

# ROLE CONFLICTS EXPERIENCED BY MALE COLLEGE VARSITY FOOTBALL PLAYERS

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, a great deal of media attention has focused upon various negative aspects of intercollegiate athletics. The sudden death of Len Bias due to cocaine use, the charges brought against three University of Virginia football players accused of conspiring to distribute cocaine, and the implementation of mandatory drug testing programs for college athletes have raised questions about the relationship between athletic participation and the use of drugs (Lamar, 1986).

The possible incompatibility of athletic participation and education also have received considerable attention. The low percentage of male athletes in revenue producing sports who fail to complete academic degrees as well as the number declared ineligible for competition due to their inability to meet the academic standards set by the NCAA's proposition 48 have been widely publicized (Lamar, 1986). As a result of proposition 48, which requires that a freshman athlete have an overall high school grade point average of 2.00 on a 4.00 scale in 11 academic courses, including three

english, two mathematics, two social science, and two natural or physical science courses, with an additional combined score of 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or a 15 on the American College Test (ACT), over 400 freshman athletes have been declared ineligible to compete in collegiate athletics (Farrell, 1986).

These large numbers support the assumptions of some that many of the nation's top athletes may be categorized as high-risk students or those who generally cope poorly in traditional educational settings (Chickering, 1974; Cross, 1971). It appears at the college level that the notion that involvement in sport enhances academic performance has been replaced with the view that trying to succeed in the classroom and on athletic fields may be an impossible task for many student athletes (Thomas, 1968). The prevalence of stories about academically unsuccessful athletes in newspapers, magazines and trade publications suggests that student athletes may have difficulty coping with the varying pressures associated with competing in sport and academic roles (Edwards, 1985; Stein & Hoffman, 1978; Rhatigan, 1984). It appears that the type of pressure athletes face may vary with level of competition, type of sport, and academic eligibility classification. Sack & Thiel, in a study of college basketball players found that basketball players in NCAA Division I programs faced more difficulty than athletes that competed in NCAA Division II programs.

Harry Edwards, professor and sport sociologist at the University of California at Berkeley, believes that race is an important issue in the role conflict of athletes. He believes that black athletes may face more adversity than their white counterparts. From the outset, he notes, black student athletes must deal with three different issues. First, they must cope with the traditional "dumb jock" image faced by all student athletes. Second, the black student athlete must cope with the racist belief held by some that blacks are athletically superior. Third, there is the stereotype of the "dumb negro" (Edwards, 1984).

Beyond college basketball, no similar data based research exist on other sport teams. It seemed appropriate, therefore, to explore the extent and source of experienced role conflict of college football players. Does role conflict which is defined as a person's inability to fulfill competing expectations of differing roles over an extended period of time (Thomas, 1968), vary by race and eligibility classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) of student athletes at a large (22,000) midwestern NCAA Division I university?

## Sample

Seventy-two male football players participated in this study. The sub-



jects ranged in age from 18 to 24 years with an average age of 21. All of the student-athletes were American citizens. Thirty-seven percent of the subjects were black and 62% were white. Thirty-three percent (N = 24) of the subjects were from the state of Iowa, while 76 percent (N = 48) were from a variety of other states (Table 1). Athletes were enrolled as students in various colleges within the university curriculum. The college of business had the greater number of students enrolled (22%) and general studies (4%) and agriculture (4%) the least (Table 2). Data collected regarding sport characteristics showed that a majority (76%) were on full scholarship, while 24 percent received no scholarships. The data showed that none of the athletes received partial scholarships. Closer analysis of sport characteristics showed that approximately 80 percent of the respondents had received some type of high school athletic honor. As might be expected, as the level of the honor increased, the percentage of athletes receiving a particular honor decreased (Table 3).

