

Public Abstract

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Title: College Adjustment of Black/African American Student-Athletes at Predominately White Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities

A dearth of research studies has examined the psychosocial experiences of African American college student-athletes. By comparison, numerous studies have examined the adjustment process of African American students at predominately White institutions (PWIs). The literature shows African Americans have a difficult time adjusting at PWIs due to numerous factors, including general stressors (e.g. financial concerns) and race-related stressors (e.g. racial insensitivity by professors) (2004; Prillerman, Myers, & Smedley, 1989; Sedlacek, 1999). In regards to college athletes, research indicates that the structure of the campus environment challenges student-athletes' capacity to fit in and adhere to expectations regardless of their racial background (Cogan & Petrie, 1996; Ridinger & Pastore, 2000). Nonetheless, it is critical to understand how the campus environment at-large and within the sports context influence African American student-athletes' adjustment.

In the current study latent profile analysis (LPA) was employed to better understand the adjustment of African American student-athletes based on perceived social support, perceived campus racial climate, team cohesion, and life events. Results indicated three profile groups of African American student-athletes emerged and can be used to predict college adjustment concerns and campus setting (predominately White institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities). Implications are discussed to offer athletic directors, coaches, and practitioners a means to capitalize on identifying facilitators of healthy adjustment, ensuring that the overall campus, and more specifically the sport environment, provides a safe, encouraging place for the success of African American student-athletes.