

THE CHECK-IN TABLE: THE TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO
COLLEGE IN DIVISION I TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETES

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Dedication

I dedicate the thesis to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Nothing I do is possible without You. To my Mom, Dr. Helen Uzamere, words cannot express how much you mean to me. Thank you for teaching me how to work and how to love. To Ese, I cannot wait to see all you accomplish, kid! Thank you for making me better. To Grandma, Dr. Patricia Fadaka-Igbinovia, thank you for your continued support. To my extended family, I love you all. To my CFES family, thank you allowing me to find my passion. Working with the CFES scholars gave me focus for where I want to be in life. To Coach Brown, thank you giving me a chance to compete as a Division I athlete. This thesis would not be possible but for the opportunity you afforded me. To Saida Burns-Moore, thank you for allowing me to work with you. You were a huge inspiration for this thesis topic. To everyone that I have coached, I hope I have been more than a coach to you. To my UMBC, Iona Prep, Greenwich Academy, Springfield College, and church family, I am grateful for all your love and support. To anyone that I guide to and through the transition from high school to college, this is for you!

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**The Check-in Table: Transition from High School to College
in Division I Track and Field Athletes**

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the transition from high school to college in Division I track and field athletes. Understanding the transition experience of Division I track and field athletes can enable student-athletes to learn strategies to cope with the transition and enable family members, peers, coaches, administrators to support the student-athlete. Four participants reflected on the first 6 months of the first year of college.

Interviews were conducted to determine factors affecting the transition period. The interview guide was developed using the Four S's (situation, self, support, strategy) of Schlossberg's Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 1981).

Factors of the transition included: physical expectations, "a dime a dozen", skills learned from the support system, and balancing a student-athlete lifestyle. After the interview, participants completed the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS; Brewer & Cornelius, 2001).

Exposure to and emulation of the transition experience during the pre-transition phase can benefit student-athletes transitioning into to college.

**The Check-in Table: Transition from High
School to College in Division I Track and Field Athletes**

People encounter a variety of transitions throughout life, such as starting a new job or starting at a new school. A common transition for high school students is graduating and entering college. Transition is defined as any event, or nonevent, that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles (Schlossberg, 1984). An event or nonevent is defined by the individual experiencing the transition, therefore perception plays a key role in any transition (Schlossberg, 1981). In order to understand the significance that a transition has for a particular individual, the type, context, and impact of the transition must be considered.

Both positive and negative transitions can produce stress. Multiple transitions happening simultaneously can make coping with the transitions difficult (Goodman et al., 2006). When supporting high school student-athletes who wish to transition into college athletics, efforts can be made to prepare high school student-athletes for the type, context, and impact of a transition (Goodman et al., 2006). Specifically, supporting the student-athletes with how to cope with the stress of multiple transitions during the

transition period, first 6 months of college, through Schlossberg's Transition Theory can be particularly beneficial (STT; Schlossberg, 1981). STT identified the three types of transitions, the stages of moving through a transition, and how to cope with a transition.

A transition is classified three ways: (a) anticipated, (b) unanticipated, and (c) nonevents (Schlossberg, 1984). Anticipated transitions are transitions expected to occur such as graduation from high school. High school seniors anticipating to play a sport in college would potentially anticipate the transition from high school to college. Unanticipated transitions are not expected to occur such as a career ending athletic injury. Nonevents are expected occurrences that do not occur. Nonevents can be broken into four categories: personal (related to aspirations), ripple (felt due to nonevents of someone else), resultant (caused by an event), and delayed (anticipated event that may still occur; Schlossberg, 1984). Nonevents are events more possible to occur than probable. An example of a nonevent is a student-athlete who hopes to compete in the Olympic Games.

The three phases within a transition include: (a) moving-in, (b) moving-through, and (c) moving-out.

"Moving-in" consists of the individual familiarizing themselves with the expectations of the transition the individual begins (Schlossberg, 1984). "Moving-through" consists of the individual trying to survive the transition. During the moving-out phase, the discomfort experienced in the moving through stage can become grief. The individual going through transition must identify the stage of the transition being experienced; otherwise the transition does not exist as a transition. Schlossberg identifies four factors directly related to an individual coping with a transition: (a) situation, (b) self, (c) support, and (d) strategies (Evans et al., 1998).

"Situation" considers what triggers the transition, the timing, the control the individual has in the transition, the change in role, how long the transition will occur, any previous and similar transition experiences, concurrent stress, and an assessment of who or what is responsible for the transition (Evans et al., 1998). "Self" considers two main categories, personal and demographic characteristics, and psychological resources. Personal and demographic characteristics affect how an individual might view life components such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender, age, stage of life, state of

health. Psychological resources include ego development, outlook on life, commitment, and values (Evans et al., 1998). "Support" considers four social support systems: intimate relationships, family units, networks of friends and institutions and communities. "Strategies" or coping responses are divided into three categories: strategies that modify the situation, strategies that control the meaning of the problem, and strategies that aid in managing the stress in the aftermath (Evans et al., 1998).

Tracey and Corlett (1995) investigated the transition experiences in first year track and field athletes in Canada. The 16 participants engaged in three personal in-depth interviews and two group interviews to understand the academic, athletic, and social aspects of the participants transition experience (Tracey & Corlett, 1995). Over the course of the study, several themes emerged from the transition experience, most notably being overwhelmed by the volume of work in the classroom and on the track, feeling alone, and balancing the freedom and responsibility of increased independence (Tracey & Corlett, 1995).

Cummins and O'Boyle (2015) researched psychosocial factors of the transition from college athletes to post-college athletes in Division I athletes. Semi-structured

interviews were utilized to analyze a retrospective group that experienced the transition away from Division-I basketball and a prospective group who would soon experience the transition. Five categories of themes were created from the nine participant interviews. Participants who successfully transitioned from the retrospective group exhibited a balanced college experience, were open to alternative activity, planned responsibly before the transition, and had a positive social support.

1. Coaches, administrators, family members, and peers contributed to the transition experience from high school to college in student-athletes. Understanding the perspective of the student-athlete transition experience is important to effectively meet the needs of student-athletes (Saxe et al., 2017). Research has investigated particular elements of the transition experiences in student-athletes such as identity foreclosure and career transition (Beamon, 2012), transition out of sport (Cummins & O'Boyle, 2015), and transition into the Canadian University system in track and field athletes (Tracey & Corlett, 1995); however, a gap in the literature exists regarding the transition experience in Division I track and field athletes. Gaining insight of the experiences of collegiate track and field

student-athletes will enable future student-athletes to better prepare for the transition experience and support literature of non-revenue generating collegiate sports. Family members, coaches, administrators, and peers of student-athletes can learn strategies to support a student-athlete coping with the transition into college. The purpose of the research was to understand the transition experience of Division I track and field athletes from high school to college. How did experiences as a high school athlete prepare student-athletes for college athletics? What were your experiences during the transition from high school to college?

Method

The purpose of the study was to examine the transition of high school track and field athletes to Division I collegiate competition. The design of the study was a multiple case study design (Merriam, 2009). Participants completed the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001) to support the multiple case study.

Participants

Participants were recruited from one of the nine schools in a Division I competitive athletic conference on the east coast of the United States. The following study

was designed as a multiple case study investigation. Participants all competed for the same track and field team and for the same coach. The participants included one first year, one second year, one third year, and one fourth year student-athletes. Participants were gathered through purposeful sampling. Participants signed a consent form (Appendix C) to participate. Return of the consent form indicated intent to participate in the study. Pseudonyms were used in place of participant's real names.

Portraits of the Participants

Nicole

Nicole is a first-year student-athlete on the track and field team. Nicole is from New York. She competes in the middle-distance events. Nicole is the second youngest of four daughters. Nicole's parents both competed as Division I track and field athletes. Both of her older sisters competed at the Division I level. Nicole enjoyed a successful high school track and field experience, competing at the state and national level consistently. Nicole believes the academic rigor is much heavier than that of her sisters, creating a harder transition experience. Nicole is a Computer Science major and chose to attend the specific college based on the academic

reputation in conjunction with its Division I status.

Nicole's AIMS score was 42/49.

Rachel

Rachel is a second-year student-athlete on the track and field team. Rachel is from town three hours from the college and competes in the middle-distance events. Rachel has an older sister that competed in track and field at the Division III level. Rachel has been competing in track and field since elementary school, competing for a club.

Rachel cited her mother as guiding her academically and her father as guiding her athletically. Rachel's high school coaches implemented aspects of college training into her high school training. In high school, Rachel had goals of competing in the Olympic Games, but believes her time has passed. Rachel is a graphic design major. She cites her parents and coaches as major influencers. Rachel's AIMS score was 41/49.

Randy

Randy is a third-year student-athlete on the track and field team. He competes in the hurdle events and has been successful at the collegiate level. He is a conference champion and school record holder. He is from a small town and earned statewide recognition for his athletic success

in high school. Randy was recruited for both football and track, but he did not take up any of the offers, citing concussions for football and the uncertainty of pursuing track in college for track and field. Randy cited his mother and high school track and field coach as major influences to choosing to compete in college for track and field. Randy's athletic identity score was 36/49.

James

James is a fourth-year student-athlete on the track and field team. He competes in the high jump and triple jump events but has been hampered by injury throughout his college years. James moved from the Congo to the USA in elementary school with his four siblings and mother. James is the third child of the four siblings. He cites his upbringing as teaching him to be self-sufficient. He is the second member of his family to pursue college sports. James' brother briefly played college football but did not finish playing. James competed in track and field for his last two years of high school. During James' last year, he was recruited moderately after winning a state championship in the high jump. James cites his coach and friends as major influencers. James' AIMS score was 42/49.

Instrumentation

Athletic identity was measured through the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS; Brewer & Cornelius, 2001). A 7-item, 7-point Likert-type scale, the AIMS items include; "I have many goals related to sport" and "Sport is the most important part of my life." Multidimensional models of the AIMS were evaluated through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) techniques with data from 2,856 individuals who completed the AIMS over 10 years (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001). Model E was the selected model after the CFA method was implemented. Model E is a 7-item version that uses three first factor elements: Social Identity, Exclusivity, and Negative Affectivity. Men scored substantially higher than women, suggesting male athletes tend to have higher athletic identity than females. Fit indices suggested that the Model E AIMS is a valid and reliable way to assess athletic identity. Athletic identity scores were utilized to create a profile for the participants of the study.

