on student-athlete experience and are able to do that.	44
Solutions	Making sure what you are paying for is worth it.	32

Sub-theme – Travel	You don't have to stay in the absolute best hotel, but you don't want to stay in the worse one either. So finding that happy medium from a budget standpoint.	5
Sub-theme – Experience	You have to look at your budget and say okay what can we invest in that no matter what the student-athlete feels like this is an experience.	6
Sub-theme – Strategic Plan	What are those things that you can afford, those top three things you think are important?	14
Sub-theme – Revenue	You don't see most HBCUs really developing real booster clubs.	7

Overall, the independent participants noted PWI and HBCU athletic departments allocate funds similarly between revenue and non-revenue generating sports. However, there might be differences in the issues HBCU athletic departments face. The following sections outline the themes of issues and solutions that emerged from the discussion of budgets with the participants.

**Issues.** Beginning with issues HBCU athletic administrators face when setting and allocating budgets, sub-themes of game day, scholarships, and priorities developed. In the next sections, the results of each sub-theme are discussed.

**Priorities.** Of the sub-themes identified, priorities were the most common discussion. To start, the participants seemed to suggest that PWIs appeared to focus more on student-athlete experience in comparison to their HBCU peers. Although it is important to report that all independent participants mentioned that budget issues are not unique to HBCUs. Penelope stated that one of the major differences she noticed between HBCUs and PWIs is the budget allocation of the entire institutions as it is more of a priority to struggling HBCUs to keep their doors open with the low enrollment numbers. With this discrepancy, Francis indicated that the issues



causing the budget challenges cause the president and athletic administrators to have different priorities. Specifically, the presidents might be more concerned with allocating funding toward academic programming whereas athletics would rather allocate funds toward building successful athletic programs. Eleanor described that one of the issues with lack of funding is because HBCUs try to keep holding onto the success they had in the 60s and 70s, they are trying to rely on the same budgets and allocations that they did 30 years ago. Eleanor reported, “At HBCUs, they try and stick to what they are familiar with.”

An overarching challenge that most participants identified that was similar between HBCU and PWI athletic departments was the struggle between the priority to generate ticket revenue and put “butts in seats.” Ensuring consistent attendance can create a better atmosphere for student-athletes and fans. However, the athletic department might have to be satisfied with less revenue to make that happen. Additionally, the participants indicated they agree with both HBCU and PWI athletic departments investing in football because of the potential for revenue.

When it comes to the budget allocation between revenue and non-revenue generating sports, it could be surmised from discussion with participants that HBCUs tend to spend the majority of their budget on revenue sports. Participants report evidence of differences between revenue and nonrevenue sports and how they might be biased in terms of budget allocation. Eleanor noted this allocation can “create a rift between coaches of different sports and even student-athletes of different sports.” In comparison, participants noted that although there are similar allocations to revenue sports at PWIs, the allocated funds are more equal across the board. The statements of equal allocation of funds across the board at PWIs perhaps indicate that PWIs may be allocating budgets more consistently to non-revenue generating sport programs. Theodore had similar remarks to Eleanor: “The difference comes in the reinvestment portion.

HBCUs have the belief to reinvest the majority of those funds in the revenue sports, while non-revenue sports get a small cut of the profit.” Most participants noted PWIs have a more consistent model to redistribute funds across all of the sport programs. Additionally, examples were provided illustrating that there are numerous cases in HBCU athletic departments where the non-revenue generating sports are the department’s most successful programs. Theodore gives one example below:

Just thinking of my alma mater, football, and basketball, basketball didn’t get good until my senior year, but my first couple of years, football and basketball were not winning anything. All the championships came through cross country, and track and tennis and golf were competitive, they were always in a position to compete for a championship. Yet, they really didn’t have half the resources that the football or the basketball team were getting. No matter how much money you are generating as an athletic department, the football team and men’s basketball team are still going to get that revenue sport privilege.

The majority of discussion surrounding revenue and non-revenue generating sports appeared to lean toward HBCUs and PWIs having a similar allocation structure although there appeared to be a difference in the amount of funds allocated to the non-revenue sports at HBCUs compared to PWIs.

**Gameday.** The participants also discussed budget issues facing HBCU and PWI athletic departments in terms of game day expenses. These expenses included travel, gear, and meals. Most participants indicated HBCUs appeared to spend less on overall travel costs. The empirical material collected supported the idea that HBCUs are not giving their student-athletes the same travel experience in comparison to PWIs. For example, Olivia noted that HBCUs tended to look

more for hotel deals in comparison to ensuring a better student-athlete experience. Reflecting on her time working with HBCU championships she noted, “It appears as though PWIs spend more money on their travel as far as going in charter buses versus vans and the types of hotels they stay in. We had lots of teams staying 15–20 miles away just to get a better price.” Additionally, Penelope mentioned athletic directors would have to continue to make trips between campus and the hotel as the team did not have a credit card available to them to put room charges on.

Meals were another topic discussed by each of the participants. All participants noted there seemed to be a difference between how administrators planned meals for student-athletes on the road and post-game between HBCUs and PWIs. Theodore gave an example from his experience traveling with an HBCU football team, “We were eating Golden Coral or Little Caesars before the game and then Popeyes after the game. Plenty of times the football team would complain about it.” The discussion of HBCUs not having funds to give student-athletes a proper meal following games was highlighted by the majority of participants. Penelope made the comparison, “They (HBCUs) don’t have an after game meal where PWI schools would never consider that.” One important note regarding meals made by Theodore was the difference between a regular season game and the football team participating in a classic, “Just traveling with the team we never had a buffet for the team to eat from or use the hotel catering, so the student-athletes are not getting a real meal, unless it was a classic. Specifically, the Tuskegee Morehouse Classic was the only time where we are here. We are having a real dinner.”

The number of participants traveling with the team was another common issue discussed by the independent participants. Both Penelope and Olivia noted that it appears that PWIs have more consistency in their travel parties. HBCUs seem to have a very widespread of the number of student-athletes that travel on each team with some having more than enough players and

others barely having enough to compete. The participants reported that not all HBCUs were able to take full rosters of student-athletes on the road because of the expense. However, beyond the student-athletes traveling with the team, it was noted by some participants that there seemed to be an unnecessary number of staff that would travel with the team. Theodore explained his perception of the phenomena that happens with HBCU travel parties:

One of the issues we had when I was on an HBCU campus, we had all these trainers, but not everyone was working. We give away opportunities or jobs for people looking for you know a way out. They are looking to be part of something – I just want to travel, or I just want to get gear – and then that team goes through the whole season without having the things they need. These trainers who really weren't doing their job, but the football team didn't have enough film guys, or they didn't have enough camera. They had to rely on these two little cameras that seemed like they just went to target real quick and dropped \$50 on them and there it is. But they really could have had 4–5 guys helping put together film.

The travel party issue seemed a common perception of HBCU athletic departments.

Athletic gear was another game expense discussed during the interviews with the independent participants. Participants mentioned the lack of consistency across team apparel and gear. From discussion with participants, shoes, travel bags, and jerseys did not seem to have a consistent brand. Additionally, participants mentioned the student-athletes at HBCUs being responsible for buying their own shoes. When it came to fundraising for gear, one common theme was lack of funding from alumni associations to increase the quality of team gear.

Theodore mentioned the teams having to go to Walmart or Target to get t-shirts for their student-athletes.

**Scholarships.** The final sub-theme that emerged from the discussion of budget and budget allocation was scholarships. Participants all noted that there was a difference between revenue versus non-revenue sports in the number of scholarships and the amounts of scholarships. This case seemed to be prevalent at both HBCUs and PWIs. However, one of the differences between scholarship distribution to non-revenue generating sports between HBCUs and PWIs was the perceived amount of funding for scholarships at HBCU non-revenue sports. Through the interviews, it could be gathered that the perception was that many HBCUs seem to fund revenue sports competitively with PWIs, but they may only give one or two scholarships to non-revenue generating sports to split amongst all student-athletes on the team.

In summary, the budget issues discussed by the independent participants included priorities, game day expenses, and scholarships. In the next section, budget solutions discussed by the participants will be presented.

**Solutions.** Based on the interviews with the independent participants, the sub-themes of travel, experience, strategic planning, and revenue emerged. The following sections offer the results grouped by each of the sub-themes identified.

**Strategic planning.** Strategic planning was the most common sub-theme that emerged among participants. Throughout the interviews, all participants mentioned the need for HBCU athletic administrators to evaluate objectives and their target audience. Specifically, administrators may benefit from understanding if their target audience is similar to the older fan base that has been reported to attend their athletic contests in previous literature (Cianfrone et al., 2010). Eleanor suggested HBCU athletic administrators should start from ground zero when re-evaluating. The suggestion from Eleanor seems to imply HBCU athletic administrators might find it useful to start from scratch when creating a strategic plan. The suggestions from the

participants included looking at what the institutions are currently doing, find where there are opportunities for revenue generation, and where there are opportunities to make cuts. Olivia noted that as an athletic administrator, “you don’t get to have the best of everything, so you need to prioritize.” Prioritizing was a common suggestion made from most participants. Francis suggested talking with coaches because they would have a better understanding of where budgets might be able to be cut for their programs. Theodore also noted that institutions need to make sure that what they are paying for is worth it.

In the majority of interviews, participants mentioned HBCUs could do more to take advantage of free improvements to their athletic departments. These free improvements involved just making sure facilities were clean. Olivia noted:

Taking things for free when you can. For example, with us, just making sure the locker room was clean. That doesn’t cost anything. Just spruce it up the best you can. If you get those things that don’t cost anything, and you do that 100% then you certainly will increase their (student-athlete) experience.

Empirical material collected suggested HBCUs were not taking advantage of these free solutions to help make the student-athlete experience better.

***Experience.*** In the discussion of student-athlete experience, the interviews from independent participants indicated HBCUs were not prioritizing student-athlete experience. However, most participants acknowledged how increased student-athlete experience could be an investment. The participants noted that keeping student-athlete experience at the front of the list of priorities can keep current donors happy and maintain relationships with graduated student-athletes for future donations to the athletic program.

**Travel.** When it comes to travel, there were a few solutions discussed by participants to help HBCUs improve travel for student-athletes. Francis mentioned a policy at a previous conference she worked for that required teams to make return trips if they were traveling less than 250 miles. Additionally, the travel party was highlighted by participants with the suggestion to reevaluate who needed to travel with the team. Extra hotels and meals on the road cost money, and it was suggested that the travel budget is reevaluated to ensure the money spent on the road is worth it.

**Revenue.** Revenue was the final sub-theme that emerged from the discussion of budgets and budget allocations. Booster clubs were highlighted by the majority of participants, with the supposed perception that booster clubs were not as prevalent at HBCUs in comparison to their PWI peers. The discussion around booster clubs included involving the local community, not just alumni, in campaigns to raise funds for the athletic department. The perception gathered from the interviews was this is happening at PWI athletic departments, but not HBCUs.

An additional solution Francis discussed in her interviews was to re-evaluate the current camp and clinic structure on campus at HBCUs. Francis detailed her experience with sport camps on campus:

Every camp and clinic was an institutional camp. They were allowed to pay themselves or assistant coaches. But when I got there, camps were operating in the red, which didn't make any sense to me. So we made sure all camps were operating in the black and that there was a certain percentage of the money they earned that would go into their fundraising account if they needed to handle some of these things.

Similar to the fiscal challenges facing HBCU athletic departments, the discussion from the participants indicated that although HBCUs do have some challenges, there are solutions to help

them improve their athletic department and the student-athlete experience. The next section will discuss the results from the interviews regarding revenue generation.

### Revenue Generation

Through the empirical material collected regarding revenue generation, the themes of revenue streams, challenges, and solutions emerged. Table 7 lists the themes, sub-themes, and examples of each code.

Table 7. Themes, Subthemes, Examples of Codes, and Frequencies from Independent Perspective of Revenue Generation.

Theme	Example of Code	# of Times Coded
Revenue Streams	HBCUs are just relying on ticket sales.	56
Sub-theme – Ticket Sales	People just really want to be a part of these moments, and that is how they generate ticket revenue from social media.	16
Sub-theme – Student Fees	That is often an important revenue stream...getting student fees.	5
Sub-theme – Advancement	Their alumni have affinity with the institution; they continue to have that affinity moving forward after graduation, there is a lot of pride in their institution which to me is a great opportunity to potentially generate revenue.	8
Sub-theme – Sponsorship	HBCUs primarily rely on sponsorship.	6
Sub-theme – Paraphernalia	They do not create enough avenues for buying paraphernalia.	9
Sub-theme – Digital Assets	They (HBCUs) are missing out on digital assets.	12
Challenges	It is harder to generate revenue when your institution is graduating people into careers that don't make a lot of money.	36



Sub-theme – Alumni	They are missing out on a wealthy alumni base.	8
Sub-theme – History	From my perception, I feel like HBCUs want to stay separate, and diversity isn't necessarily one of their priorities.	15
Sub-theme – Administration	HBCU athletic departments are often trying to put a bandage on a situation instead of diving into it and finding the best way to fix the problem.	13
Solutions	Doing a strategic plan to find out what is important to the conference.	43
Sub-theme – External	I looked at other institutions that are doing a good job at fundraising, and I would pick up the phone and call them and say, okay what are you doing, what works, what doesn't work, why did you choose this?	12
Sub-theme – Internal	Meet with all of the stakeholders on campus outside of athletics to get a feel for what is the temperature in regards to athletics raising funds.	31

The following sections outline the themes of revenue streams, challenges, and solutions in the interviews with participants regarding revenue generation.

**Revenue streams.** Revenue streams were heavily discussed amongst participants in terms of revenue generation. The sub-themes that emerged in the discussion were ticket sales, student fees, advancement, sponsorship, paraphernalia, and digital assets. The subsequent sections offer the results of each of the identified sub-themes.