**Instrumentation**

The instrument employed in this study was designed by the researcher and based upon interviews with student athletes, a review of literature, and personal experiences in sport (Sack & Thiel, 1985; Rhatigan, 1984; Edwards, 1984). The questionnaire contained 67 items designed to measure male student athletes experienced role conflict in sport. The questions reflected such things as missing class and exams to compete, the

**Table 1**  
**Football player's state of origin**

| Home State | N  | %   |
|------------|----|-----|
| Iowa       | 24 | 33  |
| Illinois   | 11 | 15  |
| Michigan   | 4  | 5.6 |
| Nebraska   | 6  | 8.3 |
| California | 6  | 8.3 |
| Florida    | 4  | 5.6 |
| Minnesota  | 3  | 4.2 |
| Kansas     | 3  | 4.2 |
| Wisconsin  | 2  | 2.8 |
| Missouri   | 3  | 4.2 |
| New Jersey | 2  | 2.8 |
| Ohio       | 2  | 2.8 |

|              |    |     |
|--------------|----|-----|
| Indiana      | 1  | 1.4 |
| Pennsylvania | 1  | 1.4 |
| Total        | 72 | 100 |

**Table 2**  
**Football player's academic majors**

| Academic college       | N  | %   |
|------------------------|----|-----|
| Business               | 16 | 22  |
| Science and Humanities | 12 | 17  |
| Education              | 10 | 14  |
| Engineering            | 11 | 15  |
| Home Economics         | 6  | 08  |
| Art and Design         | 4  | 06  |
| Agriculture            | 3  | 04  |
| General Studies        | 3  | 04  |
| Undeclared             | 3  | 04  |
| Total                  | 68 | 94% |

**Table 3**  
**Football player's high school honors**

| Honor                         | N  | %  |
|-------------------------------|----|----|
| All Conference                | 56 | 78 |
| All State                     | 43 | 59 |
| Played in state all star game | 23 | 32 |
| All American                  | 12 | 17 |

limited amount of time to study or socialize with the general student population, coping with the high visibility associated with being an athlete, and coping with negative stereotypes of athletes.

In addition, 32 items that collected demographic information such as age, race, academic classification, eligibility classification, college major, athletic and academic honors etc., were included. The students responded to the items designed to measure experienced role conflict by recording a value from 1 to 6 (1 = no problem at all, 6 = very much of a problem) indicating the extent to which the various statements reflected conflict experienced by the student athletes. The athletes responded to the demographic items by circling the answer that best reflected their answer to the questions asked.

### Procedure

At the conclusion of the 1986 football season a special meeting for the football players at a large midwestern university was called, and the instrument used for the collecting of the data was administered. The athletes were told that the purpose of the study was to examine the extent to which male college varsity football players experienced role conflict. They were assured that their participation was voluntary and that the responses would be kept strictly confidential. Athletes willingness to participate in the study was assumed by their completion of the questionnaire. The testing lasted approximately 45 minutes. Those athletes not at the meeting were contacted individually and their questionnaires returned to the researcher via campus mail.

### Analysis

Initially, means and standard deviations were computed on all items of the questionnaire. Next, the 67 role conflict items were treated by computing a factor analysis using principal factoring with iteration method and varimax rotation. This was done to assess the underlying interrelationships that might exist between the items. Having reviewed the factor analysis, factor labels were determined and assigned on the basis of the predominant items within each group or common characteristics shared by each item within a group (Table 4).

Analysis of the items composing the role conflict scale resulted in the identification of seven major factors accounting for 57 percent of the variance (Table 4). Factor 1 was labeled *Race*, since it was composed of eight items which pertained to race factors associated with sport involvement that loaded heavily with that factor. Factor 2 was labeled *Demand/expectation pressure* and contained a group of eleven items that related to