Procedure

After receiving approval from the Springfield College Institutional Review Board (IRB) the researcher contacted a Division I athletic director to secure permission to

discuss the intent of the research project with a track and field coach (Appendix D).

Once the head coach provided his/her consent, the researcher requested the participation of all the athletes for the study by meeting with the team. In this meeting, the researcher detailed the intent to interview one athlete from the first, second, third, and fourth years of participation. Once the student-athletes agreed to participate, the student-athletes were given an informed consent to read and sign. After signing the consent form, the researcher scheduled times to conduct interviews with the participants. Interviews lasted between 22-58 minutes.

The interview guide was semi-structured and questions were derived from Schlossberg's Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 1981). Interviews were held in a public space on the campus of the university. Questions were related to pre-, during, and post-transition of both the individual and the environment the participant experienced. At the completion of the interview, the researcher administered the AIMS to the participant.

Data was collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews (Appendix F) with one athlete from each year of collegiate sport participation. Interviews were designed

to examine the experiences of athletes with an explicit focus on the constructs within athletic identity. The AIMS was implemented to support data collected from the semi-structured interviews. The researcher spoke with the head coach and explained that the purpose of the project was to better understand the transition to collegiate track and field from high school competition across the four years of participation in collegiate athletics (Appendix G).

Trustworthiness

The researcher ensured trustworthiness in the data collection and analysis process. The strategies of respondent validation, peer debriefing, and audit trail were used to create trustworthiness among the data. Member checking allowed the participants to verify statements made in the interviews. During the interview, the researcher asked participants to clarify the experience if the participants did not specify when the experience in discussion occurred. All information pertinent to the transition experience was considered. All other information not related to the transition experience was omitted, if the information did not provide context. The researcher repeated responses to the participants for understanding. Feedback from the findings increased

trustworthiness in the data collected. Member checking minimized the possibility of misinterpreting of anything the participants say, and identifying researcher biases and misunderstandings (Maxwell, 2005). No feedback was received from member checking with the participants.

Peer debriefing was used to challenge the creation and analysis of themes made by the researcher. Peer debriefing is a measure of trustworthiness undertaken to incorporate a different researcher into the research. Peer debriefing is important in creating trustworthiness due to the potential shared athletic and personal experiences of the research with the participants. The research is important to understand the perspectives of the athletes involved in the study, uncover the complexity of human behavior in a contextual framework, and present a holistic interpretation of what is happening (Merriam, 2009). The researcher provided unmarked verbatim transcriptions of the interviews to the peer and cross-referenced the initial analysis with that of the peer. The peer debrief session lasted approximately two hours.

Finally, an audit trail was incorporated by the researcher to store a journal explaining the processes needed to reach the desired results. The researcher

collected a running record of reflections, questions, decisions with regard to problems, issues, ideas encountered in collecting data, and interaction with the data as the researcher engaged in analysis and interpretation (Merriam, 2009).

Data Analyses

Formal data analysis began with the interviews being transcribed verbatim. Through multiple readings of the transcriptions, the researcher utilized a constant comparison method, continuously comparing discrete data to one another. Similarly, the researcher created open and axial codes to analyze the transcriptions and construct themes (Merriam, 2009). Themes were supported by data in the transcriptions and through the use of the three factors in the AIMS (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001). At the end of each interview, the AIMS was administered to each participant to support data collected through interviews. No statistical analysis was computed for AIMS. The researcher summed the points from the AIMS to reach total score for each participant.

Results

The focus of the qualitative research investigation results was to examine the retrospective transition experiences of Division I track and field athletes. The themes that were developed to answer the research questions were: (a) Same Sport, Different Game, and (b) Life Skills. The themes developed captured the essence of the research

question, "How did experiences as a high school student-athlete prepare you for college track and field?"

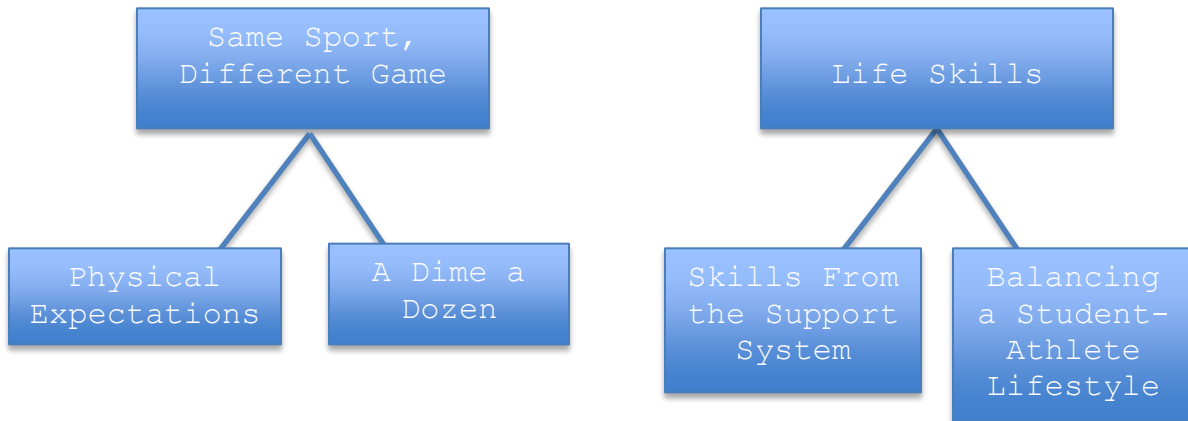


Figure 1. Flowchart of themes

Same Sport, Different Game

Barring a few changes in rules, the sport of track and field is the same from high school to college, however the commitment is completely different. Prior success balancing academic and athletic success in high school was not an indicator of successfully transitioning into college as a track and field student-athlete. The subthemes of Same Sport, Different Game are (a) physical expectations and (b) "a dime a dozen". As well as subthemes, the author will describe portraits of each participant.

Nicole	Rachel
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First year - Middle distance runner - Parents and older sisters were Division I track and field athletes - 42/49 on AIMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Second year - Older sister was a Division III track and field athlete - Cites parents and coaches as support system - 41/49 on AIMS
<p>Randy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Third year - 4x State Champion in High School - Mother and high school coach encouraged him to compete in college - 36/49 on AIMS 	<p>James</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fourth year High jumper Cites peers and high school coaches as support system - 42/49 on AIMS

Figure 2. Profile of participants

Physical expectations. The first difference observed between high school and college track was the physical expectations. The first 6 months of the college year consists mainly of preseason training (September to November), early season competitions (December to January), and championship meets (February). Upon entering college, the track and field experience in high school may not

adequately translate to college track and field. Adjusting to a new environment can be difficult but is made more difficult when the participants were changing technique. As James described it,

My first six months were actually pretty terrible ... pretty bad. I remember ... walking to class one time and someone was like "Yo like smile like, life isn't bad" ... Yeah it was rough just a transition because everything was completely different... Everything changed for me ... as far as like even my event goes ... I jumped 6'6" off of like five steps ... And then they got me out of like no man's land like having to run from far away to jump. So already what I've been doing for the past two years feels like unnatural. All the support from like my teammates from high school is like gone... If ... your identity was like solely track and you started having more difficulties than you had like in your experience...you're almost questioning like "why am I even like having these ... issues?" So ... nothing that you're used to ... that('s) supposed to be like a rock is still like supporting you mentally, at least.

Track and field athletes such as James may undergo changes in technique in the transition period. James was highlighting how regardless of prior preparation and knowledge of physical training, student-athletes may still not be fully prepared for physical expectations in the college transition, especially in the preseason block of the year. Outside of a change in technique, another component to the physical expectations was the intensity of the training. Rachel reflects on her experiences,

...the training ... was the most difficult. Like some stuff I had done before ... I've done a little bit of two-a-days toward the end of my school career because my high school coach was saying I might have that. So, he started incorporating two-a-day's over the summer. So, I was kind of used to that coming here especially for the summer training but just the type of workouts were mentally tough and physically tough.

Rachel detailed the physical demands of her early training experiences in the college transition period. Even with what she described as a demanding high school experience she still thought the physical demands were significantly more difficult in her college transition experience. She went on,

...you spend a lot more time with it in college than high school like for example practice ... is a little longer and then there's like the lifting aspect of that. Like usually in high school we practiced for like maybe hour or so and maybe we did like a lift once like every two weeks or something like that. But having to do lift ... twice a week ... And then having to have meetings with your coaches and stuff like that and having to have your classes work around that schedule it's pretty... It's pretty rough.

The transition from high school to college revealed the physical preparations undertaken as high school student-athletes would not suffice at the college level. Nicole describes the difference in training from high school to college.

...but I don't know, there wasn't so much individualism that there is now that I feel I have to do that that and this to be great and felt... it was more like I could lack on that in high school and then and I'll pick it back up there you know what I mean? But now it's just like, if you want to be great, you have to do great things like to lead up to that ... If I didn't want to do something in high school, I really wouldn't

do it and I would still be like, right there you know?

But now I see the results are so much heavier if I

don't do certain things that are expected of me to do.

Randy provided a varying perspective and approached the physical demands different from the other participants.

It was... A lot. Definitely a lot ... It was as much as

I expected. I knew the workouts were hard. There's ...

a lot of conditioning... I hadn't even seen a hurdle

or anything until six months ... But um it was you know

a lot of conditioning. The older guys were obviously

in the front leading the pack. I'm sitting here

trying to keep up and ... every day I'm like "Man, do I

really got what it takes to be here?" You know.

Because at the end of the day, you're there for the

same reason you know... for the same thing. So, it was

... definitely a bit intimidating but it just ... like it

forced me to sort of step up and try to ... be up with

them and try to catch up and it was motivating, too,

at the same time. So it's a little intimidating but

definitely a lot of a lot of motivating, and it was

fun.

Randy seemed to think about the physical demands from a

different perspective, stating he expected the training to

be difficult. He noted that, "they were hard", but he explained that the training motivated him.