**Ticket sales.** Of these revenue streams, ticket sales were the most discussed. All participants mentioned HBCU athletic departments rely heavily on ticket sales to generate income. However, it could be gathered from the interviews that the participants believed that

most HBCUs are not doing everything they can to take full advantage from ticket sales.

Theodore gave an example of the favor system the exists on HBCU campuses:

Because you did something for me back in the day, I am going to give you these ticket for free, and whatever that person did probably didn't equate to the number of tickets or the price on the ticket. Even if it is one ticket, that ticket could have a value of \$25 and that favor could have been a \$5 favor, you are not really getting that return. But it is just this weird system of favors.

The thought of HBCUs giving away tickets was mentioned in relation to the community as well. It was noted that schools will give tickets away to the community, hurting their revenue potential for ticket sales.

Of the fans that do buy season tickets, participants mentioned HBCUs are not giving them the appreciation for coming to the game or being a season ticket holder. Through the interviews, there was discussion about fan rewards, such as reserved seats for a classic that HBCUs might not be investing in for their ticket packages. It could be gathered from the interviews that perhaps HBCUs are not making their fans excited about buying season tickets.

In contrast to many HBCUs, it could be surmised from the discussion with independent participants that effective PWIs are better known for their creativity and building hype around games, leading to increased ticket sales. One of the suggestions made through the interviews was HBCUs should focus on more than just the matchup on the field. Marketing a new uniform or helmet reveal was reported as a successful way to get more people to buy tickets to a game.

*Sponsorships.* From the interviews, participants also mentioned sponsorships being a primary source of revenue for HBCU athletic departments. From the discussion with participants, it could be interpreted that HBCUs are using corporate partnerships and

relationships with cities to generate revenue, which includes participation in neutral site championships and getting a host fee from the city. However, despite the mention of sponsorships, the participants did not feel as if HBCU athletic departments were taking full advantage of the opportunities. Specifically, Olivia mentioned from her experience working the HBCU championships:

I think anytime you pull your resources as far as your impact on that city and you can articulate that as a group, you are going to get more from that city or that business. I think that from my perception, that is not something that those institutions (HBCUs) were used to. From an institution perspective, they were more like this is my partnership or my partnership with a hotel or restaurant. They haven't seen the value in pulling that weight as a group.

The empirical material collected indicated that although there is revenue generation from sponsorships at HBCUs, they are not truly putting their best value at the table.

***Advancement.*** When it came to discussion regarding advancement in athletics, it was noted by most participants that HBCU fans have great affinity and they continue to have that affinity moving forward after graduation. It was reported that their alumni have pride in their institution. From discussion with participants, there was a suggestion that institutions should be able to use these characteristics to increase alumni donations. However, issues such as donor fatigue, the lack of giving until the last minute, and not having a wealthy alumni base were noted as impacting revenue potential from fundraising on HBCU campuses.

***Student fees.*** One of the sub-themes that was only lightly touched upon during the interviews was using student fees for increased revenue generation. Participants noted they have noticed student fees and financial support from student services helping PWI athletic

departments. Francis suggested HBCU athletic departments gain a better understanding of their institution's potential to raise their budget using student fees.

***Paraphernalia.*** Paraphernalia sales were another revenue stream mentioned during the interviews with the discussion that there was a perceived belief that many HBCUs could do more with paraphernalia sales. The importance of paraphernalia was highlighted; however, it could be gathered through discussion that many HBCUs have not capitalized on selling the merchandise.

Theodore noted his perception of the challenge:

They (HBCUs) do not create enough avenues for buying paraphernalia. One of the biggest issues if you want to buy HBCU gear, you have to go on the campus. The reason that is a problem is because most of our schools are located in the hood and, and it is either an urban or rural area, either way, most of their students are not living there. They are getting away to opportunities in other states and cities so when you require them to buy gear on campus, you are telling them only come to Homecoming and they are relying on Homecoming.

Another note from the interviews was the suggested lack of creativity of paraphernalia sold at HBCUs. It was reported that HBCUs are consistently using templates that make shirts similar to other HBCUs, except for color and logo.

***Digital assets.*** The final sub-theme discussed for revenue streams was digital assets. The independent participants believed HBCUs need to do more to tap into digital assets. From the interviews, it was mentioned by most participants that PWIs are creating more opportunities involving video content in their athletic departments. One area where HBCUs were reported as struggling was telling their story, and participants believed social media was a good place for that to occur. Penelope mentioned the importance of taking advantage of the free marketing that

digital assets have to offer, “Use of social media helps because it is a free space and you can cast your net wider than going out and shaking hands in your community.” Theodore echoed the statement from Penelope in his interview, but also provided some additional insight:

With HBCUs, we are just getting the understanding of graphics and flyers whereas PWIs they are making hype videos for games. They will sit there and go back in time to last year’s game. They will probably pull footage from a game ten years ago to build hype around it, kind of like you are watching a movie trailer. They are building hype and putting music and animation around it and come up with a slogan for that game, and they will pipe it out on all their social media.

From the discussion with participants, it could be gathered that HBCUs were not using social media to market their athletic programs as well as PWIs. The next section will discuss some of the challenges HBCU athletic departments are facing with the revenue generation process.

**Challenges.** Challenges were another key area mentioned by participants regarding revenue generation. The sub-themes that emerged in discussion were alumni, history, and administration. The sub-themes are discussed in detail in the following sections.

**History.** Beginning with the history of HBCUs, most participants reported the balance between history and tradition as a roadblock preventing HBCUs from really taking full advantage of revenue opportunities available to them. Eleanor mentioned her experience with people questioning why HBCUs still exist and how society has put HBCUs in a bad light. Participants reported HBCUs are struggling to try to stay relevant and many struggle with wanting to stay separate and diversity not being one of their priorities.

**Alumni.** Theodore noted an interesting transition he noticed occurring on HBCU campuses that he believes impacts the institution’s relationship with alumni and alumni giving:

HBCUs were created out of the goodness of the heart of a struggling community whether it was a group of abolitionists or a group of freed slaves. So, that is important because these schools are so conditioned to do with less, we have always had to do with less. Now, we are in a time where the first couple of generations that they educated, their kids are now here, and those kids have grown up as more. Their kids have grown up as the haves instead of the have nots. So, they are expecting more and HBCUs are having to learn to cater to privileged African American students.

From the discussion with participants, it could be gathered that the lack of alumni giving stems from the majors the institution has to offer. Throughout the interviews, it was mentioned that it is harder to generate revenue when your institution is graduating people into careers that don't make a lot of money. However, even amongst the wealthy alumni, participants noted there is still a lack of giving. For example, Penelope mentioned Morehouse College graduating movie stars, but not seeing any major giving from those graduates. From Penelope's statements, there is a perception of alumni not giving back because HBCUs do not have a culture of giving and there is a mindset of "what have you done for me, I am not giving you anything back because you didn't do much for me." Participants reported sentiments that this current mindset challenges HBCU athletic departments in their attempt to generate revenue.

***Administration.*** From an administrative perspective, it could be gathered through discussion with participants that HBCU athletic departments are typically made up of former alumni or administrators lacking the educational background to take the department to the next level. Additionally, the high turnover rate of HBCU athletic administrators was noted. The participants also mentioned how HBCU athletic administrators do not work well together to achieve common goals amongst institutions. Specifically, Oliva noted:

Rather than saying, you know what we have to do, what we have to build to make this conference the best possible experience, to do that we have to pull together. Whereas the priority seems to be, I don't trust the next institution over, and this is all on the conference office. In general, they are competing outside the lines of competition just as much as they are competing inside the lines during competition. In my experience, administrators don't compete; they help each other out. They want to provide the best experience, and then once the ball goes up, the whistle is blown, the race is on, that is when you compete. But it feels like that is a little different at HBCUs.

The distrust amongst HBCU institutions was noted by participants as a challenge preventing revenue generation.

The final challenge discussed regarding revenue generation amongst institutions was the many hats the athletic directors wear. All participants acknowledged this was an issue for both HBCU and PWI athletic departments. Specifically, discussion with participants implied their perception was that athletic directors were being required to fundraise and run the operations of the department. The next section details some of the solutions that emerged from interviews regarding revenue generation.

**Solutions.** From the theme of solutions mentioned by participants, both internal and external sub-themes emerged for HBCU athletic departments looking to generate revenue. The sections below outline the results each of the identified sub-themes.

**External.** From an external perspective, participants noted it is important of HBCU athletic administrators to understanding their donors. For example, participants mentioned each donor is able to give at a certain level or may want to see their name on a building or seat back.

The participants all acknowledged the importance of knowing donors and the importance of working with institutional advancement.

The majority of participants expressed their belief that HBCU athletic departments should not try and reinvent the wheel, but should instead reach out to peers and find out what strategies might have been successful for them. Penelope noted:

I think the most important thing is to never reinvent the wheel. Someone out there is already doing a good job raising money in a space similar to yours. Go meet that person. Call them on the phone, steal those ideas. No sense creating the wheel, try and steal best practices from other people you can copy and steal almost anything from anybody. Most people are willing to share, fundraising is not a big secret, there is nothing out there that makes it a big secret, but it is trying to make the time to get better and being more intentional about fundraising.

Francis also noted that an external solution would be to see what is happening at the conference and NCAA level and what needs to be done to help institutions that are struggling.

***Internal.*** From an internal perspective, participants all acknowledged the importance of working with institutional advancement. Francis noted HBCU athletic administrators should:

Meet with all of the stakeholders on campus outside of athletics to get a feel for what is the temperature in regards to athletics raising funds. Are there areas where they are not comfortable with us? Do they not want us to sell raffle tickets, for example? Or, are there donors they do not want us to contact. Making sure I understand the pitfalls before I fall into one.

Throughout the interviews, it was a common suggestion that fundraising should involve the entire administrative team and that the athletic director does not need to have all the answers to



fundraising. Working with coaches was highlighted as helpful because coaches do have a good handle on what goes on locally because of their involvement with sport clubs. Participants mentioned that athletic administrators should go through some type of training to learn how to raise money.

When meeting with internal stakeholders, participants recommended athletic administrators work through a strategic plan to understand where their priorities are and to present all ideas and initiatives in a business model.

One of the assets mentioned throughout the interviews was the involvement of students on campus. From the discussion with participants, it could be surmised that many HBCUs are not using their students or student-athletes to help with revenue generation. Theodore provided an example to help HBCUs increase ticket sales:

Create a student organization whose job is to help build awareness around the games. Get you a group of students that have energy and passion for the school. Use them as your foot soldiers to talk with students. Students communicate with each other the best because they are students and they are each other's peers.

Beyond ticket sales, when it comes to revenue generation through fundraising and capital campaigns, participants believed HBCUs could benefit by telling the story of their student-athletes, what they are doing and why they are doing it. Additionally, from an alumni cultivation perspective, Francis noted the importance of cultivating the relationship with students before their graduation to continue to build the affinity they have for the institution. It was reported that this cultivated relationship could help generate sponsorship dollars through alumni giving down the road.

An important note from all of the interviews is that the solutions offered by the participants were reported to help both PWI and HBCU athletic departments with revenue generations. It could be gathered through discussion with participants that although many HBCUs were not taking advantage of some of the revenue opportunities available to them, they had similar ability as a PWI to generate revenue.

The independent participants were able to provide an overview of their perspective working with both PWI and HBCU athletic departments from their role as conference office employees and independent contractors. The next section will detail perspectives of employees of HBCU athletic departments and their views on fiscal challenges, budget challenges, and revenue generation working with HBCU athletic departments.

### **Insider Perspective**

#### **Background Information**

Before diving into the results provided by the semi-structured interviews with the inside participants, it is important to understand the background of each of the participants being interviewed and their role working at an HBCU athletic department. The information on each of the participants is below.

First, Josie was a former student-athlete at an HBCU and now an athletic director at an HBCU. Her first job was a head coach. Through her experience as a coach and administrator, she has experience attending PWI athletic contests and working with their game day operations.

Second, Finn spent the past 20 years working at eight different HBCUs. He has spent the majority of his career working on the advancement side. He served as director of athletics at two HBCUs and now Vice President of Institutional Advancement. He was a previous student-athlete at an HBCU.

The third participant, Briel, currently serves as an Associate Athletics Director at an HBCU, she also serves as her institution's senior woman administrator. She was a former student-athlete at a PWI. Additionally, she serves on an NCAA sport committee for her region and has experience working with PWIs and HBCUs through NCAA regional and national championships.

Continuing, Fitz has spent over 18 years working in college athletics. He currently serves as the Assistant Athletic Director at an HBCU. Prior to working at an HBCU, he worked at two athletic conference offices. One made up of majority PWIs, and one made up of majority HBCUs.

The final participant, Lynn, currently serves as athletic director at an HBCU. Before serving in her current role, she was an athletic director for a PWI. She began her career as a coach for an HBCU. She was also a former student-athlete at an HBCU.

Each of the participants above participated in a one-hour semi-structured interview detailing phenomena associated with fiscal challenges, budget allocations, and revenue generation. Results for each of these categories are in the next section, beginning with fiscal challenges.

### **Fiscal Challenges**

In the empirical material collected regarding fiscal issues from the insider participants, four overarching themes were identified: staffing, culture, roadblocks, and solutions. The sub-themes for each of these are located in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Themes, Subthemes, Examples of Codes, and Frequencies from Insider Perspective of Fiscal Challenges.