Table 4  
Varimax rotated factor matrix of role conflict variables

| Factor Variables                                       | Factor | 1    | 2    | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7 |
|--|--------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| <b>Race</b>  |        |      |      |     |     |     |     |   |
| Limited number of minority students                    | .87*   | .15  | .19  | .16 | .12 | .05 | .10 |   |
| Limited number of minority coaches                     | .85*   | .07  | .11  | .20 | .03 | .00 | .14 |   |
| Limited number of black faculty                        | .84*   | .07  | .17  | .15 | .06 | .09 | .22 |   |
| Living in a predominantly white city/community         | .81*   | .19  | .01  | .19 | .20 | .00 | .01 |   |
| Living in a predominantly white University environment | .74*   | .26  | .07  | .24 | .21 | .03 | .15 |   |
| Limited number of black academic advisors              | .71*   | .18  | .03  | .22 | .15 | .04 | .10 |   |
| Lack of women of same race to date                     | .64*   | .13  | .21  | .08 | .02 | .33 | .11 |   |
| Dating women of different race                         | .47*   | .03  | .10  | .01 | .25 | .14 | .01 |   |
| <b>Demand/Expectation Pressure</b>                     |        |      |      |     |     |     |     |   |
| Meeting expectations of head coach                     | .12    | .71* | .14  | .37 | .12 | .19 | .03 |   |
| Dealing with philosophy of position coach              | .37    | .69* | .16  | .07 | .00 | .19 | .06 |   |
| Meeting demands of position coach                      | .05    | .69* | .24  | .12 | .05 | .31 | .11 |   |
| Meeting demands of head coach                          | .22    | .68* | .25  | .23 | .06 | .20 | .19 |   |
| Meeting expectations of friends                        | .01    | .63* | .06  | .17 | .26 | .36 | .00 |   |
| Meeting expectations of position coach                 | .12    | .57* | .19  | .01 | .01 | .53 | .04 |   |
| Dealing with philosophy of head coach                  | .31    | .57* | .22  | .21 | .06 | .11 | .15 |   |
| Copying with major injuries                            | .10    | .52* | .40  | .07 | .12 | .07 | .29 |   |
| Living in the dormitory                                | .17    | .50* | .17  | .17 | .03 | .06 | .03 |   |
| Not enough money to meet financial needs               | .22    | .49* | .51  | .09 | .12 | .17 | .01 |   |
| Missing classes for practice                           | .08    | .45* | .38  | .08 | .43 | .05 | .14 |   |
| <b>Time</b>  |        |      |      |     |     |     |     |   |
| Attending classes when tired from practice             | .13    | .14  | .70* | .03 | .02 | .18 | .04 |   |
| Obtaining satisfactory grades                          | .05    | .24  | .67* | .27 | .18 | .00 | .03 |   |
| Studying when tired from practice                      | .19    | .16  | .65* | .25 | .12 | .00 | .03 |   |
| Copying with minor injuries                            | .01    | .39  | .54* | .10 | .30 | .21 | .02 |   |
| Not enough time at study table                         | .24    | .01  | .54* | .05 | .24 | .25 | .03 |   |
| Too much time for onfield practice                     | .11    | .24  | .52* | .31 | .12 | .17 | .01 |   |
| Limited opportunity for dating                         | .03    | .10  | .51* | .10 | .21 | .43 | .16 |   |

\*Variables loading on that factor.



Table 4 (Continued)

| Factor Variables  | Factor | 1   | 2   | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    |
|---|--------|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|------|
| Too much time at study table                              |        | .25 | .05 | .48* | .22  | .15  | .07  | .02  |
| Meeting satisfactory progress requirements                |        | .10 | .29 | .44* | .26  | .36  | .05  | .11  |
| <b>Psychological Pressure</b>                             |        |     |     |      |      |      |      |      |
| Copying with negative attitudes of instructors/professors |        | .22 | .09 | .08  | .76* | .03  | .06  | .07  |
| Dealing with assumptions that most athletes use drugs     |        | .24 | .17 | .01  | .72* | .11  | .08  | .06  |
| Coping with negative stereotypes                          |        | .20 | .09 | .06  | .65* | .10  | .30  | .11  |
| Choosing between studying and sport related activities    |        | .01 | .08 | .34  | .64* | .15  | .03  | .14  |
| Coping with the "dumb jock" image                         |        | .27 | .17 | .21  | .60* | .12  | .08  | .12  |
| Attending class after road trip                           |        | .13 | .22 | .26  | .58* | .17  | .04  | .26  |
| Coping with high visibility of athletes                   |        | .07 | .26 | .14  | .54* | .41  | .11  | .26  |
| Meeting expectations of fans                              |        | .08 | .29 | .15  | .52* | .29  | .12  | .05  |
| No time to meet other students                            |        | .16 | .39 | .27  | .48* | .07  | .03  | .09  |
| <b>Short Improvement Needs</b>                            |        |     |     |      |      |      |      |      |
| Not enough time for onfield practice                      |        | .20 | .10 | .04  | .01  | .79* | .01  | .06  |
| Not enough time in position technique meetings            |        | .24 | .03 | .16  | .01  | .77* | .20  | .01  |
| Not enough time reviewing films                           |        | .09 | .11 | .10  | .20  | .59* | .19  | .20  |
| Not enough time spent traveling with team                 |        | .05 | .03 | .10  | .10  | .56* | .17  | .20  |
| Too much conditioning w/ training                         |        | .39 | .00 | .24  | .09  | .43* | .27  | .05  |
| <b>Family</b>   |        |     |     |      |      |      |      |      |
| Meeting expectation of parents                            |        | .09 | .30 | .10  | .00  | .24  | .66* | .23  |
| Meeting expectations of home boosters                     |        | .08 | .10 | .07  | .22  | .06  | .65* | .26  |
| Meeting expectations of Univ. academic advisor            |        | .33 | .22 | .22  | .12  | .29  | .53* | .05  |
| Meeting demands of parents                                |        | .04 | .46 | .11  | .03  | .38  | .47* | .00  |
| <b>Competition</b>  |        |     |     |      |      |      |      |      |
| Missing classes for travel                                |        | .17 | .04 | .07  | .09  | .18  | .04  | .66* |
| Negative feelings after a loss                            |        | .09 | .03 | .06  | .29  | .10  | .38  | .60* |
| Missing exams due to competition                          |        | .24 | .04 | .14  | .45  | .05  | .06  | .52* |
| Attending college in home state                           |        | .38 | .03 | .07  | .23  | .18  | .12  | .44* |