Overall, the athletes explained the physical experiences during the transition to college from high school differed between each participant, but the experiences were consistency regarding the increased physical expectations. Specifically, the athletes explained alterations to technique to the intensity of the training, the physical expectations were expected or unexpected. Another part of the "same sport, different game" theme was the athletes explaining a sense of no longer feeling special, discussed under the next subtheme.

A dime a dozen. As Division I athletes, student-athletes are in part recruited because of the performance achieved at the high school level and the potential for future performance. The participants were all successful track and field athletes with high levels of performance, at least at the statewide level. Randy reflected on his college transition experience, making a name as an athlete in a small town.

So my second year in [high school] and made to the highest level that I knew at that time ... So people started to really know about me and started following

just like my hurdle career or track career ... Then junior year I think it was my breakout year because I end up winning ... the 110 hurdles and I think the 300 meters (hurdles) as well um and that was a pretty big for me it was ... pretty big especially as I said coming from a small school, small town ... it made it, you know newspapers and stuff like that so there was a lot of hype surrounded by it.

Randy detailed how his performance in high school was recognized at the top level. In his words, "there was a lot of hype," and people knew about him and his performance in high school track and field.

Nicole was not challenged by her regional competition. She detailed the competitive difference in her town versus state and national competition.

...it was easy ... it wasn't easy to be the best but ... our Island Champs and City Champs ... it wasn't as hard ... When we got to Nationals and States, it got difficult but like meets here and there it was like a fun thing like give me the baton, let's go ... I was really really close to my teammates so I expected just like we were always winning all the time and it was just like a blast.

Rachel added a similar experience competing in New Jersey.

I had an amazing freshman year, sophomore year was kind of rough for me. I came back junior year, senior year and I ended on a pretty high note. It was a pretty good part but it was overall it was successful." James added "...indoor state is when I was like oh, like this is my sport like I know ... I belong here and what not. I ended up winning states my second year doing track ... I got approached by all these college coaches at that meet.

Overall, the student-athletes shared similar thoughts about the level of achievement in high school track and field. Student-athletes spoke about competition and the performances achieved with details that captured beliefs that reinforced that the participants were top-level performers. An athlete's "status" or social recognition was related with high levels of achievement.

During the transition period, however, participants joined teammates who have performed at the same or higher levels than the participants. Rachel discussed the shift of social status during her first 6 months on campus.

"...it was kind of hard to adjust because I was going from like being the top tier at my high school. But now with girls who are doing the same running the same exact times was me. So I was like 'OK well not that special anymore you know'". James' transition from winning championships with a few other teammates in high school, to joining a team of capable athletes made his transition difficult to navigate.

...we were winning championships in high school with three or four people. And like the rest of the team is there but like 'Who are the four people that are best on the team?' It's like these guys. So now it's like those four people, there's like 40 of them ... on the team. So you're not necessarily as special.

The student-athletes shared a similar experience in the college transition. The student-athletes explained that the status as a top-level track and field performer was challenged.

Based on the descriptions of the student-athletes, the physical expectations and loss of social status created difficulties in the college transition experience. Reflecting on student-athletes high school experience, the participants provided a glimpse into what was described as

a lack of full comprehension of what to expect in the transition to college. Track and field may have been the "same sport" in the college transition experience, but track and field in college is a "different game." The greater physical expectations and loss of social status contributed to the "different game" dimension and created difficulties in the college transition for the student-athletes. This first theme provided a definition of what the student-athletes experienced during the college transition. The second theme addresses how the student-athletes navigated some of the difficulties.

Transfer of Skills

From the interviews, another major theme derived from the four student-athletes was transfer of skills that were learned in the student-athletes high school years. The student-athletes explained throughout high school, they were exposed to life skills through relationships developed from support networks, and how some of the skills helped the student-athletes through the college transition process. The skills that emerged from the interviews were (a) skills from the support system and (b) balancing a student-athlete lifestyle.

Skills from the support system

The participants spoke of the support system before the transition into college. The support system in the high school experiences consisted of family, coaches, and/or peers. The high school support system did not directly serve the student-athletes during the transition to college. The student-athletes did, however, apply skills and advice learned from the high school support system to ease the college transition. Rachel spoke of the excitement of applying what she learned from her support system and embraced being on her own:

My main positives are starting new and being out there on my own and taking what I was taught and learned with my hand being held in high school and trying to go out and do it without my hand being held in college, so I feel like that is the main positive because I'm just applying the stuff that I learned" (Rachel).

The influence of coaches on the success of the participants during the pre-transition was evident through the interviews. High school coaches can better prepare the student-athletes to transition into collegiate training by

providing advice during the pre-transition. Rachel spoke of advice her coach provided her when she is running,

Um, we were at practice. He's always like... pushing us really hard. And I think we had like repeat 200's and they were like super-fast and I was telling him 'My gosh, I'm tired'. And we would always like ask like 'How many more do we have left?' And he said 'You keep asking how many more you have left, I'm going keep adding more. You can't think when you run. You just got to run. Just do it. Because when you start thinking everything just starts tumbling. So, from him I learned that. Don't think just... just do it. Just rely like, just trust yourself and just go like you... you can get through it.

Confidence can fluctuate when the student-athlete is adapting to the physical demands of college track and field. Instilling a mindset to benefit the individual through the rigors of training can help the student-athlete during the transition period. Rachel learned the quality of training in track and field comes from the ability to trust one's own ability and have confidence one can complete the training, no matter the difficulty.

Randy found ease communicating with individuals on campus in the transition because of his upbringing with his mother,

When I was younger she always used to make me go up and talk to ... people ... Let's say my barber for example. If I had a ... stray hair right here I would go back to her, like, 'Eh, I don't know if I really like it.' She would say 'All right go back and tell him.' I'm like, 'Ah, I don't know. I don't want to tell him, let's just go, let's just go it's fine. I like it', you know ... She's like, 'No, go back and tell him.' So she really instilled in me like you know I shouldn't be afraid to necessarily to talk to anyone ... because there's no reason to be afraid. Well it's obviously a weapon or something like that but you know it's just the way you present yourself. If you come across respectfully, if you come across in a certain way and you should have no problem talking to anyone ... it doesn't matter what background they come from ... what they're into anime versus if they're into sports ... you can find some kind of connection and can still hold that conversation ... you should never be afraid to just speak.

Randy's mother encouraged Randy to learn how to speak to people, no matter the situation. Learning how to communicate can be important when entering a new environment in case one needs to access resources in the transition from high school to college.

The student-athletes' support system can instill skills that may be beneficial before the transition but can have adverse effects during the transition. Understanding the skills learned may not be beneficial and can enable the student-athlete to self-reflect and re-evaluate the use of what was applied. During his high school track and field experience, James leaned heavily on his coach for support, which led to James adopting his coach's persona,

We were just completely polar opposite. Like I would be like calm and like just trying to figure things out and everything ... he was like the best motivation person like I've ever met ... he'll motivate you to do whatever with positive and negative reinforcement. So we pretty much learned high jump up together. But he was pushing me to do more and be more so. He was loud. He was excessive like I said like he was screaming at ... coaches and stuff at track meets ... "my boy is going to beat you" I'm like I wasn't sure if I

could clear opening (height) yet like so I had to match his energy.

James carried his coach's persona to college, which did not help James' transition experience. After self-reflecting on how the mindset he adopted from his coach did not help him, James knew he had to change,

...maybe ... I adopted too much of his characteristics because when I got to campus, I thought like I was the man... Can't ... nobody tell me anything.... Give me give me a season and I'm going to, you know, do X Y and Z. Yeah. My mindset was that like I'm the best like period ... end of discussion (James).

That's probably not a healthy ... approach to anything because you... can't take that much energy into everything ... I like talking in symbols but um like the fire that last like the longest will be ... a medium sized controllable flame that you can like keep fanning... or else you're going to end up like failing and like feeling frustrated and everything ... as soon as something ... goes wrong. ... if you're going to be better than them (competitors) you need to understand your weaknesses and improve those as opposed to just thinking you don't have any".

The support system the student-athlete has access to prior to the transition likely shapes part of the transition experience. The student-athlete draws on the experience from the pre-transition and applies what is learned during the transition experience. The advice the student-athlete applied during the transition is either helpful to transitioning or not. Advice to mentally prepare the student-athlete for training and learning how to communicate are skills that can benefit the transition. Self-reflecting on the skills learned that hindered the transition experience can benefit the student-athlete.

Balancing a student-athlete lifestyle.

College athletes constantly strive to balance academic, athletic, and social roles (Adler & Adler, 1991). Most cannot successfully balance all three roles without proper guidance and assistance (Gaston-Gayles, 2003). A successful balance of academic, athletic, and social roles in high school can provide a student-athlete an idea of balancing the same roles in college. For the participants, the 'skill' of balancing the demands of a student-athlete during the transition period is drawn from knowledge of the demands of a college track and field student-athlete, and planning and support from on campus resources.

As a student-athlete, one must perform academically and fulfill athletic-related duties. In addition to being a student-athlete, participants were members of the college community and had the option of joining clubs on campus and engaging in extra-curricular activities. In high school, all participants engaged in extra-curricular activities in some form outside of track and field while taking classes. Nicole and James experienced similar involvement outside of track and to Rachel,

Honestly it was amazing. Everything was a breeze. I mean classes were classes of course somewhat difficult but it was a lot a lot easier (than college). Like I feel like I was more social back then in high school though than I am here now. But overall it was pretty it was pretty easy. I enjoyed it ... I won class president my senior year ... I was in multiple clubs ... I was and I was in ... some sort of art club and I was in the Varsity Club which was like an athlete type of thing ... And I was in the National Honors Society, so I was always like within the community and stuff like that".

Balancing academics "wasn't that bad" for Nicole as she participated in student government, volunteer

activities and competing in track and field. James supported Nicole's experience,

It was good, I liked being busy. I was a pretty social person in high school so always having different groups to go to, it was a good experience for me. Being able to go from the football team to track to SGA (Student Government Association) to the National Black Engineers society to all these different organizations ... I liked having the time because, if I didn't, there wouldn't be much else to do besides getting in trouble.