Theme	Example of Code	# of Times Coded
-------	-----------------	------------------

Staffing	I think staffing is another issue that HBCUs face and professional development.	23
Sub-theme – Staff Make-Up	The HBCU is a different level of work, less people in your shop doing the work of some of the major institutions. So, you have to get people who want to be there and are willing to work.	7
Sub-theme – Professional Development	Culture of a lot of people at HBCUs that have been there for years and are graduates of the institutions, so that is the only thing that they know.	8
Sub-theme – Advancement Employee	Greatest challenge is very few of the HBCUs have athletic associations or fundraising arms that operate in a manner to help supplement athletic programs.	8
Culture	Gameday at an HBCU versus a PWI are different, but they both want to obtain the same goal.	29
Sub-theme – Game Day	Even the point of what we would consider adequate facilities, with HBCUs, there is a component on shared facilities whereas PWIs typically have their own facilities.	5
Sub-theme – Perceptions	People have a distrust in HBCUs.	9
Sub-theme – Advancement	We have gotten better at making the ask from alumni.	15
Solutions	PWIs do a good job of having a strategic plan and knowing what their plan of action is whether it is to build a new facility or expand their program.	23
Sub-theme – Strategic Plan	We must be able to efficiently manage our budgets and in some cases make cutbacks on certain sports if indeed that is necessary.	11

Sub-theme – Fundraising	Customer service, no matter where you are, whether HBCU or PWI is really important.	12
Roadblocks	Travel to play games tends to be expensive.	14
Sub-theme – Operating Costs	Now, the conference has expanded to include schools that are not regionally centralized.	4
Sub-theme – Funding	No discretionary dollars to invest in your programs.	10

The following sections outline the themes of staffing, culture, solutions, and roadblocks in the interviews with inside participants regarding fiscal challenges.

**Culture.** Beginning with the theme of culture, the sub-themes of game day, perceptions, and advancement emerged. The sections below detail the results offered by participants by each of the sub-themes.

**Perception.** The most prevalent sub-theme was perception. The participants acknowledged how there is a distrust in HBCUs and how funds are spent at the institutions. The participants reported they believed the distrust is rooted in how HBCUs are portrayed in the news, their fiscal management, and accreditation issues. From the discussion with participants, it could be gathered that they believe donors question if the funds given are being used for their intended purpose. Briel noted that HBCUs need to be more transparent with donors to help the situation “be truly transparent and honest about where our money is going and where it has gone in the past.” All participants indicated that HBCUs need to keep donors updated on where money has gone to reduce uncertainty.

Although all insider participants noted the distrust, Briel noted that it is important to understand that HBCUs are still tasked with trying to meet the same expectations as PWIs:

Everyone has the same expectations as PWIs. What people expect from us here is the same that they expect from a PWi. So, we try to keep up with what everyone else is doing, but we don't have the money to do it, so we end up going broke trying to chase what everyone else is doing.

Fitz acknowledged that although he believes there is a general interest in wanting to change the culture of HBCUs, he has not noticed any results.

*Gameday.* From a game day perspective, Josie indicated that although the game atmosphere at both a PWi and an HBCU differ, there is still a common goal. Specifically, Josie gave the following description of the difference in game day atmosphere:

HBCUs and PWIs have the same goal; they want their fans to come out and enjoy, they want the fans to be engaged, and they want them to return to the game because that will also help in revenue, hoping those fans become donors. So, I think the goals of the HBCUs and PWIs are the same, but the environment may be a little different. At an HBCU, you are going to have music; you are going to have dancers. The vibe of an HBCU game day is more of a party. Versus, at a PWi is going to be more of an enjoying evening, not so much of a party. But the goal for both is definitely the same.

Beyond the difference in atmosphere, the insider participants noted the differences in facilities at HBCUs. The participants noted most HBCUs had a component of shared facilities, requiring teams to share practice and competition facilities with other teams in the department. Although it was acknowledged that a similar issue might exist at PWIs, it was more prevalent at HBCUs.

Finally, additional insight from participants included the lack of ability to generate ticket revenue and sponsorships. Finn acknowledged HBCU conferences have been leading in football attendance, but he is not sure how that attendance is turning into generated revenue, "while the

SIAC has been leading conferences in football attendance over the last 10 years, I still am a little skeptical in the sense that we are able to generate the kind of ticket revenue and sponsorships that offset the cost that comes with running competitive programs.” The lack of correlation between attendance and reported ticket revenue can further acknowledge some of the distrust noted by participants in HBCUs.

***Advancement.*** All participants noted the culture of alumni giving at HBCUs does not help athletics. Finn detailed the situation:

The differences between HBCUs and PWIs that are the same size is most of the PWIs have a history of philanthropy and have worked with alums and friends of the university to provide more discretionary dollars that go back into the athletic program. The history of philanthropy is not the same at HBCUs.

The majority of inside participants noted that changing this culture would have to start with the alums. However, participants highlighted that there is a difference in the type of alumni that graduate from these institutions. For example, participants noted that alumni at HBCUs are not graduating with degrees that have high earning potential in the first couple of years after graduation. The inside participants indicated that this low level of giving from HBCU alumni can only help support tuition so far. However, participants did note they saw the outlook on alumni giving getting a little better. Although, Briel noted, “We do not do a lot of asking from alumni, once we get told no, we do not want to ask again. Whereas I am a PWI graduate and they ask almost every day for something.” Overall, there was a positive outlook on the projection of alumni giving compared to previous years, but all participants indicated it needed to improve.

Under the culture of endowments at HBCUs, participants indicated HBCUs do not have healthy endowments compared to PWIs. Specifically, Finn noted, “Our endowment is under 10.8

million, so you are not generating the residual income that can be used to offset the cost of running a competitive program.” Insider participants all echoed these concerns with low endowments at HBCUs and how the athletic departments have limited pull from the institution to help the athletic department financially. The next section outlines staffing issues and participant’s perception of their impact on fiscal challenges.

**Staff.** Under the theme of staff, the sub-themes of staff make-up, advancement employees, and professional development emerged. Each sub-theme is discussed in the sections below.

**Staff make-up.** Beginning with the staff make-up, the inside participants mentioned that HBCUs need to hire people that understand the culture of an HBCU because they reported HBCU employees wear multiple hats, and there are fewer people in each department doing the work of similar size institutions. Briel mentioned the most important thing for a new hire at an HBCU institution is for them to understand the culture. Josie echoed similar recommendations: “You don’t want to get caught up with we don’t have this, or we should be doing this. It is almost like you need to embrace what you have and figure out ways to get what you need.”

An additional concern outlined by participants was the staff turn-over rate and how that can impact financial challenges. For example, Fitz outlined his experience:

The turn over does not help in a lot of scenarios. For example, you know the first day I started here, the athletic director that hired me was let go the next day by the president. Two days later, the president who let go the athletic director was gone, so in a two to three-day span, there were two new leaders in big-time roles at the school. So, even if there was a plan in place to do something along these lines, it quickly got eighty-sixed because you had new leadership immediately.



The turnover mentioned by Fitz complements previous research from Quarterman (1992) addressing the high staff turnover rate at HBCUs. Beyond the turnover, the limited staff in the different departments of athletics was also noted by participants. Specifically, Josie mentioned how academic advisors are not as prevalent in HBCU athletic departments, and the lack of advising and tutorial centers can impact the students. Josie's statement expanded upon previous research by Bannister (2014) indicating the lack of academic resources on HBCU campuses. The insider participants described how the multiple hats worn by HBCU athletic administrators prevent advancement as one person has multiple duties, some of those include fundraising. The next section specifically details the insiders' perception of advancement employees at HBCUs.

***Advancement employee.*** All insider participants acknowledged the lack of athletic associations or booster clubs to help supplement athletic programs. Finn mentioned that one of the first things he did when began his current position at an HBCU was to hire a development person that only raised money for athletics. From the discussion with participants, it appeared as there was increased pressure on athletic directors at HBCUs to raise money in addition to their responsibility of running the athletic department. Fitz mentioned that the lack of development personnel was where he believes HBCUs are failing. The participants all mentioned the importance of hiring someone whose sole priority is to raise funds for the department of athletics. Additionally, the majority of participants mentioned the importance of the investment of hiring the individual to focus only on development for athletics. The final sub-theme of professional development is discussed in the next section.

***Professional development.*** The majority of insider participants mentioned the lack of professional development for employees of HBCUs. Josie acknowledged that funding might provide the rationale for the limited professional development opportunities, "Professional

development, at HBCUs, it is not that it is hard to find, I think there are really good professional development opportunities, I think it goes back to funding and being able to bring back good take-a-ways.” Lynn and Briel both mentioned professional development opportunities created by the NCAA for minorities.

One common discussion topic amongst participants regarding professional development and how it creates fiscal challenges is current employees becoming set in their ways. Briel mentioned that a lot of people working at HBCUs have been there for years and are graduates of the institutions, so that is the only thing they know. Participants mentioned the challenge faced by HBCUs when outsiders are hired to work on campus and make changes to benefit the institution. Additional challenges and roadblocks facing HBCUs and their attempt to overcome fiscal challenges are outlined in the next section.

**Roadblocks.** Under the theme of roadblocks, the sub-themes of operation and finances emerged. The following sections offer the results of each sub-theme identified.

***Operating cost.*** From an operation perspective, participants mentioned how travel to play games was getting expensive, especially with expanding HBCU athletic conferences. Finn noted how the HBCU conferences include schools outside of their geographic region, making travel costs rise. Additionally, one of the other operational rock blocks mentioned was carrying non-revenue generating sports to ensure compliance with Title IX. Institutions are required to comply with Title IX; however, if additional funding is added to support the revenue-generating sports of men’s basketball and football, funding, and athletic opportunities need to be provided to women student-athletes as well. These additional funds and opportunities could potentially create additional budget challenges. Participants mentioned funding to ensure all sports were

adequately supported, however, the participants did note that these issues were similar to issues faced by PWIs.

**Funding.** From a funding perspective, participants discussed the lack of funding that impacted staffing, facility updates, and scholarships for student-athletes. However, it was noted by participants that these challenges were similar to similarly sized PWIs. Challenges participants mentioned that they believed were unique to HBCUs were low enrollment and retention and having the majority of students on some type of financial aid. Participants acknowledged how these challenges impacted their operating budgets in athletics and limited the amount of discretionary dollars available to athletics. The final theme of solutions mentioned by participants is outlined in the next section.

**Solutions.** Under the theme of solutions, the sub-themes of strategic plans and fundraising emerged. Each sub-theme is discussed in detail in the sections below.

**Strategic plan.** Beginning with the sub-theme of strategic plans, the majority of participants mentioned that they believed PWIs typically create and follow through on strategic plans more consistently compared to most HBCUs. Specifically, Josie mentioned, “I think we have them (strategic plans) at HBCUs, I think in some cases we need to revisit them throughout the year to try and make sure we are staying on task with what it is we are trying to do for our athletic programs and in what ways athletics is helping to support the institution.” The discussion with participants indicated that HBCUs need to specifically define goals and tasks. Briel mentioned that strategic planning might include reevaluating what sports HBCU athletic departments are sponsoring.

When participants were asked if they believed these fiscal issues were improving on campus at HBCUs, participants mentioned they believed there were steps taken to improve some

of their challenges. For example, Briel acknowledged that, “under our current administrative leadership here, our president has placed an emphasis on managing the fiscal budget more responsibly and that is something that has been a tremendous help for the institution as a whole here.” Participants mentioned the need for athletic administrators to begin to use any revenue they do generate more efficiently and effectively.

**Fundraising.** When it comes to fundraising, participants believed more capital campaigns could help athletic departments and institutions facing fiscal challenges. Participants mentioned that it was important for these capital campaigns to happen at the right times and ensure there is a method to the campaigns with clear goals. Customer service when fundraising was highlighted by the majority of participants. Josie mentioned that for both HBCUs and PWIs, “because that customer service, even with your student-athletes, as well as fans and sponsors, those are the things that have people continuing to come back and support your program.” The relationship with donors was highlighted by all participants, making sure athletic administrators are asking for what they truly need and being transparent with where the money is going.

The next section outlines budget challenges facing HBCUs and the sub-themes that emerged throughout the interviews with the insider participants.

### **Budget Challenges**

In the empirical material collected regarding budget challenges from the insider participants two overarching themes were identified; program operations and strategic planning. The sub-themes for each of these are located in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Themes, Subthemes, Examples of Codes, and Frequencies from Insider Perspective of Budget Challenges.

Theme	Example of Code	# of Times Coded
-------	-----------------	------------------

Program operations	It may come down to those guarantee games to offset travel costs as well.	42
Sub-theme – travel	A PWI, from what I have experienced, their men and women, a lot of those programs travel separately.	17
Sub-theme – scholarship	One of the things is that very few of our institutions (HBCUs) fund scholarship budgets at the allowable NCAA level.	10
Sub-theme – game day	You need to make sure those sports (non-revenue) are supported and have an adequate budget because they are an important piece to the puzzle when it comes to having all of your sports meeting sport sponsorship.	15
Strategic Planning	I always walked around with a notebook and little pen in my pocket because you are always jotting things down you want to revisit how you are doing tickets, revisit how you are doing at the beginning of a game.	46
Sub-theme – assessment	Start looking for what you can cut, travel budget and those kinds of things.	12
Sub-theme – staffing	The biggest thing is having some buy-in, I usually let the coaches give me a tentative budget.	14
Sub-theme – revenue	I think we have to be creative and find effective ways to reach out to the community or corporate sponsors.	10
Sub-theme – budget allocation	The challenge is trying to take that dime and split it 12 ways and still be within budget.	10

The sections below will outline program operations and strategic planning as it relates to budget challenges facing HBCU athletic departments.

**Program operations.** Beginning with program operations, the sub-themes of travel, scholarships, and operation costs emerged. Each of the sub-themes regarding program operations are discussed in the following sections.

**Travel.** It could be gathered from discussion with participants that they believed many HBCU athletic departments had travel operations that were more taxing on student-athletes and coaches. Participants mentioned teams having to travel all night because they can't afford to stay in hotels, playing multiple road games in a row to ensure they are making travel efficient, and traveling and playing games in the same day. Briel had an example of what she has noticed, "At HBCUs, we are getting on the bus at 5:00...in the morning to travel to play a game and then coming back at 2:00...in the morning. So, there is definitely a difference in how funds are allocated and what you can spend on."