|   |       |      |     |     |     |     |      |
|---|-------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Trying to find classes that don't interfere with practice times | .03   | .34  | .34 | .24 | .01 | .01 | .43* |
| Playing with pain   | .10   | .16  | .07 | .15 | .14 | .26 | .40* |
| Percent of Variance   | 29.8  | 16.7 | 5.7 | 5.0 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 3.2  |
| Total Variance  | 57.3% |      |     |     |     |     |      |

pressures that student athletes might feel as a result of expectancies from others. Factor 3, *Time*, contained a cluster of nine items associated with difficulty student athletes face due to time constraints. Factor 4, *Psychological Pressure*, was loaded heavily with nine items that might handicap student athletes psychologically. Factor 5, *Sport Improvement Needs*, consisted of five items that enhanced sport success. Factor 6, *Family*, consisted of four items which pertained to pressures that student athletes may feel as the result of expectancies from various family members, friends or acquaintances of the athlete. Factor 7, *Competition*, contained a cluster of six items that deal with problems that athletes may face as a result of competing in sports.

Data were analyzed using the statistical package of the social sciences (SPSSX, 1985). The demographic information was described on the basis of simple frequencies, means, standard deviations and percentages. In order to examine the relationship between the two independent variables (race and eligibility classification) and the seven interpretable conflict factors a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted.

## Results

The intent of this study was to examine the nature and extent of male student athlete experienced role conflict associated with participation in varsity football. In addition, the possible interrelationship between race, eligibility classification, and experienced conflict as measured by the seven interpretable conflict variables (competition, psychological pressure, time, demand pressure, family, race and sport improvement needs) also was studied.

Initially, means and standard deviations for the total sample on the seven identified factors was computed. This analysis showed by inspection of the mean scores, that athletes experienced the greatest amount of conflict with *psychological pressure*, *competition*, and *time*. Athletes were the least bothered by the variables *race* and *sport improvement needs* (Table 5).

## MANOVA Analyses

In order to determine whether a relationship existed between experienced role conflict, race and eligibility classification, a MANOVA was con-

ducted. The MANOVA yielded significant main effect differences on the Hotelling-Lawley trace in terms of race ( $F(7,46) = 10.24, p < .01$ ) and eligibility classification ( $F(21,134) = 2.43, p < .01$ ). No significant interaction effects were found.

**Table 5**  
**Means and standard deviations for conflict variables**

| Variable                | M    | SD   |
|-------------------------|------|------|
| Competition             | 3.13 | 1.05 |
| Psychological Pressure  | 3.05 | 1.13 |
| Time                    | 3.04 | 1.10 |
| Demand Pressure         | 2.79 | 1.19 |
| Family                  | 2.18 | 1.15 |
| Racial                  | 2.09 | 1.37 |
| Sport Improvement Needs | 1.95 | .94  |

### Race

To determine on which of the factors the groups differed significantly, univariate analyses of variance were conducted separately for each dependent variable. The univariate analysis by race showed that black athletes differed significantly from white athletes on all of the factors (demand pressure, time, psychological pressure, competition) except *sport improvement needs* and *family* (Table 6). Black student athletes assigned higher scores than white athletes to all of the factors.