Randy knew his limits, prioritizing school and sports then scheduling extra-curricular activities,

It's always been part of my life. I've always done you know rec sports and school and my identity almost relies on it being an athlete ... a student-athlete I should say. Obviously ... it was harder than just being a regular student, but it was just something normal that is like I habit, you know? It's just something you do naturally ... I knew that I had priorities in sports and I had priorities to school and either way I had to get it done. I didn't really spend time focusing on other extracurricular activities. At one

point I was part of our dance crew, I dropped that for sports. There are a lot of volunteering and community work, I dropped a lot of that for sports and school because I didn't have time. You know I didn't have the time or energy to commit to everything. So I had to pick certain things and those were the two that I really focused on towards the end of my high school career.

Randy further explained,

I was one of those people that couldn't handle doing multiple things. I can only focus on so many things and that was just me, you know... I ... mentored this little kid that lives in Baltimore. And that ... was again easier for me to handle just because I didn't feel it as if it was a job or a duty ... You know it was just something that I felt I had to do. So, I made time for it. I made that effort and I was able to do it all together.

Balancing the student-athlete lifestyle during the transition period can be aided by gaining understanding the demands of a student-athlete. Rachel, Nicole, and Randy gained perceived understanding of balancing a student-athlete lifestyle in different manners. Randy reflected on

being unsure of his ability to balance a student-athlete lifestyle after he took a college class while still in high school:

...I knew the commitment that it took in high school, and I can only ... assume that it was going to be even more in college because I've taken college classes. I knew they were harder. And I'm thinking to myself 'Yeah, if I can barely handle this, how am I going to handle sports on top of that?' You know.

Even with knowledge of the academic commitment needed to be a student athlete, Randy did not prioritize academics as he had as a high school student-athlete:

So academically, it wasn't the best. It was OK ... right above average. Socially... A little bit more outgoing than I should have been I guess. But I met a lot of new people and it was exciting for me you know a new place new school ... I talked to people a lot. I rarely stayed in my dorm. I was very active, you know?

Rachel gained understanding of the demands of a student-athlete through her older sister, who competed in track and field at the Division III level;

...I would talk to her over the phone, she would tell me about um, like how they had to like get up early for practice and then go to class right after ... sometimes, they would have two-a-days. Two practices in one day. And I was just like "Well I don't know if I could do that. It's kind of tiring... takes up all my time but..."

Nicole also had sisters to learn from to better navigate the transition experience. Both of her older sisters competed at the Division I level, but what she understood was different from her transition experience,

"Ok so I have two older sisters ... both them went to different universities but they excelled ... I was like "OK" like this is ... what we do. We did this all throughout high school this is easy. I come here (college), and I'm like 'wait, this is really hard ... Granted they had majors less difficult than mine but yeah it's really hard ... and it's really hard to stay focused. And you think from them ... It made it seem that it was all easy and like just get your work done. But it's not easy ... and like sometimes you're alone ... you feel like you're going through it alone. And because at the end of the day it's all what you put in

... Every emotion you feel and everything you're ... going through affects your ... Results. So yeah, I didn't realize that".

James echoed the experience of struggling to adjust to the student-athlete lifestyle,

Yeah, there was definitely more challenging classes. Back in high school would just be like you're coasting through the classes whether you're trying or not. Like you're probably going to pass. So like now there's like the option of failing a class now ... the option of being overwhelmed by your classes. There's that... responsibility in the sense that... track is taking up more of your day ... I've got two-a-days and I still have to manage like my coursework. Joining organizations, because if you don't join organizations then your only friends are ... the ones that you train with ... all day every day and you can't see the same faces ... all day like that ... Like anything you could think of ... is adding to the stress.

Student-athletes are just as much students on a college campus as any other college student on campus. Student-athletes are required to perform academically in addition to fulfilling athletic requirements. Engaging

socially and in extra-curricular activities is an option for student-athletes, just as for non-athletic peers. The success of balancing a student-athlete lifestyle may depend on utilizing the support system available to the student-athlete. Taking college classes while in high school and speaking to a support that understands how to balance a student-athlete lifestyle can help Division I track and field athlete's transition from high school to college. Utilizing specific strategies and resources helped the participants balance a student-athlete lifestyle.

Adjusting to the academic demands of the student-athlete transition experience was easier for Rachel because of the advisors she had on campus,

That (academic transition) was easier than I thought because of the um advisers like advising really helps me like having that athletic adviser as well as my major advisor really helped because I could go in there sit down and talk to the athletic advisor about stuff that I couldn't talk about with my academic advisor because they just one and done, they got so many other kids so having the individual focus helped me a lot.

Nicole shared a similar experience adjusting to the academics, utilizing academic and athletic advisors, Um well like our athletic mentor Carissa. She's like really awesome. I think I had her every week like last semester (first semester) but then ... I had the option to not have her again this semester, but I chose to still have her like every other week, because I thought like just talking to her and sitting there and just like laying out 'OK this is what I had so far. This is what I've been doing. This is what I got on this'. It's just... you say in your head but you don't really like internalize it. So like speaking to her and knowing that someone's right there that wants you to do the same thing is just it was a really great like um relationship. As well as like my CWIT (Center for Women in Technology) mentor ... I feel like she's more of like um networking side of things like start internships right away and stuff like that. And like we have networking events and just like things like that it's great to... It's great to have people expect so much of you. And I don't know. It's really helpful. It makes you expect more of yourself, so...

When asked about specific strategies to stay structured, Nicole spoke about effective planning she utilized during the transition period,

Like make a schedule like a daily schedule or like even weekly and monthly. Like that's something I really never really did. I just like went with the flow like what's happening at the time and setting reminders and things like that and like make sure if I'd like missing something or like don't understand something to get on top of it right away. And like also with like track like injuries and stuff like that get on it right away. And I feel like we're asking you for help. Like I don't know that just me. So like when I would like feel like tension and like my body for track I would feel weird going to the trainers. But now I'm starting to do that more and like it's really effective. So yeah.

Specific strategies can guide student-athletes balancing the academic, athletic and social roles of being a student-athlete. Balancing academics, athletics and extra-curricular activities in high school does not necessarily translate to balancing academic, athletics and social roles in college. Utilizing specific strategies can better

acclimatize student-athletes transition to college from high school.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to understand the transition experiences of Division I track and field athletes from high school to college. Four participants gave retrospective accounts of the pre-, during, and post-transition. Themes that emerged from the interviews were (a) Same sport, different game, and (b) Transfer of skills.

The first theme describes the experiences of the athletes' transitions into college academics and athletics. The sport of track and field is the same from high school to college barring minor rule changes, but the physical expectations are increased. Changing techniques, attending the weight room, and increased conditioning are all required training and are all part of the physical expectations encountered during the transition period to college. Additionally, participants experienced a shift in social status during the transition period joining a team of student-athletes as talented or more talented than the participants.

The second theme describes student-athletes' skills utilized to navigate the college transition. Balancing

academics, athletics, and social roles (Adler & Adler, 1991) is an experience the participants engaged in while in high school, but the experiences did not necessarily prepare the student-athletes for balancing the same roles in college. The skills applied during the transition were resilience, communication, and self-reflection. Learning the track and field experiences from family members and taking college classes were strategies used to understand the demands of a college student-athlete. Planning and working with on campus resources were practical strategies for the participants to navigate the transition. The interview guide was developed from the four factors Schlossberg (1984) directly related to an individual coping with a transition: (a) situation, (b) self, (c) support, and d) strategies (Schlossberg, 1984).

Situation

The characteristics of a 'situation' include the role change, previous experience, and concurrent stress (Goodman et al., 2006). All four participants entered the same situation -- the first six months as Division I student-athletes -- in different ways. A common role change the participants discussed was not feeling as a special after successful athletic experiences. The role change from

notable athlete to a dime a dozen was part of the theme "same sport, different game". Previous experiences James and Rachel spoke about included winning championships with a few members on the track and field team in high school and being "top tier" to not feeling as special when transitioned into college. The confidence and performance in college sport of the student-athlete is important in identifying the role change the participants experienced. Student-athletes are recruited partly because of the performance attained in high school. If the student-athlete has not been challenged or been around other top talent, the student-athlete may lack the confidence to perform or train effectively subsequently affecting the performance in competition. College coaches should be aware of the transition issues student-athletes may encounter joining a team of talented student-athletes and provide necessary support.

Similarly to James and Rachel, Nicole and Randy were accomplished athletes at the high school level, but previous experiences did not help the transition period. Randy understood that college track and field would be more difficult than high school, but still spoke about the difficulty of the training and trying to keep up. Nicole

enjoyed success athletically in high school without dedicating herself to training in the same manner she believes she needed to in the transition period. James reflected on the concurrent stress of relearning a new technique, balancing the potential of failing a class, joining organizations on campus all while not having the support of the individuals he cited as supporting him during the pre-transition (coach and peers).

Self

In Schlossberg's Transition Theory (STT) the characteristics of "self" include personal characteristics, psychological resources include ego development, outlook on life, commitment, and values (Goodman et al., 2006). Randy spoke of prioritizing school and track and field during the pre-transition because he knew "was one of those people that couldn't handle doing multiple things." Knowing yourself can help an individual entering a transition better navigate the transition. The participants had varying ideas of "self." James and Rachel felt less "special" because of the level of talent on the team James and Rachel joined. This shift in social identity is a part of the three first order factors of the AIMS (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001).

James also spoke about entering the transition, believing he would be athletically successful in his first year, saying he was "the man". James grew frustrated when he did not perform well during his first year, after which he realized how his ego affected his performance. Athletes in positions similar to James can prepare for the transition to college by realizing that success in high school track and field does not guarantee success in college track and field. Situation and self are very similar in how the student-athlete can better transition into college Division I athletics. The importance of knowing the student-athlete may face challenges in the transition suggests the student-athlete should properly preparation for the transition before entering it. The ego, values, and outlook the student-athletes has can ease or hinder the transition of the student-athlete. Personal and demographic characteristics affect how an individual might view life components such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender, age, stage of life, and state of health. Psychological resources include ego development, outlook on life, commitment, and values (Goodman et al, 2006).