Additionally, when it comes to travel, Lynn mentioned how in most cases men's and women's teams are traveling on the same bus. She described her experience learning how travel is different at an HBCU:

For example, when I got to my current institution, I could not believe we put our men's and women's basketball teams on a charter bus for a ten-day road trip to three different states. A PWI, from what I have experienced, their men and women, a lot of those times those programs travel separately. HBCUs because we are crunching numbers and trying to survive, we do it the best way we can. Which puts out coaches and student-athletes in a little bit of an uncomfortable situation taking those trips for that long using that type of transportation mode.

When looking at the best way to allocate funds for travel, the participants noted the importance of meeting conference obligations first and to play more regional competition. Participants noted it could be beneficial to play the teams that were in the same division in your same region as this saves on travel costs.

Game guarantees were offered as a suggestion to off-set travel cost. However Fitz noted that the travel costs to play those games could outweigh the benefit from playing in the guarantee game. It is important to note that one of the participants believed travel was pretty consistent across peer HBCU and PWI athletic departments.

**Scholarship.** From a scholarship perspective, participants noted that very few HBCUs fund scholarship budgets to the allowable NCAA limits. From discussion with participants, it could be implied that the limited scholarship budget impacts the product the athletic departments are able to put on the field. Specifically, participants noted the most discrepancy in non-revenue generating sports. For example, Finn believes the commitment from the institution to scholarship athletes directly impacts the type of kid they can attract:

They (PWI student-athletes) play baseball, or they play soccer. We have kids who the first time they pick up a tennis racket is when they get to college because we are just trying to field a team. We have a tennis program and one scholarship, and you need to put a team with 8-10 kids on the court. How many skilled tennis players can you attract with one scholarship?

One specific note participants had between the difference between HBCUs and PWIs when it came to scholarships was the inability of HBCUs to scholarship student-athletes that have no eligibility remaining, but are still trying to complete their degree programs. Participants mentioned some student-athletes taking more than four years to complete academic programs

with athletic commitments, but the institution not being able to fund their final year due to budget constraints.

***Gameday.*** In the discussion regarding game day budget challenges, participants indicated there was a noticeable difference in a PWI and HBCU. Specifically discussing uniforms, the participants mentioned that PWIs could look more well put together whereas HBCUs had to decide between purchasing warm-ups or uniforms each year for their student-athletes. The participants also highlighted how they had experienced difficulties attempting to upgrade facilities on campus, such as gymnasium floors, because of the shortage of budget.

However, the majority of participants acknowledged operating and game-day expenses were similar between similarly sized HBCUs and PWIs. Additionally, participants mentioned they believed the allocation of funds between revenue and non-revenue generating sports were similar for HBCUs and PWIs regarding game-day expenses. However, it was noted that PWIs that do have more successful Olympic sports that are able to make national championships might be more fully funded. The next section will discuss the theme of strategic planning highlighted by participants.

***Strategic planning.*** In the discussion between participants regarding budget challenges, under the theme of strategic planning, the sub-themes of assessment, staffing, revenue, and budget allocation emerged. The sub-themes identified are discussed in the sections below.

***Assessment.*** Beginning with the sub-theme of assessment, all participants believed athletic administrators needed to evaluate spending. Specifically, participants highlighted looking at ways to increase revenue streams, ways to cut the budget, and ensuring the athletic department is sponsoring the right sport programs for the institution. Josie noted that from her experience, she has noticed that when a new athletic director takes the helm of a program, “They



have things in their mind that they want to change, but you really have to assess where the program is.” The majority of participants also noted that it was important to keep a spreadsheet of all projected expenses throughout the year, so the athletic department knows what each game will cost, to include travel expenses. One of the challenges noted by participants was the responsibility of athletic administrators to make the athletic department run without people knowing there are funding challenges.

*Staffing.* From a staff perspective, participants mentioned that coaches should be involved in the strategic planning. From discussion with participants, it could be gathered that they valued involving coaches in strategic planning to help have a better understanding of each team’s needs in addition to creating a better awareness for coaches for budget challenges within the department. Beyond coaches, participants advocated for senior administration of the institution to be involved and understand the financial needs of the athletic department. The majority of participants highlighted the challenge for athletic administrators to get senior-level administrators of the institution on board with initiatives. Additionally, as mentioned previously, participants mentioned the importance of having fundraising officers specifically for athletics to help the department grow their budgets. One of the dilemmas mentioned by Fitz was the challenge for senior-level administration of the institution to approve hiring new coaches when they are also tasked with hiring new faculty. Moreover, when HBCUs can get good coaches, it was Fitz’s perception that institutions were not able to keep them because they are not paying competitive salaries.

When it comes to the athletic administrative staff, the participants noted that although there is a lack of funding to allocate to each sport program, the staff’s visibility can ensure student-athletes that their sport is important. Specifically, Josie mentioned that she attends the

majority of competitions, stops by practices, and even walks around the halls of the academic buildings to engage with students. She believes this helps create the perception that athletics is very supportive of all athletic programs, even though there is limited funding to each program.

**Revenue.** The discussion from participants on revenue generation under the theme of strategic planning indicated many HBCUs might be at a disadvantage. Reasons mentioned for the disadvantage included limited endowments and foundations, and the lack of outside financial resources. One suggestion made by multiple participants was to evaluate ticketing at both revenue and non-revenue sports. Fitz noted his perception of non-revenue versus revenue sports:

There is a bad perception because the sport doesn't generate revenue that it is not of interest to student-athletes, fans, or alumni. So, with that said, it is kind of out of sight out of mind because people are under the impression that a sport doesn't generate as much buzz. That is a bad perception to have because if you invest into any of the sport programs, you will see a difference. I have seen schools that have decided to commit to Olympic sports, and I have seen those sports sometimes become bigger than the revenue generating sports because the one consistency is that team wins so people come and they want to see it because there is a commitment to the sport.

The participants acknowledged the investment needed to operate sport programs, but the challenge is getting others to see the value and invest in the program.

**Budget allocation.** The final sub-theme that emerged under strategic planning was budget allocations. All participants reported they believed the root of the budget allocation challenge is splitting a limited budget across all sport programs. From Briel's perception, "Essentially HBCUs are trying to keep up with the Joneses, and what everyone else is doing." Through

discussion with participants, it could be implied that many HBCUs are trying to do more with a smaller budget and that money continues to move around to cover costs.

Although budget allocation challenges were heavily highlighted facing HBCUs, participants mentioned budget allocation between revenue and non-revenue sports was similar. Lynn described her perception of the allocation, “we do spread that funding out even though the revenue sports are making money, that is how we operate and help our non-revenue sports. So, it kind of balances out in my opinion at some point because you know football generally takes care of women’s basketball, volleyball, and track and field.” The perception from Lynn indicates that although HBCU athletic departments are working with smaller budgets, they are following a similar budget allocation model compared to PWIs.

The next section outlines revenue generation and the themes that emerged from the interviews with the insider participants.

### **Revenue Generation**

In the empirical material collected regarding revenue generation from the insider participants, the only overarching themes that emerged was revenue streams. The sub-themes for revenue generation are located in Table 10 below.

Table 10. Themes, Subthemes, Examples of Codes, and Frequencies from Insider Perspective of Revenue Generation.

Theme	Example of Code	# of Times Coded
Revenue streams	Take advantage of resources alumni bases could bring.	98
Sub-theme – Game Guarantee	PWIs have the same things (revenue streams), maybe not as many game guarantees.	7
Sub-theme – Advancement	PWIs focus on individual giving and they work to identify their alums who have an interest and commitment to	48

	seeing a successful athletic program.	
Sub-theme – Game Day Revenue	Ticket sales at PWIs is big because they tend to do well with season packages or season tickets compared to HBCUs.	36
Sub-theme – Streaming	It is a whole heck of a lot easier to sell your game to a company that knows they will be on TV versus a video stream.	7

The sections below will discuss the empirical material collected regarding game guarantees, advancement, game day revenue, and streaming as it relates to revenue generation.

**Revenue streams.** In the discussion between participants regarding revenue generation, the sub-themes of game guarantees, advancement, game day revenue, and streaming emerged. The following sections offer discussion of each sub-theme identified.

**Gameday revenue.** The most heavily discussed revenue stream for HBCUs was game day revenue including ticket sales, merchandise sales, and concessions. The participants identified the challenge facing HBCU athletic departments to sell season ticket packages. From discussion with participants, it could be gathered that HBCUs generally sell significantly fewer season tickets compared to PWIs. All participants acknowledged that they spend a significant amount of time trying to presell tickets as it helps them better gauge the revenue for the year and set their budget. According to Fitz, season tickets are valuable for the institution because, “It does not matter if I play four home games or five because I am selling the value of the opportunity to buy tickets, not how much it costs to go to one game.” Additionally, all participants mentioned the importance of the game day experience when selling season tickets. Participants mention that ticket sales are vital for HBCUs because they absorb the cost of putting the games on and paying the officials.

Staffing was one of the challenges outlined by the participants when it came to ticket sales for HBCU athletic contests. The majority of participants noted that they believed that at HBCUs, an employee that is either a coach or full-time administrator over a different department is also in charge of ticket sales. This discussion from participants indicates that HBCUs are understaffed when it comes to ticket sales.

Social media and online sales were noted as areas that PWIs are taking advantage of to sell tickets to fans. Although participants did mention HBCUs are using social media and online ticket sales, the perception gathered through discussion was that they believed PWIs are using these platforms more effectively to sell tickets.

Participants also mentioned permanent seat licenses and reserved seats as a way to generate game-day revenue. However, when it came to ticket sales, the insider participants highlighted that all revenue from ticket sales seems to come from football, but it would be advantageous for HBCUs to start ticketing other sport programs as well. Briel outlined her experience ticketing non-revenue generating sports:

In the 2017–18 academic year, we moved to charging for softball and baseball. Now we moved into 2019 and are charging for volleyball and soccer. I think those are some ways we create that revenue stream we were missing. I don't think anyone complained over the last two years about having to pay for tickets.

With the importance highlighted by the participants on ticket sales, the participants all mentioned game attendance was crucial, and they suggest HBCU athletic administrators work to increase attendance at athletic events.

Beyond ticketing, selling merchandise and concessions were mentioned by participants to increase game-day revenue. During discussion, the majority of participants expressed the

sentiment that PWI athletic departments as a whole sell more concessions and merchandise on gameday.

**Streaming.** Streaming was another sub-theme that emerged under revenue generation. Participants all mentioned the importance of creating visibility for athletic programs, especially back to the local community. The majority of participants noted they believed PWIs stream more athletic contests, especially in the non-revenue generating sports. When it comes to streaming for non-revenue generating sports, Fitz highlighted the importance of a team's success when it comes to selling the initiative to both sponsors, networks, and the institution. From the discussion with participants, it seems as if revenue from streaming has improved over the years.

**Game guarantee.** From a guarantee games perspective, the participants discussed HBCU teams and their involvement in football classics. Specifically, Finn outlined their involvement: HBCUs have been involved in football classics, where typically they move a game against a rival to a major city and they take a guarantee from a sponsor, and the sponsor takes all of the dollars from marketing, ticket sales, and income generated from merchandise. This has worked, but in a lot of cases, universities give up a lot of control of their image and everything associated with the game that they are not maximizing the amount of money that they could. They are not getting all of the money they could.

The majority of participants recognized the balance that needs to happen between having home games and participating in classics. One of the issues mentioned by participants was the fact that HBCUs are putting their student-athletes through tough games to earn a paycheck. Josie and Fitz both mentioned how administrators are sending football teams to get slaughtered against tough opponents just to earn a paycheck for the institution. Participants discussed how the conversation of balance of game guarantees frequently occurs amongst colleagues.

*Advancement.* The final sub-theme that emerged was advancement for revenue generation. Participants expressed their belief that PWIs focus on giving and identifying their alumni who will give to the program. However, it was noted by participants that HBCUs are historical institutions that have been around for years and that they do have graduates that could give. Fitz outlined how HBCUs could start to get more alumni involved, “Not everyone is capable of writing a \$10,000 check, but everybody is capable of giving \$50-\$100 for a ball game. So, we got to build a foundation that will support the sport programs.”

Participants discussed solutions to increase donations from alumni, these included working with alumni affairs and creating campaigns for alumni giving. Through discussion with participants, it could be gathered that they had the perception that PWIs consistently tell their story effectively to donors. Specifically, the majority of participants believed HBCUs were not selling the importance of their historical programs. Participants reported they believed selling the story of HBCU athletic programs will help them get more dollars from alumni and sponsors.

Lynn highlights her perception:

It really has to do with the level of reputation. How organizations see you functioning, how trustworthy you are, giving them something positive to put their name on. I think that is very important and a lot of HBCUs just have to show the things we are doing in a positive manner because a lot of our stories just don't really get out.

In addition to HBCUs selling their story, the participants noted HBCUs need to understand and build relationships. Specifically, Josie mentioned the importance of following-up with alumni once a donation is made to show gratitude for the gift. This follow-up keeps the donor engaged and willing to give to the program.

All participants discussed the understaffed athletic departments when it came to revenue generation through alumni and sponsorships. The participants discussed that most athletic department employees were spreading themselves too thin and not truly going out to make the ask from sponsors. Participants suggested increasing staff to solely oversee advancement for athletics would help the institution. Additionally, participants acknowledged the importance for HBCUs to begin selling sponsorships for non-revenue sports in addition to revenue sports. When it comes to making the ask, Lynn suggested HBCU athletic administrators not hold back, “We have to reach out and make the ask to the unbelievable people, people we don’t think we can receive from and build relationships.” The statement indicated that HBCU athletic administrators should not hold themselves to smaller, local businesses, but should reach out to more well-known companies that have more money to give.