### Eligibility classification

The univariate analysis of role conflict by eligibility classification showed that the athletes differed significantly on the factors time and *competition*. No significant differences for eligibility classification were found on the factors *race*, *demand pressure*, *psychological pressure*, *sport improvement needs* or *family* (Table 7).

A one-way analysis of variance was run on eligibility classification to determine how football players in various eligibility classifications differed on each factor. The Follow-up test showed that sophomores recorded significantly higher scores than seniors on the factor time. In general, freshmen and sophomores tended to score time higher as an area that caused conflict than did juniors and seniors (Table 7).

Analysis of the factor competition showed that seniors differed significantly from freshmen, scoring items associated with competition significantly higher than freshmen. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors were somewhat similar in their response patterns. Interestingly, the values assigned the factor competition seemed to increase as the class rank of the football players increased (Table 7).

### Discussion

In general for this sample it appeared that football players did not experience a great deal of role conflict. Analysis of the mean scores for individual items on the role conflict scale showed that only a few fell above the average value of three. It is theorized that this may be due in part to the fact that student athletes who participated in football at this university were provided with many support services. These services may help mediate such things as time, academic, and psychological pressures. In addition, the football program at this university does not have a strong historical tradition of winning. This lack of a winning tradition may serve to reduce the pressure for participants. The literature has suggested that players who compete in programs that are labeled "football powerhouses" appear to suffer conflict associated with trying to meet the expectations of coaches, fans and media to a greater extent than athletes who participate in programs that lack such a tradition (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1983; Sack & Thiel, 1985; Ervin, Saunders, & Gillis, 1984).

An analysis of the data showed that factors related to competition, psychological pressure and time produced the greatest amount of conflict for football players. Having to cope with problems that are a result of competing in sports, such as missing classes and exams, the psychological rigors surrounding sport participants such as the "dumb jock" image, as well as the time constraints placed upon these athletes due to sport related activities, seemed to be the source of more conflict for football players than any of the other identified areas.

The finding that psychological pressure was the second most problematic area was not surprising. This factor was composed of items that may handicap student athletes psychologically, such as coping with negative attitudes of instructors/professors, dealing with assumptions that most athletes use drugs, copying with the "dumb jock" image, and the high visibility associated with being an athlete. These findings suggest that there is a strong need for coaches, professors, athletic and university administrators to take a closer look at the psychological pressures faced by student athletes. The amount of money and popularity brought to institutions by revenue-producing sports through gate receipts, television



**Table 6**  
**Football player's F tests for conflict factors by race**

| Variable                | Black | White | F     | P     |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                         | M     | M     |       |       |
| Racial                  | 3.61  | 2.36  | 56.79 | .01** |
| Demand Pressure         | 3.42  | 2.79  | 8.71  | .01** |
| Time                    | 3.52  | 2.99  | 8.52  | .01** |
| Psychological Pressure  | 3.62  | 2.91  | 5.48  | .02*  |
| Sport Improvement Needs | 2.20  | 2.03  | .02   | .90   |
| Family                  | 2.35  | 2.22  | .26   | .61   |
| Competition             | 3.84  | 3.30  | 4.25  | .04*  |

\*Significant at .05 level.

\*\*Significant at .01 level.

**Table 7**  
**Football player's F tests for conflict factors by eligibility classification**

| Variable                | Classification |      |       |        | F    | P     |
|-------------------------|----------------|------|-------|--------|------|-------|
|                         | Fresh          | Soph | Junio | Senior |      |       |
|                         | M              | M    | M     | M      |      |       |
| Racial                  | 3.01           | 2.75 | 2.16  | 2.69   | .46  | .70   |
| Demand Pressure         | 2.79           | 3.68 | 2.58  | 2.68   | 2.29 | .09   |
| Time                    | 3.30           | 3.50 | 2.80  | 2.73   | 2.87 | .05*  |
| Psychological Pressure  | 3.01           | 3.26 | 2.49  | 3.47   | .86  | .47   |
| Sport Improvement Needs | 2.26           | 2.25 | 1.96  | 1.72   | 1.25 | .30   |
| Family                  | 2.36           | 2.59 | 2.06  | 1.88   | 1.33 | .28   |
| Competition             | 3.07           | 3.52 | 3.64  | 4.08   | 5.04 | .01** |

\*Significant at .05 level.