Support

Characteristics of "support" include the types of support, function of the support system and options amongst the support system (Goodman et al., 2006). Participants cited family, coaches, and/or peers as sources of support during the pre-transition, but the role of the support changed during the transition period. James spoke about navigating his concurrent stress with the support of his coaches, or teammates from high school. Nicole said she felt alone at times while navigating the transition period as she was separated from her family. During the transition period, Rachel and Nicole reflected positively about the support of academic and athletic advisors on campus.

The function of the support system varied. Rachel and Nicole spoke about academic and athletic advisors helping them organize elements of the transition. Nicole had options of support in the form of her siblings, parents, dorm peers, CWIT mentor, friends, Carissa, her athletic advisor, and her academic advisor. Different options in her support system were available in different capacities throughout the transition.

The support a student-athlete receives from the support system can positively impact the transition.

Support on campus is important for the student-athlete because the support system the student-athlete had before transitioning to college may change once the student-athlete transitions. Participants in the study valued the support of the family members and the efforts the family members made to support the participants. Family members should continue supporting the student-athlete however possible. Participants cited high school coaches as instrumental in the pre-transition. Administrators and college coaches can establish relationships with the student-athlete to be a support in the transition period.

Strategy

Lastly, the characteristics of "strategies" include how the individual seeks information and the direct actions the individual uses (Goodman et. al, 2006). Rachel and Nicole used effective scheduling to navigate the transition. Both have older sisters who competed in college track and field and both asked the siblings about the track and field experiences to seek information. Rachel and Nicole learned about the physical demands of the college track and field, but Rachel was not adequately prepared. Rachel and Nicole used academic and athletic advisors as direct ways to navigate the transition. Nicole continued

to utilize her athletic advisor post transition, even though such advisor meetings were no longer mandated for first year student-athletes. Additionally, Nicole also utilized a planner to fulfill her academic responsibilities.

Transitioning into a new environment may require integration into a new community. When integrating into a new community, communicating may be necessary to learn about others. Communication is a strategy Randy used during the transition to meet friends and acclimatize to campus. Support systems can instill necessary skills in student-athletes to navigate aspects of the transition. Without sufficient communication skills, athletes similar to Randy may struggle to find the necessary support from family members, peers, coaches, or administrators during the transition.

The findings of the study relate to the transition experiences of first year track and field athletes, investigated by Tracey and Corlett (1995). The first of the three personal in-depth interviews and two group interviews produce numerous categories including: the experience of major transition, expectations of university, feelings of loneliness and isolation independence, and the

need for time management skills. Participants believed the transition into college made them "return to the bottom of the totem pole" because of the stature as first years (Tracey & Corlett, 1995). The same feeling relates to the findings in the current study in which James and Rachel both expressed not feeling "special" after entering a team of athletes who were just as good, if not better than James and Rachel were during the transition period.

Participants in the study by Tracey and Corlett (1995) typically reported, "I just want to be part of this team" when asked about the athletic expectations. James, had a contrary viewpoint about his transition experience. James entered the transition believing he would achieve great performances during his first year "Give me... a season and I'm going to, you know, do X Y and Z. Yeah. My mindset was that like I'm the best like period ... end of discussion." The perception may be varied because of the Canadian Inter-university Athletic Union (CIAU) does not offer athletic scholarships like the NCAA does. NCAA Division I athletes have the opportunity to earn athletic scholarships (Tracey & Corlett, 1995). Randy who was arguably the most accomplished athlete in the pool of student-athletes researched, seemed to be the most like the

participants in the study by Tracey and Corlett (1995).

Randy, who had taken college classes while still in high school, also took the liberty to learn from some Division 1 athletes who previously attended his high school. Taking college classes and learning about the rigors of competing at the collegiate level, almost prevented Randy from pursuing college track and field. Randy's mother and coach encouraged him to do otherwise.

Participants in the study by Tracey and Corlett (1995) mentioned "meeting lots of people" and finding something to do. Randy said he was "A little bit more outgoing than I should have been" and rarely stayed in his dorm because he "was very active." Participants felt alone and isolated at times during the transition and had to balance the freedom and responsibility of increased independence (Tracey & Corlett, 1995). No one embodied this finding more than Nicole. Nicole stated she felt lonely multiple times throughout the interview. On several occasions during the researcher's interview with Nicole, she stated how lonely she felt. For example, in responding to her understanding of the demands of a college track and field athlete before entering college, Nicole said that she did not fully understand and felt "like you're going through it alone"

and "every emotion you feel and everything you're ... going through affects your ... Results."

The theme "Same sport, different game" related to the surprise that participants expressed with Tracey and Corlett to the volume of academic work and volume of training. One participant stated "It is like a new game, with new rules; a lot more time and effort has to be put into it - a lot more than I was expecting." Again, Nicole spoke of the reality she faced entering the transition from how she operated prior to the transition. In high school, Nicole would "lack" on certain aspects of training if she did not want to do it. In the transition, she saw the transition "much heavier" if she did not complete certain tasks expected of her.

Limitations

In conducting the research, there are elements of the study out of the control of the researcher. A possible limitation of the study may be personal events the participants have experienced pre-, during, or post-transitioning into college. The interview guide was developed asking questions of self, situation, support and strategy. Any part of the questioning may trigger negative experiences for the participants. Participants could have

misremembered aspects of any part of the transition period, which could alter the results and data analysis by the researcher.

Another possible limitation of the study would be participant desires to quit the team for athletic or non-athletic reasons. Stepping away from sport may affect how the student-athletes reflect on the transition experience. A desire to quit may cause the participants to disengage during the interview process.

Lastly, a possible limitation could be the utilization of video and audio to collect data. Participants authorized permission to be recorded but may have felt nervous and restricted responses to the questions. Participants did not indicate nervousness and the interviewer encouraged the participants throughout the interview with statements such as "you are doing great."

Future Research

For future considerations, first year track and field student-athletes would benefit from learning about Schlossberg's Transition Theory and the four S's to better self-evaluate and navigate the transition period of the college. First year student-athlete should be aware of the environment the student-athletes are entering into and the

resources available (situation), who the student-athletes are (self), tactics the student-athletes will utilize to balance the demands of a student-athlete (strategy), identify who is in the support system is (support) and what is specific duties are expected of them as student-athletes (Schlossberg, 1984). Boyer (1987) reported students in high school receive information about college from parents, friends, counselors, and teachers, in that order of importance. The information received forms the expectations for the student (Boyer, 1987). Completely emulating the student-athlete experience would be difficult, but experiencing a dimension of the student-athlete experience can potentially better prepare the student-athlete for the transition than dialogue from parents, friends, counselors, teachers, coaches, or administrators.

Tracey and Corlett (1995) stated that the "first year could not be completely prepared for ahead of time," but elements of the transition can be emulated during the pre-transition period. The environment, resources and support of college is unique to each institution but preparing the student-athletes for the necessary training to be encountered, familiarizing the student-athlete with more

responsibility while dealing with more isolation, creating environments of multiple talented athletes for the student-athlete to compete in are all strategies to emulate part of the college experience. Engaging in necessary training can require the coach to increase the volume of training for the student-athlete to adjust to and not get injured. Familiarizing the student-athlete with more responsibility in a more isolated state could entail sending the student-athlete away from home during summers for camps to learn and build new experiences away from the support system. Creating environments of multiple talented athletes for the student-athlete to compete in can include having the student-athlete attend more rigorous competitions or train with other athletes.

A consideration for the colleges that the student-athletes attend is to create events that center the student-athletes to cultivate relationships with coaches and peers for the first-year student-athletes. The participants in the study cited support in the form of peers, coaches, and/or family. The support was primarily for the pre-transition. The student-athletes did not have that same support after transition to college. Family cannot be duplicated but connecting transitioning student-

athletes to coaches and teammates can serve as support as the student-athlete "moves-in," "moves-through," and "moves-out" of the transition period (Schlossberg, 1984).

Student-athletes entering the transition from high school to college can benefit from college-like training to be properly conditioned and to be surrounded by other good athletes to prepare for the physical expectations of college Division I track and field. Skills student-athletes can learn before entering help the transition period, such as learning how to stay focused during training and how to communicate. Finally, learning aspects of the student-athlete lifestyle, such as taking a college class in the pre-transition can benefit student-athletes transitioning into college.

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Appendix A

RESEARCH DESIGN

Athletics are an avenue to earn a merit-based scholarship to higher education. When preparing to transition into college athletics from high school athletics, certain student-athletes may be more prepared for the responsibilities of a student-athlete than other based on the experience the student had in high school (Tracey & Corlett, 1995). The transition from high school to college can be eased or hindered by the key factors of the transition. The key factors are the support, self, situation, and strategies of the transition (Goodman, Schlossberg, Anderson, 2006). The purpose of the research project was to understand the transition to college athletics from high school athletics in Division I track and field athletes.

Statement of the Problem

The current research used multiple case study qualitative method to focus on the transition experiences of the Division I track and field athletes. Interviews were conducted on-site of the campus of the chosen institution. The researcher asked questions associated with experiences pre-, during, and post transitioning into

college, what resources the student-athletes found helpful in transitioning into college and the experiences as a student-athlete at the institution attended.

Definition of Terms

Athletic Identity

An individual participating in sport develops an athletic identity. Athletic identity is the examination of "identity," a self-expression of personal goals, values and morals through an athletic lens (Brewer et al., 1985). The Athletic Identity Measurement Scale quantitatively measures athletic identity. Subscales for the AIMS include social identity, exclusivity and negative affectivity (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001).

Transition

The transition theory developed by Nancy Schlossberg (1981) can assess the impact a given transition has at a certain point in time, based on the individual and environment the transition occurred (Evans et al., 1998). The transition, the individual, and the environment are the factors Schlossberg's transition theory finds to likely determine the impact of the transition on the individual. If the individual does not believe transition is occurring, transition does not occur.

Four S'

The four S' are the key factors in determine the scope of a transition (Goodman et al., 2006). The four S's are the (a) situation, (b) strategies (c) self (d) support.

'Situation' includes the role change, previous experience, and concurrent stress (Goodman et al., 2006). The characteristics of "self" include personal characteristics, psychological resources include ego development, outlook on life, commitment, and values.

Characteristics of "support" include the types of support, function of the support system and options amongst the support system. The characteristics of "strategies" include how the individual seeks information and the direct actions the individual uses.