Finally, participants suggested that HBCUs need to create more annual campaigns for their athletic program that will last from year to year. These included establishing associations, foundations, and endowments that could help build athletic programs. Briel suggested for administrators to reach out and work with institutional advancement as they might have an employee that could help athletics already on staff.

Overall, from the empirical material collected regarding revenue generation, some participants explained that HBCU athletic departments have the ability to be as successful as their PWI peers. However, participants acknowledged that the believed PWIs had more staff and initiatives in place that could help them achieve their fundraising goals. The next section will summarize the results from the interviews with both the inside and independent participants.



### Summary

In summary, both the independent and inside participants discussed three different areas related to HBCU athletic department finances; fiscal challenges, budget challenges, and revenue generation. Table 11 below outlines the similarities in responses between the two groups of participants.

Table 11. Similarities in Responses Between Independent and Insider Participants.

Financial Challenges	Budget Challenges	Revenue Generation
The suggestion that the history of HBCUs is impacting the finances of the athletic department.	PWIs appeared to be more focused on student-athlete experience and student-athlete well-being.	PWIs use social media and digital assets, paraphernalia, and the advancement office effectively on campus.
Staffing challenges were a struggle facing HBCUs.	HBCUs do not appear to provide the same scholarship opportunities to non-revenue generating sports.	The limited staff at HBCUs challenge fundraising and relationship cultivation potential.
It was suggested that issues did exist at similarly sized PWIs. However, the issues were more common to HBCUs compared to PWIs.	Reccomendation of strategic planning to help budget challenges at HBCUs.	The suggestion that HBCUs could do more to sell the story of their athletic programs and student-athletes.
There does not appear to be a culture of alumni giving at HBCUs.		
HBCUs are not investing in hiring employees that focus on generating funds for the athletic department.		

Beginning with fiscal challenges, both independent and insider participants acknowledged that the history of HBCUs was a fiscal challenge impacting the athletic department. Specifically, participants noted how there is not a culture of alumni giving at HBCUs. Additionally, when it comes to fiscal challenges, staffing challenges were heavily highlighted impacting HBCUs. Specifically, participants indicated that HBCUs were not investing in hiring employees that

focus on generating funds for the athletic department. Although participants acknowledged HBCUs did have challenges, it was noted by both independent and insider participants that similar issues did exist at similarly sized PWIs. However, it appeared as the issues were more common to HBCUs compared to PWIs.

Focusing on budget challenges, travel and game day operations appeared to be highlighted by both independent and insider participants when comparing HBCUs and PWIs. Participants indicated PWIs appeared to be more focused on the student-athlete experience and student-athlete well-being for travel in comparison to HBCUs focusing on having to ensure they have the funds to meet minimum travel requirements. Both independent and insider participants discussed meals, transportation and hotels. Scholarships were another highly discussed topic regarding budget by participants. The discussion from participants indicated that although HBCUs might be competitive with scholarships provided for revenue-generating sports, they were not providing the same scholarship opportunities to non-revenue generating sports. Throughout the interviews, all participants noted the importance of strategic planning to help HBCU athletic departments facing budget challenges. The strategic planning discussion included athletic administrators completing an assessment to understand opportunities better and look for areas to cut. Additionally, it is important to note that both independent and insider participants emphasized the importance of including coaches in the discussion of budget allocations to have a better understanding of each program's needs.

Finally, in the discussion of revenue generation, many revenue stream opportunities were discussed by participants. Both sets of participants believed PWIs typically use social media and digital assets, paraphernalia, and the advancement office on campus more frequently to generate funds for their athletic department compared to HBCUs. Both sets of participants mentioned the

limited staff at HBCU athletic departments challenge growth from fundraising and building relationships with sponsors and donors. The major challenge highlighted by both groups of participants regarding HBCU revenue generation was the culture of giving on HBCU campuses and the importance of athletic administrators to change this mindset and to build better relationships with alumni. A common solution mentioned by both groups when it came to revenue generations was for HBCUs to do more to sell the story of their athletic programs and student-athletes. Both groups of participants believed PWIs sold their story in a way that helped them generate increased revenue from alumni and sponsors.

In the next chapter, conclusions will be offered and the results noted above will be discussed as they relate to previous literature. Implications from this study will also be highlighted, and finally, suggestions for future research will be addressed.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

In this section, I offer an overview of the results of this study. Specifically, I begin with a discussion of the results followed by implications for both practitioners and academics. Finally, I will end with a section discussing future research possibilities.

The empirical material collected in this study suggests that HBCUs are limited in resources which stem from their financial instability. These limited resources include staffing, facilities, and funds for athletic program operations, travel, and scholarships. Analyzing the empirical material collected from discussion with participants from a resource dependency perspective, the results indicate that with the few resources these institutions have, they fall victim to the decisions set by peer NCAA member institutions that might have more power in the membership because of the resources they have. The limited resources possibly prevent the institutions from gaining power within the NCAA membership (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977). Although the empirical material collected indicate how similarly sized HBCUs find themselves in similar situations compared to PWIs regarding limited resources, the empirical material collected implied that the problems were more prevalent and consistent across HBCU campuses. This result indicates that HBCUs are the “have nots” of the NCAA membership and as a whole, they will not have the resources in the membership to create initiatives that might specifically benefit these institutions as opposed to the more heavily resourced PWIs. Specifically, as athletic department expenses grow, institutions will compete for the limited financial resources available (Ulrich & Barney, 1984). Looking at resource allocation, although the results of this study indicated that HBCUs are spending much less on athletic programs compared to PWIs, the results were similar to previous research from Elliott et al. (2018) indicating that although

HBCUs were spending less compared to PWIs, they were following similar spending patterns, in this case regarding revenue and non-revenue generating sports.

This section is organized into a general overview of how the results of this study compare to existing literature on HBCU athletics. Following, a discussion on three overarching research questions will be offered specifically addressing how fiscal challenges, budget challenges, and revenue generation compares between HBCU and PWI athletic department. Finally, the implications of this research and suggestions for future research will be discussed.

### **Comparing Literature on HBCUs**

Similar to previous research (Arnett, 2014; Albritton, 2012; Bracey, 2017; and Stewart, 2017), the empirical material collected in this study indicates that enrollment and the demographic make-up of the student body continue to be a struggle for HBCUs. Specifically, the empirical material collected indicates that the enrollment dependent HBCUs are struggling to maintain operation funding on campus and the limited funding impacts the amount that can be allocated to athletics. The empirical material collected in this study indicates that athletic administrators should try to look for outside resources for funding for athletic programs, but that there are roadblocks facing athletic administrators. Specifically, having HBCUs consistently appear in the news under a negative light for accreditation issues and mismanagement of finances were highlighted in the results. The results indicate that HBCU athletic departments should possibly make the investment in hiring an employee to work in advancement solely for athletics, having this individual raise funds and build relationships with alumni and community members. With the lack of alumni giving at HBCUs, this study indicates the importance of investing in an individual in the athletic department to try and change the culture of alumni giving on campus.

Beyond the root of the financial issues noted in this study, this study expanded on the conclusions from previous research from Robbins et al., (2015) and Cooper and Hawkings (2012). Specifically, the travel burdens and limited resources were expanded upon in this study and the empirical material collected support that HBCU athletic teams were traveling by bus on long road trips with limited funds for hotel stays or proper meals throughout the trip.

Additionally, the dual roles coaches are responsible for at HBCUs could prevent the institutions from attracting the best coaches. Although these issues are prevalent on HBCU campuses, solutions were offered in this study, such as including coaches in setting budgets for the academic year as this could help coaches better understand any financial burden and keep transparency between athletic administrators and coaches. Guarantee games were mentioned in this study as a possible revenue stream. However, it was noted that although HBCUs are earning a paycheck for these games, the physical risks for student-athletes is debated between HBCU athletic administrators and the payout might not be as significant as the common perception as many of them have to pay back the institution for any upfront travel costs paid for the team to travel to the game.

One notable result from this study was the common concern of attendance at HBCU athletic contests and the unfortunate limited revenue generated from ticket sales on game day. As referenced in Tables 2 and 3, previous reports indicate that HBCUs have consistently led football attendance (2017 NCAA Football Attendance; Reddick, 2017). With reports indicating how HBCUs are continually leading in football attendance, it is unclear how this is the case after analyzing the results of this study and understanding from the perception of athletic administrators that HBCUs are reporting limited attendance at athletic contests, and that they need to do better with game day ticket sales. One possible consideration is the high attendance at

classic games is offsetting the attendance of the on-campus athletic events. However, attendance and ticket sales at HBCUs is an area of needed inquiry to help practitioners better understand this discrepancy. The results of this study did mention there is a possible favor system at HBCUs and that could be hurting overall ticket sales, but further analysis into attendance and ticket sales at HBCUs is needed.

Similar to previous literature regarding streaming and television, this study further indicated that HBCUs are not receiving the same revenue generated from streaming and television compared to PWIs. However, the empirical material collected in this study indicates that HBCUs are getting better at capitalizing on this revenue stream. This result aligns with recent contracts signed by HBCU conferences with ESPN, Aspire, and most recently Flo (Williams, 2017a, 2017b). These partnerships were signed in the past five years, so further research could follow these contracts to determine the success based on the investment by both HBCU conference offices and institutions.

The results from this study indicate that HBCUs might not be capitalizing on revenue that could be generated through corporate sponsorships and marketing. Specifically, the empirical material collected further indicates HBCU athletic administrators may be spread too thin and not investing in marketing departments to reach out to build relationships with corporate sponsorships in their community (Jackson et al., 2001). As Armstrong (2001) found, black sport consumers have value propositions that can make them attractive to corporate sponsors. However, based on the results of this study, HBCU athletic departments are not taking advantage of their consumers. The results of this study indicate that PWIs are reaching out to corporate sponsors, but the lack of an advancement employee in the athletic department at HBCUs might prevent HBCUs from finding the same success. Specifically, regarding social media, it is

commonly reported that HBCUs are leading in social media metrics on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter. Tables 12, 13, and 14 below report the two HBCU athletic conferences, the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, lead social media rankings (D2 Social Media, 2018).

Table 12. HBCUs lead DII Twitter Rankings

Followers	Conference
19,904	Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC)
15,300	Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC)
12,257	Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA)
11,391	Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC)
10,413	Gulf South Conference (GSC)
10,173	Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MAIAA)
9,966	Northeast-10 Conference (N10C)
9,710	Lone Star Conference (LSC)
8,855	Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC)
8,832	Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC)

*Notes: D2 Social Media, 2018*

Table 13. HBCUs lead DII Facebook Rankings

Followers	Conference
82,263	Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA)
12,035	Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC)
4,544	Great American Conference (GAC)
3,798	Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC)
3,523	Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MAIAA)
3,419	Lone Star Conference (LSC)
3,289	Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC)
3,090	Peach Belt Conference (PBC)



2,860	Northeast-10 Conference (N10C)
2,681	Sunshine State Conference (SSC)

*Notes: D2 Social Media, 2018*

Table 14. HBCUs lead DII Instagram Rankings

Followers	Conference
5,810	Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA)
3,690	Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC)
3,602	Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC)
3,548	Great American Conference (GAC)
3,364	Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC)
2,652	Peach Belt Conference (PBC)
2,513	Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC)
2,431	Conference Carolinas (CC)
2,351	Mountain East Conference (MEC)
2,046	Pacific West Conference (PWC)

*Notes: D2 Social Media, 2018*

However, the results of this study suggest that PWIs might be using these platforms more effectively to build relationships with fans. This discrepancy is another area that could be further researched to understand why HBCUs are not capitalizing on their highly engaged social media pages. Additionally, it could create an opportunity for HBCU practitioners to maximize the use of social media as a sponsorship inventory. For example, a sponsor could pay for the institution to post tweets about their organization on their social media pages. This type of sponsorship might be more beneficial to organizations compared to traditional signage that appears at arenas and stadiums.

On a student-athlete note, one important result from this study is the difference in student-athlete experience noted between HBCUs and PWIs. Cooper and Hawkings's (2002) hypothesis that the higher visibility of and resources available at PWIs contributing to student

preference in a PWI compared to an HBCU was expanded in this study, as results indicated PWIs were prioritizing and spending more on student-athlete experience. The student-athlete experience included better travel accommodations, more investment in the game-day atmosphere, and academic resources available. This study indicated that HBCUs should consider strategic planning and prioritizing student-athletes. More priority placed on student-athlete experience could help with recruiting student-athletes and increasing retention rates.

Looking at the results regarding athletic administrators at HBCUs, the results indicate that athletic administrators are wearing multiple hats and were spread thin. This result complements previous research from Quarterman (1992) indicating the multiple responsibilities HBCU athletic administrators had on campus. The empirical material collected in this study indicates that there is a high turnover rate at HBCUs, and employees tend to be graduates of HBCUs with no experience outside of an HBCU. The frequent turnover rate prevents HBCUs from committing to fundraising campaigns as with new leadership comes new initiatives in the department. Additionally, as the results indicate, the limited outside hires at HBCUs prevent the institutions and their athletic programs from trying new initiatives, similar to PWI athletic departments as the results indicate that HBCUs continue to stay stagnant in their operations.

On a final note, throughout the empirical material collected from the participants in the study, it was highly suggested that HBCU athletic departments work on a strategic plan for their departments. Additionally, with the turnover rate noted in this study, it is important that HBCUs follow the strategic plan and continue to revisit the plan frequently to ensure they are meeting their goals and objectives. An initial assessment should be complete in the athletic department to ensure that the department is spending as efficiently and effectively as possible; this includes an evaluation of current sport sponsorship to determine if the athletic department is offering the

correct sports and not spending money on sponsoring sports that might not be beneficial for the institution. Additionally, from a strategic planning perspective, this study indicates the importance of athletic administrators planning out their budgets for the entire academic year to have a good idea of what they will be spending and where cuts can be made. Overall, the results of this study indicated the importance of planning with the limited resources available at HBCUs. In the next sections, each of the three research questions will be addressed.