\*\*Significant at .01 level.

revenues, and media coverage appear to be increasing each year, thus increasing the importance of student athletes role to the university. The results of this study suggest that as the role of the college athlete increases in

importance, psychological problems faced by these individuals may also rise. It appears important to identify and provide support mechanisms to aid student athletes in dealing with such difficulties.

It was not surprising that time related variables ranked in the top three factors associated with experienced role conflict. Time constraints have been identified in earlier research as one of the main variables that may cause conflict for athletes (Edwards, 1985; Underwood, 1980; Sack & Thiel, 1985). The football players who participated in this study spent an estimated six to eight hours per day in sport-related activities during their season of competition. These activities included such things as the studying of game film, attending position technique meetings, weight training/conditioning, onfield practice, as well as the treatment and care of injuries. Coupled with these demands, the athletes were expected by coaches, parents, peers and professors/instructors to attend classes regularly, and be successful in academics as well.

### Race

The finding that role conflict varied significantly by race was expected and supports the findings of previous researchers (Coakley, 1982; Zeiglar, 1972; Spivey & Jones, 1975; Edwards, 1983). The data showed that black football players experienced a significantly greater amount of conflict than white athletes on five of the seven identified factors (race, demand pressure, time, competition, psychological pressure). Although the differences were not significant, black football players also were found to experience more conflict than their white counterparts on the factors family and sport improvement needs.

These findings suggest that black student athletes who attend predominantly white institutions may have a much more difficult time coping with the demands of sports and academics than white athletes. The high scores assigned by black athletes to the factor race suggests that blacks may have a series of race-specific problems that should be addressed.

If institutions are going to continue to recruit and in some instances virtually depend upon the sport skills of black athletes for the success of their programs, the specific needs of black athletes need to be analyzed. Increasing the number of black support staff personnel would seem logical. The results of this study imply that an increase in black coaches, university, and athletic staff personnel might assist in remediating the amount of conflict felt by black student athletes.

### Eligibility Classification

When role conflict was examined as a function of eligibility classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior), it was found that athletes dif-



ferred significantly only in terms of the factors time and competition. It was found that freshmen and sophomores (underclassmen) experienced more conflict in relation to time variables than juniors and seniors (upperclassmen). These differences may be due to experience. That is, it might be expected that the longer an athlete participates in a program, the more accustomed he/she becomes to coping with the pressure and the more skilled at time management. Another justification for this difference may be that as a class of athletes progress, those individuals who cannot adjust to the demands of sport competition may discontinue their sport careers. This theory finds support in the data which contained a higher percentage of freshmen and sophomore athletes (63%) than junior and senior athletes (38%). Student athletes who can't make the necessary adjustments to be successful in sports and academics due to competition or psychological pressure as well as time constraints may have a tendency to give up participation.

The significant difference between freshmen and seniors on the factor competition suggest that upperclassmen feel more athlete role conflict related to competition demands than underclassmen. For underclassmen, particularly freshmen, athlete role conflict may not be as great because they don't feel as much pressure to perform well and live up to the expectations of others (fans, teammates, media, coaches, etc.) In addition, only a limited number of freshmen actually get the opportunity to travel and compete at the varsity level. As a result, they may not feel as bad about the loss of a game or a poor team performance in part because they are not as integral a part of the process as upperclassmen. This lack of experienced pressure may be important to consider with proposed recommendations for extracting eligibility from freshman athletes. In addition underclassmen don't experience as many injuries from games, and may not set as high a value on competitive factors thereby also reducing experienced pressure associated with competition.

The consistent rise in role conflict related to competition in terms of eligibility classification suggests that the longer an individual competes in varsity football, the greater the amount of difficulty factors associated with competition to develop. As student athletes progress in terms of eligibility, there may be a shift in the area that produces the greatest amount of role conflict. Upperclassmen were found to experience more conflict than underclassmen in terms of competition while underclassmen appeared to experience more conflict associated with time variables than upperclassmen.

The results of this study imply the need to examine more directly, specific areas of student-athlete role conflict. Apparently, missing classes due to sport related activities, meeting the demands and expectations of

coaches, parents, professors, and dealing with time demands associated with sport participation may lead to psychological stress and conflict. If the NCAA in general, and individual institutions in particular, are to meet their objectives of providing clear strong and practical policies for athletic teams, as well as clean, well run, programs that uphold the integrity and credibility of institutions, they can ill afford to ignore the nature and extent of the pressure, stress, and strain that today's college athlete face.

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