Delimitations

In researching the transition from high school to college athletics the research, the following delimitations were considered.

1. The researcher did not interview or gain further insight from any from other participants other than the four participants being studied.

2. The researcher did not use statistical analyses to

quantify the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale.

3. The research did not ask participants about any personal factors affecting the athletic experiences.

Limitations

In the current study, the following limitations were considered.

1. Although measures were taken to ensure reliability and validity of the study, aspects of the study were out of the control of the researcher.

2. Findings may be affected by personal events the participants have experienced.

3. Participants may also have had desires to quit the team for non-athletic reasons, and may have been disengaged during the interview process.

Research Questions

The following research questions were considered.

1. How did experiences as a high school athlete prepare you for college athletics?

2. What were your experiences during the transition from high school to college?

Appendix B**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The opportunity to compete as a varsity athlete in collegiate sports is a privilege for select high school athletes. The demands of being a college student in addition to that of an athlete can create a challenge in performing well in the classroom and the athletic sector. The demands of being a student-athlete heightened the difficulty upon prioritization of athletics over academics. Student-athletes may prioritize athletics higher than academics in hopes of following a career as an athlete.

Any person engaging in athletics obtains athletic identity. Athletic identity is the examination of "identity," a self-expression of personal goals, values, and morals through an athletic lens (Brewer et al., 1985). College athletes, or student-athletes, engage academically and athletically. If athletics are prioritized more than academics, the student-athletes may be described as foreclosed. Identity foreclosure is a construct pertaining to commitment to an identity without engaging in exploratory behavior (Marcia et al., 1993). Student-athletes described as foreclosed are committed to

status as an athlete without exploring other interests (Marcia et al., 1993).

Individuals optimally develop when engaged in a variety of activities, interacting with people from different backgrounds (Chartrand & Lent, 1987; Jordaan, 1963; Pearson & Petitpas, 1990; Super, 1957). Exploratory behavior enables individuals to "make informed decisions about their(sic) personal values, interests, and skills, and enables them to develop coping strategies and confidence in their(sic) abilities to be successful in adult life" (Brewer & Petitpas, 2017). Higher scores of identity foreclosure can result in poor academic or career preparation. High identity foreclosure combined with high athletic identity may fail to adequately prepare an individual for the entire college experience.

College students transitioning from high school use different avenues to adjust to college life. Athletic competition is a vessel used to engage student-athletes as transition into a college routine occurs. Melendez (2006) examined the college adjustment of 207 student-athletes and non-athletes who were in first or second year of college. Athletic participation provided a positive stimulus to adjusting to college.

Completion of the student-athletes athletic eligibility requires transition into a professional career, athletically or otherwise. In transitioning away from college sports, the student-athlete may be inadequately prepared because of identity foreclosure due to commitment to a sport without engaging in other activities. Beamon (2012) examined identity foreclosure in 20 African-American former Division I athlete through interviews. Although a portion of the participants competed professionally, the participants were ill prepared for a career away from athletics.

Beginning college can be difficult for first year students. Similar to the nonathletic peers, transitioning to college can be daunting for student-athletes. Participating in sport, having teammates and structured routine can make the transition easier for first year student-athletes. The following literature includes: Athletic Identity and Identity Foreclosure, Transitioning from High School to College, Career Transitions, College Student-Athletes and Athletic Participation and the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS) followed by a summary of literature.

Athletic Identity and Identity Foreclosure

Athletic identity examines the self-expression of the personal goals of being an athlete, values, and morals (Brewer et al., 1993; Waterman, 1985). In collegiate athletics, developing the student-athlete to succeed in the playing arena, classroom, and professional field is a challenge for support staff. Athletic identity is the theoretical framework for understanding the mentality of athletes as pertaining to perceptions of self, the athletes perception of societies views of athletes and how broad or narrow the athletes focus is on being an athlete.

Positively or negatively, time commitment, approval from peers, or intrinsic and extrinsic rewards can intensify or reduce athletic identity. Athletic identity decreases in athletes after experiencing an event that hinders the ability of the athlete to play sport such as a severe injury, poor competitive season, or deselection (Brewer & Cornelius, 2010). Contrarily, strong athletic identity can lead to a premature commitment to status as an athlete.

When the student-athlete is committed to having status as an athlete without engaging in exploratory behavior, the student-athlete is considered foreclosed (Marcia et al.,

1993). Individual growth occurs when a variety of activities and interactions with people from different backgrounds take place (Chartrand & Lent, 1987; Jordaan, 1963; Pearson & Petitpas, 1990; Super, 1957). Student-athletes develop coping strategies and confidence in the ability to be successful in adult life while engaging in exploratory behaviors (Brewer & Petitpas, 2017). Adler and Adler (1985, 1991) conducted multiple longitudinal studies with male track and field athletes players from major Division I universities. Many of the athletes entered college academically optimistic. After the first year, the participants placed less importance on academics. The athletes registered for easier classes and entered easier majors as to remain eligible and not interfere with the preparations of track and field athletes. Collegiate athletes who strongly commit to a sporting team or peer athletes may find difficulty to properly develop a balanced student-athlete identity (Marx et al., 2011). Athletes with a strong athletic identity may commit to an identity status without adequately engaging in exploratory behaviors. Individuals are described as foreclosed upon commitment to status without exploration.

In examining the college sport participation, Good, Brewer, Petitpas, Van Raalte, and Mahar (1993) analyzed identity foreclosure and athletic identity in 502 college students. Participants were enrolled in an introductory psychology, physiology, or research course and were recruited from four small northeastern colleges. Of the 502 participants, 166 were varsity athletes, 90 students played intramural sports and 246 were non-athletes (Good et al., 1993).

Analyses were performed to identify differences in athletic identity and identity foreclosure between genders and sports participation levels. The ANOVA performed for identity foreclosure calculated a significant difference in class and athletic participation level, but not in gender. The ANOVA calculated significant difference in gender and athletic participation level, but not in class in athletic identity. Upperclass non-athletes were significantly less foreclosed than underclass non-athletes (Good et al., 1993).

Male non-athletes scored higher than female non-athletes on the AIMS. Gender was not a factor in the athletic identity differences between intramural and varsity student-athletes. Similar to Good et al. (1993),

Petitpas (1981) found senior non-athletes to be significantly less foreclosed than senior athletes, freshman non-athletes, and freshman athletes.

Beamon (2012) compiled 20 former student-athletes for phone interviews, averaging two and a half hours. Beamon (2012) examined identity foreclosure in 20 African-American former Division I athletes through in-depth ethnographic interviews. In depth standardized interviews were used as the data collection technique. Open ended-non-biased questioning was used and designed to elicit candid responses from participants. Identity foreclosure and an exclusivity of the athletic role were evident in participants.

Coding of the interviews highlighted that 14 participants had experience playing professional sports, 15 believed athletics composed 60% of the participants identity, and 12 believed athletics composed 75% (Beamon, 2012). A limitation was the sample size. The results cannot be generalized to more than Division I sport revenue-generating African-American student-athletes. Future research would include Division I African-American female athletes in revenue-generating sports. When becoming a professional athlete is not possible, student-

athletes are foreclosed and ill prepared for the work force.

Linnemeyer and Brown (2010) examined the career maturity and foreclosure in collegiate student-athletes, fine arts students, and general college students. Student-athletes were males and females who were members of a varsity team. Fine arts students were defined as anyone majoring in a fine art major and general college students were non-athletes not in a fine arts program. Of the 326 undergraduate participants, 101 were student-athletes, 32.8% were first-years, and 69.5% identified as Euro-American (Linnemeyer & Brown, 2010).

The student-athletes in the sample were comprised from a Division I institution (Linnemeyer & Brown, 2010). Men's soccer players compiled 21.8% of participants, with women's volleyball, women's and men's track and field athletes, and women's and men's tennis represented in the sample. Career maturity and identity were foreclosure were measured through the Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R; Crites & Savickas, 1996) and the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status, respectively (OM-EIS; Adams, Shea, & Fitch, 1979).

Student-athletes scored significantly higher than fine arts students. None of the groups in totality were described as identity foreclosed. Results may not be generalizable outside of the Midwestern sample used for the study. Only 11% of participants were from a revenue generating sport.

College athletics provide opportunity for high school student-athletes to compete after high school. How the student-athlete identifies with the role as an athlete determines the extent of the student-athletes athletic identity. Premature commitment is described as identity foreclosure. Student athletes identifying as foreclosed may be ill prepared to transition away from an athletic role upon completion of eligibility. When becoming a professional athlete is not possible, participants were foreclosed and ill prepared for the work force.

Transition from High School to College

Students graduating high school embark on college without understanding what college entails. Living away from home, meeting new people, and studying new subject area can all be intimidating for a first year student. Many colleges offer orientation programs in the summer before the semester begins to allow first year students to

adjust to college around peers and alleviate worries. Intervention programs can be helpful in identifying deficiencies to college awareness the student may have from high school.

Transitioning from high school to college for prospective student-athletes can be difficult. The homesickness students entering college may feel are no different for student-athletes. Student-athletes are grouped together outside of the athletic arena, often times in classes, study groups, and living arrangements. Consistency during the transition period from high school to college for student-athletes can be helpful in alleviating the pressure of being away from home, but can affect the student-athletes ability to engage and relate to others (Golden, 1984).

The identity of the student-athlete can be contested during the transition period. Depending on the quality of talent of teammates, student-athletes may succeed to reduced playing time and attention, a reality of being an average athlete and no longer the star athlete as in the high school level. Realizing the reality of a role change challenges the self-concept of the student-athlete (Lanning, 1982). During the first year of athletics,

student-athletes adjust to potentially spending 40 hours a week in sport related activity and missing up to 26% of class time (Rhatigan, 1984).

Pratt et al. (2000) utilized group discussion sessions to research the effectiveness of social-support oriented intervention program for incoming university students. Participants included a randomly assigned control group and an intervention group. All participants were first year students. The study began at the beginning to the middle of the students first academic year. Of the participants, 50 first-year students showed better adjustment to university and fewer behavioral problems. Participants in the intervention group scored higher on university adjustment, and were less likely to skip classes and to report smoking, than participants in the control group. For women, but not for men, the intervention group was also less likely to be depressed and reported higher levels of social support than did the control group.