### **Fiscal Challenges**

To address RQ1, both independent and insider participants acknowledged there were fiscal issues unique to HBCUs. These fiscal issues included opportunities that HBCUs are currently missing out on and challenges. Specifically addressing the challenges indicated by participants, the results of this study indicate the current culture, staffing, and fan experience on HBCU campuses create additional fiscal challenges that PWIs might not have deal with on campus. In regards to the current culture, the results of this study indicate the current culture of alumni giving at HBCUs is a challenge that PWIs might not face. This result expands upon previous research from Stuart (2017) suggesting potential donors do not appear to be making the investment in HBCUs. However, it should be noted that even though this study indicated there is not a culture in place to support alumni giving on HBCU campuses, both independent and insider participants agreed that HBCUs were possibly not putting the best fundraising and institutional development practices in place to improve the financial outlook for the institution.

Additionally, the results from both the insider and independent perspective indicate that HBCUs might not be selling the story of their institutions and students as well as PWIs. The lack of positive marketing from HBCUs challenges the institutions as monetary gifts might be tied to positive campaigns on campus outlining the impacts the athletic program and student-athletes

make in the local community. From a cultural perspective, the results from this study imply that there is an internal conflict within HBCUs that PWIs might not have to deal with on campus. The internal conflict revolves around the original mission and purpose of the institution and how the mission and purpose of HBCUs have changed over time. With the unlimited options for students that once only had the opportunity to enroll in an HBCU, these institutions have had to change to compete for the same students as their peer PWIs. The result of this change has led to shrinking enrollment and thus less revenue from tuition (Camera, 2017). As HBCUs are predominantly funded by tuition, the lack of enrollment directly impacts the budget for the institution and creates fiscal challenges.

In comparison to HBCUs, similarly sized PWIs, might face similar fiscal challenges as many, smaller PWIs are also predominantly funded by tuition. However, a major difference could be in how the institutions market and sell their product to new students and alumni. With the growing need to compete for students, HBCUs need to put out positive publicity as this study indicates they are often in the news for negative reasons such as the mismanagement of funds. The negative news has led to distrust in HBCUs and creates additional challenges for these institutions as they try to generate income and increase enrollment. Although positive marketing might help these institution, previous research has noted that many HBCUs are not investing in hiring a marketing or external relationships employee in their athletic department (Li & Burden, 2009). The lack of an employee dedicated to publishing positive news stories could prevent HBCUs from selling their story.

From the insider perspective, the results of this study indicate that the staff at HBCUs are overworked and not necessarily the right fit for the position. Additionally, with the staff at HBCUs, the insider participants indicated that HBCU employees were not receiving the same

professional development opportunities available to peers at PWIs. The lack of professional development opportunities could cause the stagnant work cycle at HBCUs, preventing them from employing innovative solutions to solve fiscal challenges that they do have on campus. These solutions could include working on best practices to engage alumni better and create additional revenue streams for the institution.

Regarding fan experience, this study implies PWIs are giving their fans a more robust game day atmosphere leading to higher attendance and fan engagement. Higher attendance and fan engagement can lead to increased revenue generation for athletic departments and can help athletic departments run independently from the institution. Being able to run a self-sustaining athletic department would help athletic departments in institutions that are facing major fiscal issues. When it comes to experience for travel, the insider participants implied that HBCUs are located in conferences that required extensive travel. With the majority of HBCUs competing in one of the four HBCU athletic conferences, it might be an important conversation for athletic administrators to have if their current conference affiliation is best for their institution. If HBCUs are in conferences that require expensive travel budgets, it might not be the best fit for the institutions as they try to engage fans and provide the best experiences for their student-athletes.

When discussing possible solutions to the fiscal challenges facing HBCUs, strategic planning and fundraising were offered. When it comes to the difference in fiscal challenges facing PWIs and HBCUs, the results from this study indicate that HBCUs are not participating in the same strategic planning initiatives and best practices as their peer PWIs. The lack of planning could cause HBCUs not to spend the funds they do have efficiently and effectively.

From a fundraising standpoint, HBCUs could do more work on the advancement side with capital campaigns and building endowments. The results of this study suggest that PWIs

have greater endowments and annual capital campaigns for their institution to help with fiscal challenges facing their institutions. Although this study specified that HBCUs as a whole have lower levels of fundraising compared to their PWI peers, the results of this study suggested that HBCUs are working toward building endowments and initiating capital campaigns. This result expands upon previous research from Gasman (2009) that indicated HBCUs have small endowments, limiting funding for their campus. These initiatives could help HBCUs counter fiscal challenges faced by their institution and put them on a more even financial playing field with their PWI peers.

### **Budget Challenges**

To address RQ2, the results of this study indicate that HBCUs are not allocating funds similarly to PWIs when it comes to program operations. Beginning with travel, results indicated HBCUs are possibly not spending what PWIs do on creating the best experience for their student-athletes, this includes hotels, transportation, and meals. When it comes to transportation, this study expanded on the research from Robbins, Gilbert, and Clifton (2015), who suggested HBCUs require student-athletes to travel on long bus rides to avoid hotel costs and are playing back-to-back road games to ensure they are getting the most out of one trip. The results of this study imply that these same practices are not happening in PWI athletic departments. Additionally, regarding meals, student-athletes competing for HBCU athletic programs are not being given the opportunity for nutritious meals on the road and post-game to save funds. The situation possibly impedes on the student-athlete experience and could create concerns regarding the health and wellbeing of student-athletes competing for HBCUs.

From a facility and uniform perspective, this study indicates that HBCUs are not budgeting for gear and facility upgrades at the same level at PWIs. The lack of investment

impacts the student-athlete experience leading to PWIs allocating more funds toward student-athlete experience compared to HBCUs. The more money spent on student-athlete experience at PWI campuses could prevent HBCUs from competing for the same prospective student-athletes and retaining current student-athletes. Additionally, the lack of funds spent on student-athlete experience could impact fan attendance at athletic contests and engagement that could lead to increased revenue. Specifically, regarding gear, the study implied HBCUs are not outfitting teams with consistent brands and are shopping for gear and uniforms from locations where they can get the best deal as opposed to creating a uniform look for the institution. The uniform look would include having travel bags, shoes, and jerseys with a consistent brand.

When comparing funding for revenue and non-revenue generating sports, the results of this study indicate HBCUs are allocating scholarships similarly across revenue generating sports compared to PWIs, but are not funding the non-revenue generating sports at the same level. Specifically, the results indicate that HBCUs have to spread one or two scholarships across a whole team of student-athletes. Both insider and independent participants agreed that there is a lack of funding to the non-revenue generating sports at HBCUs, even though some of the non-revenue generating sports might be the more successful sport programs in the athletic department. The results of the study implied there was possibly an attempt from HBCUs to try and compete with PWIs in revenue-generating sports, even if they might not have the funds to compete at the same level. The pouring of funds into the revenue generating sports with the already limited athletic department funding on an HBCU campus takes away from funds that could be allocated to non-revenue generating sport programs.

Although the results of this study indicate HBCUs face budget challenges that PWIs might not face, the study offered solutions that HBCU administrators could put into place to

better structure their athletic department for success. Specifically, as mentioned previously, one area that HBCUs can work on is strategic planning. Creating budgets on the front end of the academic year and planning out the cost of travel and game day operations could help HBCUs budget and allocate funds throughout the academic year. The practice of planning out the budget for the academic year could help HBCU campuses better understand where they are allocating funds most effectively and where funds could be cut.

When it comes to planning, it is important for the institution to prioritize budget allocations across sport programs. As this study indicated, HBCUs are investing more in revenue-generating sports in comparison to their non-revenue generating sports. Although participants believed this to be a common practice at both HBCUs and PWIs, they believed there was a far greater disparity in the allocation of funds between the two types of sports at an HBCU. It could be imperative for HBCUs to reassess their current budget allocation practices and look for ways to possibly cut spending toward revenue generating sports in the hopes of providing a better student-athlete experience for non-revenue generating sport programs. This assessment might mean revenue generating sports are not able to stay at the best hotels or eat at the best restaurants but that the budget can be allocated so that there is a happy medium reached and all sport programs can stay at decent hotels and have decent meals while on the road for competition.

### **Revenue Generation**

Regarding RQ3, ticketing was heavily discussed. Specifically, the results implied HBCUs are not doing the best they can to capitalize on ticket sales. The lack of success in ticket sales stemmed from the absence of ticketing non-revenue generating sports and giving away tickets to contests for free. Additionally, unlike PWIs, HBCUs are not putting effort into season ticket



sales and selling other ticketing packages to athletic contests. Although HBCUs have limited staff for ticket sales, and sometimes the ticketing staff serves other responsibilities in the athletic department, the more preseason work selling tickets, the better the outlook for ticket sales throughout the season.

The results also suggested that HBCUs are not taking advantage of selling athletic paraphernalia and concessions. The lack of these game day sales could hurt the revenue generation potential that HBCUs have with the fan base that attends their athletic events. Increasing sales from paraphernalia and concessions on game day could help the athletic departments on HBCU campuses increase revenue for individual sport programs and be more self-sustaining, so when major fiscal issues are impacting budget allocation to athletics, the athletic department has additional funds from game day revenue to offset any budget deficit.

Digital assets were another area of revenue generation where PWIs are believed to have more success in compared to HBCUs. Specifically, regarding social media, these are free platforms that athletic departments can use to market their sport programs to fans, alumni, and potential sponsors. However, results suggest that PWIs are doing more with the free platforms in comparison to HBCUs. One specific area where PWIs are finding more success in comparison to HBCUs is online ticket sales using digital platforms. Digital ticketing could help HBCUs increase fan attendance and repeat attendance. Additionally, the more tickets sold online, the less staff is needed to sell tickets on game day. HBCUs should assess the possibility of increasing digital ticketing opportunities in an attempt to increase revenue generation.

When it comes to staffing, athletic administrators might not be doing everything they can at HBCUs to take advantage of revenue generation. The results imply HBCUs are not hiring staff with the advancement knowledge to understand the best ways to generate revenue. The lack of

staff with experience generating funds prevents HBCUs from moving forward and building revenue generation plans to compete with PWIs. HBCUs are already facing the additional challenge of distrust from potential sponsors and alumni, so not having the proper staffing in place might hurt these institutions. Although there are challenges HBCUs face regarding revenue generation, it is important to note that participants in this study believed HBCUs have the same ability as a similarly sized PWI to generate revenue.

PWIs were reported to more effectively generate revenue through working with institutional advancement. However, as noted previously, the lack of alumni giving and the lack of a wealthy alumni base hurt HBCUs when it comes to advancement opportunity (Stuart, 2017). It might be advantageous for HBCUs to start creating revenue generating opportunities for alumni, fans, and potential sponsors that are planned and continuous. For example, HBCUs might benefit by hosting annual events to engage donors and keep their support. The results from this study imply PWIs may be more active in cultivating relationships and engaging donors compared to HBCUs. This process includes expressing gratitude and acknowledging whenever a gift is made to an institution. This acknowledgment should occur with small gifts as well, as not all donors have the ability to give hefty sums to the athletic department.

### **Implications**

Although the results of this study indicated areas in which HBCUs were lacking compared to peer PWIs, there were areas of opportunity where improvement can be made. Specifically, although there are limited resources, the results indicate that there were many areas where HBCUs were not doing their best to capitalize on revenue generation. One of these areas was revenue from advancement including donations from alumni and corporate sponsors. Although the culture of giving at HBCUs from alumni was noted as lacking, the study also found

that the majority of HBCUs are not hiring employees to commit to developing and cultivating relationships with alumni. This result indicates that HBCUs can expand this area and increase revenue as they are currently not doing everything they can to engage their alumni. Similarly, regarding sponsorships, HBCUs not hiring advancement employees to reach out and spend a full-time workload building relationships with corporate sponsors indicates that HBCUs are not putting their maximum effort into putting people in place to get these sponsorships. This finding indicates that HBCUs might have the potential to generate additional resources from donations. They are just not currently investing. Making this investment could prove promising to HBCU athletic departments.

Likewise, the results from this study indicate that it is vital for athletic administrators to participate in strategic planning for their institutions. The results of this study indicate that HBCUs are not prioritizing goals and objectives and following a strategic plan. The lack of strategic planning results in the lack of a clear direction for these departments and the cycle of the athletic administrators in these departments continuing to repeat the same spending and operational habits year after year even, if these are not the most efficient or effective. With the lack of clear strategic planning in HBCU athletic departments, it is clear that initiating a strategic plan in the department could better help athletic administrators assess their current department and look for ways to cut or be more efficient with spending. Additionally, the results of this study indicate that HBCU athletic administrators should not reinvent the wheel during the strategic planning process and should reach out to peers for advice to see what has worked and what has not worked in their athletic department. Understanding best practices can help HBCU athletic administrators better situate their athletic department for success.

The final implication of this study notable to both academics and practitioners is the lack of a clear understanding of attendance and ticket revenue at HBCUs. According to the results of this study, athletic administrators report that HBCU are struggling with ticket revenue and attendance and are falling behind their PWI peers in these categories. However, previous research indicates how HBCU football does well in fan attendance. This discrepancy can hurt HBCU athletic administrators that project more revenue based on fan attendance numbers at HBCU athletic contests. The empirical material from this study indicates the need for athletic administrators to put more emphasis on pre-selling season tickets and reserved seating so that HBCUs have a better idea of their projected income for the academic year. This projected revenue can be included in budgeting for the academic year. The next section will offer suggestions for future research based on the results of this study.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

With the results of this study, it is important that future research continues to find ways for HBCUs to capitalize on revenue generation and strategic planning to help make the best of the limited resources these institutions have for the athletic departments. From a strategic planning perspective, it is important that future research look into best practices that peer institutions have already implemented to understand what practices might work for HBCU athletic administrators. As mentioned previously, the results of this study indicate that HBCU athletic administrators are spread thin and already have multiple responsibilities on campus. Research to help them determine the best practices for their institutions, specifically in analyzing student-athlete experience, operations, travel, scholarships, and fundraising can help these athletic administrators already spread thin develop a strategic plan that can be immediately impactful in their athletic department.

Additionally, future research could help better understand the story that HBCUs have to sell to corporate sponsors and alumni. Throughout the results of this study, it was noted that HBCUs are encouraged to sell the story of their student-athletes and campuses to the community or potential donors and sponsors. Again, as HBCU athletic administrators are already juggling multiple tasks, research into what exact stories HBCU athletic departments and student-athletes have that will resonate with corporate sponsors, and alumni could help these departments generate additional revenue through fundraising campaigns.

Finally, it is vital that future research analyze fan attendance at HBCU athletic events and ticket revenue to understand why HBCUs are not capitalizing on the fan base that is attending their football games. As ticket revenue, specifically from football, was found to be a main source of revenue for HBCU athletic departments. Research to understand how HBCU athletic administrators can capitalize on attendance can help these departments. Additionally, other game-day revenue streams could be analyzed such as merchandise and concession sales to better understand why HBCU athletic departments are not capitalizing on these revenue streams, and how they might be able to implement them in their department.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that HBCU athletic departments have potential. All participants in this study indicated that HBCU athletic departments have a great product and story to sell to help with revenue generation. However, these departments continue to repeat the same yearly cycle of budget setting and using the same revenue streams to generate revenue. Using the results of this study, HBCU athletic administrators can understand the importance of making the investment into advancement employees and working with institutional advancement to cultivate and build relationships with potential donors. As mentioned previously, with the lack of consistent fundraising campaign practices at HBCUs, they have the ability to start fresh and

implement fundraising practices that can help their institutions generate money. Although roadblocks, such as the perceived culture of the institutions, were reported as preventing these institutions from capitalizing on fundraising dollars, the results of this study indicate HBCU athletic departments are not doing everything they can to promote the positive initiatives their athletic departments and student-athletes are doing on campus and in the community. HBCUs have a great story to share; it is just the effort to get that story out into the public. Advertising that story might be the difference in making revenue that can be generated for these institutions and their athletic departments. Once the stories are told, it will be interesting to watch the revenue generation capabilities, and how these limited resourced institutions might be able to capitalize on additional revenue streams that they are currently not taking advantage of in their athletic departments.

## References

- (1965). *Higher education act of 1965 section-by-section analysis*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education. Retrieved from <https://legcounsel.house.gov/Comps/Higher%20Education%20Act%20Of%201965.pdf>
- 2017 NCAA Football Attendance. (2017). Retrieved from [http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/stats/football\\_records/Attendance/2017.pdf](http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/stats/football_records/Attendance/2017.pdf)
- 2019 NCAA Convention. *Division II Second Publication of Proposed Legislation*. Retrieved from: <https://web3.ncaa.org/lstdbi/reports/getReport/90005>
- Albritton, T. J. (2012). Educating our own: The historical legacy of HBCUs and their relevance for educating a new generation of leaders. *Urban Review, 44*, 311–331.
- Alexandris, K., Tsaousi, E., & James, J. (2007). Predicting sponsorship outcomes from attitudinal constructs: The case of a professional basketball event. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 16*, 13–139.
- Andrews, J. (2015). Sponsorship spending on college athletics totals \$1.1 billion in 2014/2015 season. *IEG Sponsorship Report*. Retrieved from [http://www.sponsorship.com/iegsr/2015/08/31/Sponsorship-Spending-On-College-Athletics-Totals-\\$.aspx](http://www.sponsorship.com/iegsr/2015/08/31/Sponsorship-Spending-On-College-Athletics-Totals-$.aspx)
- Armstrong, K. (1999). Nike's communication with black audiences: a sociological analysis of advertising effectiveness via symbolic interactionism. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 23*, 266-286.
- Armstrong, K. (2001). Black consumers' spending and historically black college sport events: the marketing implications. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 10*, 102–111.

- Armstrong, K. L. (2002). An examination of the social psychology of Blacks' consumption of sport. *Journal of Sport Management, 16*, 267–288.
- Arnett, A. (2014, December 18). State of HBCUs. Retrieved from: [www.diverseeducation.com](http://www.diverseeducation.com)
- Associated Press (2007, October 26). Division II Chowan moving to Historically Black CIAA. *Diverse: Higher Education*.
- Auerbach, N. (2016, March 15). Successful HBCU basketball coaches endure rockier climb. *USA Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/ncaab/meac/2016/03/15/successful-hbcu-basketball-coaches-endure-rockier-climb-hampton-meac/81820174/>
- Bannister, N. (2014, April 10). Ghosts of athletics past haunt HBCUs. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.questia.com/magazine/1G1-366082695/ghosts-of-athletics-past-haunt-hbcus>
- Berrett, T., & Slack, T. (2001). A framework for the analysis of strategic approaches employed by non-profit sport organizations in seeking corporate sponsorship. *Sport Management Review, 4*, 21–45.
- Bopp, T., & Sagas, M. (2012). An examination of African American NCAA DI-FBS football coaches: a five-year update. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport, 5*, 153–169.
- Bozeman, B., & Faye, D. (2013). Minority football coaches' diminished careers: why is the “pipeline” clogged? *Social Science Quarterly, 94*, 29-58.
- Bracey, E. (2017). The significance of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in the 21st century: Will such institutions of higher learning survive? *American Journal of Economics & Sociology, 76*, 670–696.
- Brinkmann, S. (2013). *Qualitative Interviewing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



- Brod, M., Tesler, L. E., & Christensen, T. L. (2009). Qualitative research and content validity: developing best practices based on science and experience. *Quality of Life Research*, 18, 1263–1278.
- Burnsed, B. (2013). Division II athletics spending keeping pace with institutional budget increases. *NCAA News*.
- CIAA Tournament (2018). *About the CIAA Tournament*. Retrieved from <https://www.ciaatournament.org/about>
- Camera, L. (2017). Keeping a promise to HBCUs. U.S. News. Retrieved from <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=b59e063f-9739-46b1-8b1b-1c29faad471a%40sessionmgr4009>
- Carter, J. (2017). Hampton athletics jumps to the Big South. *HBCU Digest*. Retrieved from <https://hbcudigest.com/hampton-athletics-jumps-to-the-big-south/>
- Centor, J. (2005). Students cheer games but boo fees, *NCAA News*, 42, 16–17.
- Charlton, R. (2011). The role of policy, rituals and language in shaping an academically focused culture in HBCU athletics. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 4, 120–148.
- Cheslock, J., and Knight, D. (2015). Diverging revenues, cascading expenditures, and ensuing subsidies: the unbalanced and growing financial strain of intercollegiate athletics on universities and their students. *Journal of Higher Education*, 86, 418–447.
- Chowdhury, M. (2014). Interpretivism in aiding our understanding of the contemporary social world. *Open Journal of Philosophy*, 4, 432–438.

- Cianfrone, B. A., & Zhang, J. (2013). The impact of gamer motives, consumption, and in-game advertising effectiveness: A case study of football sport video games. *International Journal of Sport Communications*, 6, 325–347.
- Cianfrone, B. A., Pitts, B. G., Zhang, J. J., Byrd, C., & Drane, D. D. (2010). A market segmentation analysis of Historically Black College and University “Classic” attendees. Presentation at the 2010 North American Society for Sport Management.
- Cianfrone, B.A., & Zhang, J. J. (2006). Differential effects of television commercials, athlete endorsements, and venue signage during a televised action sports event. *Journal of Sport Management*, 20, 322–344.
- Cianfrone, B. A., Pitts, B. G., Zhang, J. J., Byrd, C., & Drane, D. D. (2010). A market segmentation analysis of Historically Black College and University “Classic” attendees. Presentation at the 2010 North American Society for Sport Management.
- Clement, A.J., and Lidsky, A.J. (2011). The danger of history slipping away. *Planning for Higher Education*, 39, 149–158.
- Cooper, J., Hawkins, B. (2012). A place of opportunity: black male student-athletes' experiences at a historically black university. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 5, 170–188.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *Foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- D2 Social Media, 2018. Retrieved from <http://d2socialmedia.com/list/conf/>
- Davis, J. (2015, January 13). Paine College suspends football program. *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Retrieved from <http://www.ajc.com/news/local-education/paine-college-suspends-football-program/ZjZFeb7tU37Eu7BPwFw37K/>

- Davis, J. (2016, August 26). Regents approve Albany State, Darton State merger. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.
- Davis, K. (2006, April 6). In the Penalty Box. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*; 23, 24–26.
- Dees, W., Bennett, G., & Villegas, J. (2008). Measuring the effectiveness of sponsorship of an elite intercollegiate football program. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 17, 79–89.
- Dees, W., Hall, T., Tsuji, Y., & Bennett, G. (2010). Examining the effects of fan loyalty and goodwill on consumer perceptions of brands at an action sports event. *Journal of Sponsorship*, 4, 38–50.
- Dent, G. (2012, June 14). CIAA: 100 years strong and moving forward. *NCAA News*.
- departments' expenditures. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 40, 82–102.
- DII Social Media (2018). Retrieved from <http://d2socialmedia.com/list/conf/>
- Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The psychology of attitudes*. Orlando, FL, US: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Elliott, K. P. & Kellison, T. (2018). *College athletic revenue* (Research report).
- Elliott, K. P., Kellison, T. Cianfrone, B.A. (2018). Budgeting for Success: Comparing finances between historically black colleges and universities and predominantly white institutions, College Sport Research Institute, University of South Carolina, April 14, 2018.
- Farrey, T. (2017). The gentrification of college hoops. *The Undefeated*. Retrieved from <https://theundefeated.com/features/gentrification-of-ncaa-division-1-college-basketball/>
- Finch, D., O'Reilly, N. Varella, P. and Wolf, D. (2009). Return on trust: An empirical study of the role of sponsorship in stimulating consumer trust and loyalty, *Journal of Sponsorship*, 3, 61–72.
- Gaither, S. (2013, January 17). Changing Tides. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*; 29, 10–11.

- Gasman, M. (2009). Historically black colleges and universities in a time of economic crisis. *Academe*, 9, 26–28.
- Gasman, M. (2016). The changing face of historically black colleges and universities. gratitude in retailing. *Journal of Business Research*, 68, 1318-1323
- Greenlee, C. (2012). Down. Set. March. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*; 29, 22–24.
- Gwinner, K. P., & Swanson, S. R. (2003). A model of fan identification: Antecedents and sponsorship outcomes. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 17, 275-294.
- Heath, D. (2017, April 18). Savannah State plans to move athletics down to Division II. *Savannah Morning News*. Retrieved from <http://savannahnow.com/local-colleges/news/sports/2017-04-17/savannah-state-plans-move-athletics-down-division-ii>
- Hobson, W. and Rich, S. (2015, November 23). Playing in the red. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/sports/wp/2015/11/23/running-up-the-bills/?utm\\_term=.a01c5d705ae5](http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/sports/wp/2015/11/23/running-up-the-bills/?utm_term=.a01c5d705ae5)
- Hoffer, A., & Pinchin, J. (2013). The effects of revenue changes on NCAA athletic departments' expenditures. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 40, 82–102.
- Hosick, M. B. (2005). Schools looking more toward students to foot athletics bill. *NCAA News*, 42, 16–17.
- Hruby, P. (2017). The plot to disrupt the NCAA with a pay-for-play HBCU basketball league. *VICE Sports*. Retrieved from [https://sports.vice.com/en\\_us/article/59zejz/the-plot-to-disrupt-the-ncaa-with-a-pay-for-play-hbcu-basketball-league](https://sports.vice.com/en_us/article/59zejz/the-plot-to-disrupt-the-ncaa-with-a-pay-for-play-hbcu-basketball-league)
- Hsiao, Y., Hsu, Y., Chu, S., & Fang, W. (2014). Is brand awareness a marketing placebo? *International Journal of Business and Information*, 9, 29-60.

- Huang, M. (2015). The influence of relationship marketing investments on customer gratitude in retailing. *Journal of Business Research*, 68, 1318-1323.
- Hubbard, L. (1999). College aspirations among low-income African American high school students: gendered strategies for success. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 30, 363–383.
- Hums, M. A. & Chelladurai, P. (1994). Distributive justice in intercollegiate athletics: development of an instrument. *Journal of Sport Management*, 8, 190–200.
- Inabinett, M. (2012, October 2). Spring Hill College sees SIAC as right fit for move to NCAA. *Alabama Media Group*.
- Jackson, E. N., Lyons, R., & Gooden, S. C. (2001). The marketing of black college sports. *Sports Marketing Quarterly*, 10, 138-146.
- Jeffers, G. (2002, February 1). The enduring tradition of the CIAA. *Ebony Media Operations*, 57, 38–44.
- Johnson, M. (2013). Financial and related issues among historically black colleges and universities. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 6, 65–75.
- Johnson, M., & Paulsen, N. (2013). Rules of engagement: A discrete choice analysis of sponsorship decision making. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 30, 634–663.
- Jones, W., & Bell, L. (2016). Status report on HBCU athletics: participation, finances, and student experiences. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 10, 48–74.
- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57, 1–22.