A modification of Pratt et al. study, Mattanah, Ayers, Brand & Brooks (2010) investigated how peer social support intervention helps first year students transition to college. The study accounted for gender and precollege adjustments affecting intervention outcomes. Participants

were on average 17.7 years old and majority female. Adjustment to college was measured with the Student Adaptation College Questionnaire, perceived social support was measured with the Social Provisions Scale, loneliness was measured with the UCLA Loneliness Scale and precollege adjustment concerns was measured with the New College Students Concerns Scale.

Participants engaged in a nine-week social support group during the first year of college. Participants were randomly assigned to a group that met for eight sessions. In six of the session, participants discussed topics related to the college transition. Topics included creating new social ties, balancing work, academics, and a social life, and peer pressure (Mattanah et al., 2010). Participants who expressed greater concern regarding transitioning to college reported less social support and greater loneliness.

Transitioning into college is different for every student. The transition to college is easier for some students because of the support the students had the transition. Contrarily, others embark on college without much or any support and struggle through the transition as a result (Pratt et al., 2000). First year student-athletes

transitioning to college are different in how the student-athletes navigate the first year of college. With increased competition and stringent demands on time, first year student athletes may encounter a more difficult transition period to college (Golden, 1984).

Career Transitions

Athletes with strong athletic identity can become foreclosed. A college student-athlete foreclosed as an athlete is ill prepared to transition away from the athletic career. Schlossberg's (1981) transition theory assesses the impact a given transition has at a certain point in time, based on the individual and environment the transition occurred (Evans et al., 1998). The theory was developed to aid adults through the transition process (Schlossberg, 1981). The transition, the individual, and the environment as the key factors determining the transition of the individual.

Transition is classified three ways: (a) anticipated, (b) unanticipated, and (c) nonevents (Schlossberg, 1984). Anticipated transitions are transitions expected to occur such as graduation or NCAA eligibility exhaustion. Unanticipated transitions are not expected to occur such as a career ending athletic injury. Nonevents are expected

occurrences that do not occur. Nonevents can be broken into four categories: personal (related to aspirations), ripple (felt due to nonevents of someone else), resultant (caused by an event), and delayed (anticipated event that may still occur; Schlossberg, 1984). Nonevents are events more possible to occur than probable. An example of a nonevent is a student-athlete being drafted to a professional team. The three phases within a transition include: (a) moving-in, (b) moving-through, and (c) moving-out. The moving-in phase consists of the individual familiarizing themselves with the expectations of the transition the individual begins (Schlossberg, 1984).

The moving-through phase consists of the individual trying to survive the transition (Schlossberg, 1984). During the moving-out phase, the discomfort experienced in the moving through stage can become grief (Schlossberg, 1984). Schlossberg (1984) identifies four factors directly related to an individual coping with a transition: (a) situation, (b) self, (c) support, and (d) strategies. The individual going through transition must identify the stage of transition being experience; otherwise the transition does not exist as a transition. The context of each transition of a person should be noted and understood.

In an in-depth, open-ended, dialogic interview based qualitative methodology, Parker (1994) examined the experiences of former college football players upon completion of the athletic careers. The seven participants for the study played NCAA Division I-A in the southern United States. All seven completed athletic careers within three years of the study and were at least eight years removed from collegiate competition. Each individual was interviewed between one and four times with interviews ranging from 1-1/2 to 6 hours (Parker, 1994). Parker (1994) believed key themes emerged and data saturation was reached regardless of interview length. Interviews were analyzed using standard qualitative procedures. Transcriptions were reviewed multiple times with notes documented in the margins. With the theory in place, preliminary themes were confirmed, rejected, or represented new possibilities as more of the data was analyzed. The analysis approach is indicative of grounded theory methodology.

Findings revolved around (a) transitions from high school to elite-level college football, (b) the learning of behavior not positively transferable to the "real world" (c) the power and control issues surrounding the major

college football setting and (d) the way the participants were experiencing post-eligibility life. When transitioning from high school to college football, the former college athletes cited the relationship with the high school coach as personal and the college coach as impersonal. Four of the former athletes believed playing time and attention from coaches were based on how based on negative behavior. Participants believed politics between administration and coaching staff dictated playing time and chances at professional opportunities. Participants believed in overcoming the chances of not attaining a professional career, regardless of how academic counselors advised them otherwise. Future research includes exploring transition longitudinally, throughout the college experience. Unpreparedness to transition away from athletics can lead to poor career maturity for college student-athletes.

Career maturity is the readiness to cope with vocational and development tasks (Crites & Savickas, 1996). The Career Maturity Inventory-Revised (CMI-R; Crites & Savickas, 1996) quantifies participants levels of career maturity and is composed of the competence test and attitude scale. The competence test has 25-items and

measures knowledge about occupations and decisions involved in choosing a career (Crites & Savickas, 1996; Linnemeyer & Brown, 2010). The Attitude Scale is a 25-item test identifying attitudes and feelings toward making a career choice. Statements include topics such as religion, politics, and occupations (Crites & Savickas, 1996). Internal consistency reliability for the 75-item CMI Attitude scale ranged from .50 to .72 (Crites, 1973) and estimates of .54 and .6 have been reported for the CMI-R Attitude Scale (Busacca & Taber, 2002; Powell & Luzzo, 1998). Murphy et al. (1996) assessed student-athletes level of identity foreclosure and athletic identity and the impact career maturity. Using the foreclosure subscale of the Objective Measure of Ego-Identity Status (OM-EIS), Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS), and Career Maturity Index (CMI), 124 Division I athletes were assessed. Women possessed higher career maturity than men and non-athletes had significant higher career maturity compared to varsity athletes. In particular, athletes in revenue-generating sports had higher identity foreclosure scores and lower career maturity scores. As hypothesized, identity foreclosure and athletic identity were inversely related to career maturity in intercollegiate athletes.

Lally and Kerr (2005) examined the career planning of university student athletes and the relationships between career planning, athletic identities, and student role identities. Participants were eight Canadian student-athletes in track and field athletes, track and field, volleyball, and swimming who were navigating away from identity foreclosure and toward career planning.

Participants reflected on experiences as student-athletes, the career plans the student-athletes idealized upon first arriving in college, and how participants changed as the study progressed. The student-athletes career plans, athletic identities, and student role identities changed over the course of time studying in university.

Early and later years were categorized to early career and late career plans. Participants had more mature career plans at the time of the initial interview, in the fourth and fifth years at university. Participants also experienced a decline of athletic identities which created opportunity to explore other role options (Lally & Kerr, 2005). The relevance of the information is to explore the different avenues of disconnecting college athletes from athletic identity and more engaged in exploratory behavior. Although the study was in Canada, a similar intervention

could be implemented in the United States, especially for athletes whose chances of playing professional sports are slim.

When transitioning away from a collegiate athletics career, preparation can be aided in the separation from status as an athlete. The career transitions theory developed by Nancy Schlossberg (1981) assesses the impact a given transition has at a certain point in time, based on the individual, and environment in which the transition occurred (Evans et al., 1998). The transition, the individual and the environment are the factors Schlossberg's transition theory likely determine the impact of the transition on the individual. If the individual does not believe a transition is occurring, transition does not occur. Parker (1994) examined the experiences of former college football players upon exhausting athletic eligibility. Transitions from high school to elite-level college football, learning of non-transferable behaviors to the "real world", the power and control issues surrounding the major college football setting and the way the participants were experiencing post-eligibility life were themes that emerged from the seven interviews. In a Canadian study, Lally and Kerr (2005) examined the career

planning of university student athletes and the relationships between career planning, athletic identities, and student role identities. The student-athletes career plans, athletic identities, and student role identities changed over the course of time studying in university. In the fourth and fifth years at university, participants had more mature career plans at the time of the initial interview. Participants who disengaged from athletic identity explored other interests during the university years.

College Student-Athletes and Athletic Participation

Development of self-identity occurs primarily in late adolescence (Jordaan, 1963). Individuals who participate in sport may likely identify partially or completely as an athlete. The level of competition as a varsity athlete (Division-I, II, or III) does not signify the level of athletic identity an individual possesses (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001).

Melendez (2006) examined the impact of athletic participation on the college adjustment of student-athletes. Specifically, the study explored how gender, race, and athletic participation impacted college adjustment. The researcher hypothesized that athletics

would contribute positively to college adjustment for women. Of the 300 questionnaires distributed, 207 student-athletes and non-athletes from four predominately White universities were collected. The final sample boasted 49% student-athletes and 51% non-athletes.

College adjustment was measured with the Student Adaption to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1989). SACQ is a 67-item, self-report measure of college adjustment through four categories: (a) Academic Adjustment Scale, (b) Social Adjustment Scale, (c) Personal/Emotional Adjustment, and (d) Goal Commitment/Institutional Attachment subscale (Baker & Siryk, 1989). The four subscale scores are totaled to create a college adjustment score.

Results indicated no significant difference between the student-athletes and non-athletes in high school GPA or parental education. Female students scored higher than males on all sections. Minority females scored higher in academic adjustment than minority males (Melendez, 2006). As hypothesized, findings showed that athletic participation positively contributes to the prediction of college adjustment.

Mignano et al. (2006) also studied female student-athletes. Mignano et al. (2006) hypothesized that student-athletes from a Division III single gender college would potentially exhibit lower levels of athletic identity than female student-athletes at a Division III coeducational institution. The participants were 145 varsity athletes from four small, highly selective colleges, 73 from coeducational schools, and 72 from all-women's colleges in New England.

Through the AIMS, demographic and student involvement questionnaires data was collected. Student-athletes from women's college scored higher on the AIMS Seniors from coeducational colleges scored higher than first and third year student-athletes. Results may be representative of empowerment for students to achieve excellence (Mignano et al., 2006).

Miller and Kerr (2003) examined the role experimentation of university student-athletes. Using in-depth interviews, eight senior participants who competed in intercollegiate in Canada were selected in order to collect rich, thick data. The athletes competed in swimming, track and field, and volleyball. Interviews were analyzed and categorized into meaning units. Grouping allowed

researchers to connect the data from the interviews. Nine categories were developed from 60 identified properties.