- Kim, Y., Lee, H., Magnusen, M., & Kim, M. (2015). Factors influencing sponsorship effectiveness: A meta-analytic review and research synthesis. *Journal Sport Management, 29*, 408-425.
- Klein, L. L., & Diniz Pereira, B. A. (2016). The survival of interorganizational networks: a proposal based on resource dependence theory. *Revista de Administração Mackenzie, 17*, 176–200.
- Ko, K., & Kim, Y. (2014). Determinants of consumers' attitudes toward a sport sponsorship: A tale from college athletics. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing, 26*, 185–207.
- Koronios, K., Psiloutsikou, M., Kriemadis, A., & Kolovos, P. (2016). The effect of perceived motivation of sports sponsorship: Evidence from basketball fans. *International Journal of Business and Economic Sciences Applied Research, 9*, 33–45.
- Kurtz, J. (2018, November 3). Savannah State lays off 26 faculty members. *WJCL ABC*, <https://www.wjcl.com/article/savannah-state-lays-off-26-faculty-members/24598022>
- Kwak, D. H. & Kwon, Y. (2016). Can an organization's philanthropic donations encourage consumers to give? The roles of gratitude and boundary conditions. *Journal of Consumer Behavior, 15*, 348–358.
- Lavidge, R., & Steiner, G. (1961). A model for predictive measurements of advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing, 25*, 59–62.
- Li, M., & Burden, W. (2009). A survey of the sport marketing and sponsorship practices of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) playing NCAA Division I Football. Presentation at the 2009 North American Society for Sport Management.

- Logue, J. (2016). Zero-sum game. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/02/02/stillman-cuts-illustrate-financial-challenges-athletics-black-colleges>
- Matheson, V, O'Connor, D, & Herberger, J. (2012). The bottom line: Accounting for revenues and expenditures in intercollegiate athletics. *International Journal of Sport Finance*, 7, 30–45.
- Mayer, K.C, Morse, A. L., DeSchriver, T. (2017). Intercollegiate Football and luxury suites: An investigation of factors related to price. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 26, 75–86.
- McKindra, L. (2008, January 13). The HBCU experience. *NCAA News*. Retrieved from <http://ncaanewsarchive.s3.amazonaws.com/2008/association-wide/the-hbcu-experience---01-13-08-ncaa-news.html>
- Meenaghan, T. (2001). Understanding sponsorship effects. *Psychology and Marketing*, 18, 95-122.
- Menon, S., Sinha, A., & Sreekantan, B.V. (2014). *Interdisciplinary perspectives on conscience and the self*. New Delhi Heidelberg, New York: Springer.
- Morehead, C., Shapiro, S., Madden, T., Reams, L., & McEvoy, C. (2017). Athletic ticket pricing in the collegiate environment: An agenda for research.
- Morton, J. (2017). Impact of student feeds on winning in the NCAA. *Journal of Contemporary Athletics*, 11, 73–82.
- Motley, A. (2018). Funding ways to grow. *Business Officer*, 51, 14–23.
- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (2018, April 13). Retrieved from <http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/finances?division=d2>

- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (2018, April 13). Retrieved from <http://www.ncaa.org/about/where-does-money-go>
- Nocera, J. (2016, September 18). Historically black schools pay the price for a football paycheck. *The New York Times*
- O'Hallarn, B., Morehead, C. A., & Pribesh, S. (2017). Gaining S-T-E-A-M: A general athletic department social media strategy. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Sport*, 9, 39–61.
- Patrick, I. S. C., Mahony, D. F., & Petrosko, J. M. (2008). Distributive justice in intercollegiate athletics: an examination of equality, revenue production, and need. *Journal of Sport Management*, 22, 165–183.
- Popp, N., McEvoy, C., & Watanabe, N. (2017). Do college athletics marketers convert social media growth into ticket sales? *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, 18, 212–129.
- Quarterman, J. (1992). Characteristics of athletic directors at historically black colleges and universities. *Journal of Sport Management*, 6, 52–63.
- Reddick, B. (2017, May 17). SIAC leads NCAA Division II in football attendance for 13th consecutive year. Retrieved from [http://www.thesiac.com/news/2016/5/17/FBALL\\_0517160123.aspx](http://www.thesiac.com/news/2016/5/17/FBALL_0517160123.aspx)
- Robbins, G., Gilbert, J., Clifton, A. (2015). Coaching stressors in a Division II historically black university. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 8, 183–205.
- Sage, G. & Eitzen, S. (2015). *Sociology of North American Sport* (10th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. Leberman, S., & Shaw, S. (2012).
- Salancik, G. R., & Pfeffer, J. (1977). Who gets power – and how they hold on to it. *Organizational Dynamics*, 5, 3–21.



- Savage, G. (2017). An uncertain future of the nation's oldest HBCU. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 34, 21–22.
- Seymour, A. (2006). Pigskin payday: for many HBCU athletic departments, the annual football classics keep their sport programs afloat. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 23.
- Shenton, A. K. (2003). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22, 63–75.
- Shirsavar, H. A., Gilaninia, S., & Almani, A. M. (2012). Study of factors influencing positive word of mouth in the Iranian banking industry. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 11, 454-460.
- Stets, J. E. & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63, 224–237.
- Stirgus, E. (2018, February 16). Georgia's HBCUs: Augusta's Paine College in a fight for its future. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.
- Stone, G. W., Cort, K. T., & Nkonge, J. (2012). An exploratory model of the antecedent factors contributing to fan support/attendance at HBCU basketball games. *Atlantic Marketing Journal*, 1(1), 15–30.
- Stuart, R. (2017). Financial anxiety. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 34, 10–11.
- Suggs, D. (2017). Savannah State University moving back to NCAA Division II because of financial concerns. *The Undefeated*. Retrieved <https://theundefeated.com/features/savannah-state-moving-back-to-ncaa-division-ii/>
- Taylor, S., Bogdan, R., & Devalut, M. L. (2016). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Guidebook and Resource*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thamel, P. (2017). The stream teams. *Sports Illustrated*, 126, 62–68.

- The “Rules”. (2018). Retrieved from <https://retoolyourschool.com/rules/>
- Theune, F. (2016). The shrinking presence of black female student-athletes at historically black colleges and universities. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 33, 66–74.
- Toldson, I. (2017). The funding gap between historically black colleges and universities and traditionally white institutions needs to be addressed. *Journal of Negro Education*, 85, 97–99.
- Trahan, T. (2012). Hampered by small budgets and larger institutional problems, once-proud HBCU football programs are Division I competitors in name only. Would they be better off dropping down to Division II? *Vice Sports*.
- Trail, G. T., & James, J. D. (2015). *Sport Consumer Behavior* (2nd ed.). Seattle, WA: Sport Consumer Research Consultants LLC.
- Tsiotsou, R., & Alexandris, K. (2009). Delineating the outcomes of sponsorship: Sponsor image, *University Press*, 2002.
- Ulrich, D., & Barney, J. B. (1984). Perspectives in organizations: Resource dependence, efficiency, and population. *Academy of Management Review*, 9, 471-481.
- Vakratsas, D., & Ambler, T. (1999). How advertising works: What do we really know? *Journal of Marketing*, 63, 26–43.
- Visentin, M., Scarpi, D., & Pizzi, G. (2016). From assessment to purchase: A three-stage model of the marketing funnel in sponsorship activities. *Journal of Sport Management*, 30, 615–628.
- Wear, H., Heere, B., & Clopton, A. (2016). Are they wearing their pride on their sleeve? Examining the impact of team and university identification upon brand equity. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 25, 79–89.

- Weight, E., Taylor, K., & Cureen, J. (2010). Corporate motives for sport sponsorship at mid-major collegiate athletic departments. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 3, 119–130. Sponsorships.com
- Wheatley, T. (2017). Morris Brown College used to enroll 2,500 students. Today, there are 40. *Atlanta Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.atlantamagazine.com/great-reads/morris-brown-college/>
- Williams, T. (2017). SIAC signs multi-year agreement to telecast football games on ESPN3. The SIAC. Retrieved from <http://www.thesiac.com/news/2017/10/5/general-siac-signs-multi-year-agreement-to-telecast-football-games-on-espn3.aspx?path=gen>
- Williams, T. (2017). The SIAC and Aspire renew broadcast agreement. Retrieved from <http://thesiac.com/news/2017/9/21/general-the-siac-and-aspire-renew-broadcast-agreement.aspx>
- Williams, T. (2017a). SIAC signs multi-year agreement to telecast football games on ESPN3. The SIAC. Retrieved from <http://www.thesiac.com/news/2017/10/5/general-siac-signs-multi-year-agreement-to-telecast-football-games-on-espn3.aspx?path=gen>
- Williams, T. (2017b). The SIAC and Aspire renew broadcast agreement. Retrieved from <http://thesiac.com/news/2017/9/21/general-the-siac-and-aspire-renew-broadcast-agreement.aspx>
- Wolverton, B., Hallman, B., Shifflett, S., & Kambhampati, S. (2015, November 15). Sports at any cost. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from <http://projects.huffingtonpost.com/ncaa/sports-at-any-cost>

Ziff, D. (2017). 4 myths about athletic scholarships. *U.S. News*, Retrieved from <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/paying-for-college/articles/2017-10-04/4-myths-about-athletic-scholarship>

## APPENDICES

## Appendix A -Interview Guide

1. Please describe your experiences with HBCU and PWI athletic departments.
2. How do major fiscal issues facing a typical HBCU athletic department compare to PWI athletic departments?
  - a. What challenges do you see facing HBCU athletic departments?
  - b. If challenges, what challenges differ from PWI athletic departments?
  - c. Are any of these challenges similar?
  - d. Have you noticed any attempt to rectify any of these challenges?
  - e. What do you think is the best course of action to help institutions face these challenges?
  - f. What would you recommend to HBCU athletic administrators facing these challenges?
  - g. Would you give the same advice to PWI athletic administrators?
3. How do challenges HBCU athletic department heads face when setting budgets and allocating funds for revenue-generating sports, non-revenue generating sports, and operating costs compare to PWI athletic departments?
  - a. What budget challenges have you seen on HBCU campuses?
  - b. If challenges, are these challenges similar and/or different from budget challenges you have seen in PWI athletic department.
  - c. Do you notice budget differences between revenue generating and non-revenue generating sports at HBCUs?
  - d. If differences, do these same differences occur at PWI athletic departments?
  - e. How have you seen HBCUs allocate their operating costs? Do you agree/disagree with these allocations?
  - f. Do you think the way HBCUs and PWIs allocate funds are similar or different? Please explain.
  - g. What would you recommend to HBCU administrators allocating funds and setting budgets?
  - h. Would you give the same advice to PWI athletic departments?
4. How does the solicitation and generation of revenue compare between HBCUs and PWIs athletic departments?
  - a. What revenue streams have you noticed HBCU athletic departments using to generate revenue?
  - b. Are these similar/different to PWIs?
  - c. What challenges do you see preventing HBCU athletic departments from generating additional revenue?
  - d. Are these challenges similar/different to PWIs?
  - e. What would you recommend to HBCU athletic administrators trying to find additional revenue streams?
  - f. Would you recommend the same advice to PWI athletic administrators?

- g. Based on your experience working with both PWIs and HBCUs, what in your opinion is the biggest deficit regarding revenue for HBCUs? In other words, where are they missing out?

Appendix B – Phone solicitation script.

**Good morning/afternoon,**

**I am currently a Ph. D. student in the Kinesiology Department at Georgia State University. I am researching Historically Black College and University athletic programs, specifically focusing on finances. Based on your involvement working at or with an HBCU, I would like to include you in the study. I am hoping you might be willing to participate in about an hour long semi-structured interview to help me to better understand your perspectives and experiences working at or with an HBCU. I would appreciate your time and feedback.**

**If you are willing to participate in the study, we can set up the one-hour interview around your schedule. The interview can be completed over the phone or face to face. Pseudonyms will be used during the transcription process to protect your identity, and you will have the opportunity to review the transcript following the interview to confirm my correct interpretations of the phenomena you will be describing.**

## Appendix C – IRB Approval.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
Mail: P.O. Box 3999  
Atlanta, Georgia 30302-3999  
Phone: 404/413-3500  
Fax: 404/413-3504

In Person: Dahlberg Hall  
30 Courtland St, Suite 217



November 26, 2018

Principal Investigator: Timothy B Kellison

Key Personnel: Elliott, Kelly; Kellison, Timothy B; Lund, Jackie

Study Department: Kinesiology & Health

Study Title: Financial Analysis of Historically Black College and University Athletic Departments

Review Type: Expedited 6, 7

IRB Number: H19267

Reference Number: 352134

Approval Date: 11/25/2018

Expiration Date: 11/24/2019

The Georgia State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and approved the above referenced study in accordance with 45 CFR 46.111. The IRB has reviewed and approved the study and any informed consent forms, recruitment materials, and other research materials that are marked as approved in the application. The approval period is listed above. Research that has been approved by the IRB may be subject to further appropriate review and approval or disapproval by officials of the Institution.

Federal regulations require researchers to follow specific procedures in a timely manner. For the protection of all concerned, the IRB calls your attention to the following obligations that you have as Principal Investigator of this study.

1. For any changes to the study (except to protect the safety of participants), an Amendment Application must be submitted to the IRB. The Amendment Application must be reviewed and approved before any changes can take place
2. Any unanticipated/adverse events or problems occurring as a result of participation in this study must be reported immediately to the IRB using the Unanticipated/Adverse Event Form.



- Principal investigators are responsible for ensuring that informed consent is properly documented in accordance with 45 CFR 46.116.
3. A Waiver of Documentation of Consent has been approved for this study in accordance with the requirements set forth in 45 CFR 46.117 c.
  4. For any research that is conducted beyond the approval period, a Renewal Application must be submitted at least 30 days prior to the expiration date. The Renewal Application must be approved by the IRB before the expiration date else automatic termination of this study will occur. If the study expires, all research activities associated with the study must cease and a new application must be approved before any work can continue.
  5. When the study is completed, a Study Closure Report must be submitted to the IRB.

All of the above referenced forms are available online at <http://protocol.gsu.edu>. Please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Research Integrity (404-413-3500) if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Chang".

Catherine Chang, IRB Member

**Federal Wide Assurance Number: 00000129**