Findings revealed three spheres of engagement from a student-athlete: the academic, athletic, and social (Miller & Kerr, 2003). Participants negotiated time between the three spheres. Engagement in one often resulted in lack of engagement in the other two.

Despite advisement to do otherwise, in the athletic sphere, participants were athletically focused and academically dismissive in the first and second year in hopes of competing professionally or for the national team. Despite stating importance of academics, the participants academic sphere was "peripheral" to athletics (Miller & Kerr, 2003). Participants experimented in the social sphere to make friends. Participants believed social engagement, especially with teammates, aided in better athletic experience.

College students use different activities to adjust to the pace of college demands. Student-athletes adapting to college use athletics as a way to adjust from high school. Mendelez (2006) examined the impact of athletic participation on the college adjustment of student-

athletes. Sports participation positively affected the adjustment to college.

Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)

Athletic identity is measured through the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS; Brewer & Cornelius, 2001). AIMS is a 7-item questionnaire that targets three first order factors the researchers found to encapsulate athletic identity: social identity, exclusivity, and negative affectivity. The AIMS uses a 7-point Likert scale to gather data. Scores range from 7-49. High AIMS scores have been shown to be inversely related to career maturity (Murphy et al., 1996). The research evaluated the viability of the unidimensional and multidimensional AIMS models through confirmatory factor analytic techniques with a large sample with diverse characteristics. Demographics provided by participants were used to describe the participants. Research conducted included 2856 participants collected over 10 years. The mean age was 20.61 ($SD = 3.86$) years (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001). Two thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine indicated gender, 64.3% and 35.7% identified as male and female, respectively. One thousand four hundred and seventy six indicated race/ethnicity, 1607 identified as varsity

athletes, 1545 participants attended NCAA Division I institutions. Football, soccer, baseball, track and field athletes, swimming and diving, and lacrosse were the most frequented sports of the 20 sports indicated by all participants. The total sample was divided into a derivation group and validation group to insure equivalence in gender and varsity athlete/non-athlete composition. The mean AIMS score for athletes ($M = 38.21$, $SD = 6.54$) was significantly different from the mean AIMS score for non-athletes ($M = 24.45$, $SD = 9.56$, $t = -21.01$, $p < .01$,. The AIMS was validated by the substantially higher scores of athletes versus non-athletes.

Summary

Collegiate athletes of all abilities compete and carry the same academic responsibilities as non-athlete while carrying the identity of an athlete. Collegiate student-athletes, like anyone who competes in athletics generates athletic identity. A self-expression of personal goals, values, and morals through an athletic lens comprise athletic identity (Brewer et al., 1985). Student-athletes entering college can use goals and values related to athletics to successfully transition from high school to college athletics. Melendez (2006) examined the impact of

athletic participation on the college adjustment of student-athletes. Questionnaires from student-athletes and non-athletes attending four predominately White universities indicated athletic participation positively influencing college adjustment.

Adler and Adler (1985, 1991) conducted multiple studies with male basketball players from major Division I universities. Although many of the athletes entered college academically optimistic views, after the first year, the participants focus changed to staying eligible and majoring in easy courses as to remain eligible and not interfere with the preparations of track and field athletes (Marx et al., 2008; Sturm et al., 2011).

Student-athletes who commit to status as an athlete without engaging in exploratory behavior are described as identity foreclosed. Identity foreclosure can lead to inadequate preparation when the athletic career inevitably discontinues. The 20 African-American former Division I student-athletes competing in revenue-generating sports explained the difficulties of identity foreclosure. Participants did not feel prepared after the completion of the athletic careers finished (Beamon, 2012). Supporting

student-athletes throughout college may aid in disassociation from identity foreclosure.

Parker (1994) examined the experiences of seven former college football players upon completion of the athletic careers. Through interviews, four key themes evolved: (a) transitions from high school to elite-level college football (b) the learning of behavior not positively transferable to the "real world," (c) the power and control issues surrounding the major college football setting, and (d) the way the participants were experiencing post-eligibility life. All but one participant spoke positively about the collegiate football career and ignored advisement from academic counselors on the dangers of pursuing a professional athletic career.

Gap in Literature

The transition literature around the transition experiences of student-athletes has been well researched. The literature student-athlete transitioning in college at the Division I level does not have the same depth of research. Research on the transition experiences, student-athletes transitioning into college, will support existing literature in sport transition literature. Research can better prepare administrators; coaches, parents, and

athletes understand the skills necessary for the transition from high school to college. Future research includes understanding the transition experience for males versus female track and field athletes and the transition experience of transfer athletes versus high school athletes.

Appendix C

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE VOLUNTARILY

IN A RESEARCH INVESTIGATION

Department of Physical Education

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE

SPRINGFIELD, MA 01109

Dr. Thaddeus France

Aboshioma Obemeata

Responsible Faculty Member

Investigator

(413) 748-3774

Subject's Name

Date

PROJECT TITLE: How does athletic identity change over the college sport experience?

You are being asked to participate in a research project as described in this form below.

The purpose of this research project is to understand how athletic identity changes over the collegiate sport experience the experience in Division I student-athletes. Participation in this project will be about 30-45 minutes. Participants will be asked to participate in interviews and complete a 7-question quiz. All information discussed today will remain private and confidential. If you do not wish to continue, you may discontinue at any time. Return

of the consent and completion indicates willingness to participate.

The interviews will be video recorded and the following conditions will be met:

- 1) Your real name will not be used.
- 2) No videotapes will be used for any purpose other than academic purposes
- 3) Your participation in this study is voluntary; you have the right to stop the interview at any point.

Do you grant permission to be quoted directly?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you grant permission to be videotaped?

Yes _____ No _____

No known risks or benefits are associated with participation in the current study.

I certify that I understand the nature of this study. I consent to participate and I will answer the questions with honesty and to the best of my knowledge.

Name of Participant (Please print) Date

Signature of Participant

Appendix D

LETTER OF PERMISSION

Director of Athletics

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Shioma Obemeata and I am currently a graduate student pursuing my Master's degree at Springfield College in Athletic Administration.

The purpose of my research project is to understand how the sport experience changes over the course of the student-athlete experience, in Division I athletes.

This document states the permission and support by the Director of Athletics to utilize the four student-athletes from your Division I institution for my study. The players would be asked to participate in individual interviews. The individual interview would take approximately 30-60 minutes. All sessions will be strictly confidential and voluntary.

If you have any questions, I can be contacted at (914) 623-3041 or by email aobemeata@springfieldcollege.edu. You can also contact my thesis advisor, Thaddeus France at tfrance@springfieldcollege.edu. Your cooperation and support of this project is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Shioma Obemeata, B.A.

Springfield College Graduate Student

Thaddeus France, Ed.D.

Professor of Physical Education

Springfield College

APPENDIX E

Interview Guide

Pre-transition

1. Tell me about your experiences competing in track and field in high school. **SELF**

PROBE What were your experiences like as a high school student-athlete, balancing school, track and field and any other activities you were involved in? **SELF**

PROBE How did you get introduced to playing? **SITUATION**

2. In high school, did you feel you had enough of an understanding of the demands of a college student-athlete?

SITUATION

PROBE How did you come to get information about the demands of being a college student-athlete?

PROBE Who were some of the people involved in this process?

3. When you were in high school, what did you want from track and field? **SELF**

- a. How did you go about achieving this? **STRATEGIES**

- b. Who were the people instrumental in helping you realize this? **SUPPORT**

- c. What ways did they support you? **SUPPORT**

Transition

1. What was your first 1-6 months like during your first year as a college student-athlete? **SELF/SITUATION**

PROBE Walk me through the timeline of this experience

SITUATION

LISTEN FOR PEOPLE THAT WERE INVOLVED and PROBE more about the relationships and support **SITUATION**

Positives/negatives of first month

2. How did your support system change during this time?

SUPPORT

3. How did you think or engage differently during this time period than before getting to high school? **SELF**

Post-Transition

1. Knowing what you know now from you experiences, what advice would you give high school student-athletes to be better prepared for becoming a college student-athlete?

STRATEGIES/SUPPORT

2. What advice would you give to coaches at the high school and college levels **STRATEGIES/SUPPORT**
3. What advice would you give to families of high school student-athletes? **STRATEGIES/SUPPORT**

APPENDIX F

Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)

7-Item Version of the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)

Please circle the number that best reflects the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement regarding your sport participation.

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| 1. | I consider myself an athlete. | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly agree |
| 2. | I have many goals related to sport. | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly agree |
| 3. | Most of my friends are athletes. | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly agree |
| 4. | Sport is the most important part of my life. | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly agree |
| 5. | I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else. | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly agree |
| 6. | I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport. | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly agree |
| 7. | I would be very depressed if I were injured and could not compete in sport. | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly agree |
-

APPENDIX G

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

(1) RECRUITMENT OF ATHLETES

" _____, my name is Shioma Obemeata and I am graduate student and assistant coach with the track and field at Springfield College. I am conducting research around the transition from high school to college in Division I track and field athletes. As an aspiring coach I believe it is important to understand the needs on and off the track of the prospective student-athletes to better guide them to and through college. As a former Division I athlete at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), I understand the demands of being student-athlete at this level. To understand the transition from high school to college, I want to interview you to discuss your transition experience. The transition is defined as the first one to six months of your first year of college. Interviews will last between 30-60 minutes on campus. After each interview, I will ask you to complete the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale, a 7-question quiz. The quiz should not take more than a few minutes.

(2) RECRUITMENT OF HEAD COACH

"Coach _____, my name is Shioma Obemeata and I am graduate student and assistant coach with the track and field at Springfield College. I am conducting research around the transition from high school to college in Division I track and field athletes. As an aspiring coach I believe it is important to understand the needs on and off the track of the prospective student-athletes to better guide them to and through college. As a former Division I athlete at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), I understand the demands of being student-athlete at this level. To understand the transition from high school to college, I want to interview four of your student-athletes, one on each year to discuss the transition experience. Interviews will last between 30-60 minutes on campus. After each interview, I will ask the participants to complete the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale, a 7-question quiz. The quiz is attached.

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