2017

A strengths-based intervention for African American student-athletes experiencing stress (S.I.S.T.A.S.): development of a stress management workshop

Ashley Elizabeth Coleman

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Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

A STRENGTHS-BASED INTERVENTION FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN

STUDENT- ATHLETES EXPERIENCING STRESS (S.I.S.T.A.S.):

DEVELOPMENT OF A STRESS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

A clinical dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Psychology

by

Ashley Elizabeth Coleman

August, 2017

Shelly P. Harrell, Ph.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This clinical dissertation, written by

Ashley Elizabeth Coleman

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

Doctoral Committee:

Shelly Harrell, Ph.D., Chairperson

Thema Bryant-Davis, Ph.D.

William D. Parham, Ph.D., ABPP

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to the past, present, and future African American female student-athletes. Your

commitment to strive toward your goals, despite the daily encounters with "isms," inspires me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank my Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, for without Him none of this could be possible. Thank you for trusting me with the ability to touch lives in a positive way. I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Shelly Harrell, for encouraging me and guiding me throughout this process. Thank you to my committee members, Drs. Thema Bryant-Davis and William D. Parham, for sharing your expertise and wisdom. Collectively, thank you for reaching back and pulling forward.

Finally, to my biggest blessings: my parents. I am grateful for how you continuously breathed unwavering support, confidence, and belief in me when I thought I could not go on during this journey. Thank you for the daily notes, text messages, and hugs.

VITA

Ashley Elizabeth Coleman

EDUCATION

Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Los Angeles, CA
Doctoral candidate, Clinical Psychology PSY D. Program- APA Accredited
GPA: 3.874   Anticipated graduation date: 05/2016

    Doctoral Dissertation
        Chair: Shelly Harrell, Ph.D.
        Title: A strengths-based Intervention for African American Female Student-Athletes
            Experiencing Stress (S.I.S.T.A.S.): Development of a stress management
            workshop

            Preliminary oral defense of dissertation proposal passed   02/02/2016

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    Clinical Competency Exam: Passed with distinction   01/2012
    Case conceptualization, treatment plan, and session transcript presented from cognitive-
        behavioral therapeutic approach

Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Malibu, CA   05/2009
Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy
GPA: 3.95

Howard University, Washington, D.C.
Bachelor of Science in Psychology with Cum Laude Honors   05/2006

ACADEMIC HONORS
- Pepperdine University GSEP Diversity Scholarship   2009-2012
  - A merit based scholarship awarded to four doctoral students yearly
- Pepperdine University Trustee Grant   2009-2012
- Howard University Dean's List   2003-2006
- Howard University Trustee Scholarship   2003-2006

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

University of California, Los Angeles Counseling and Psychological Services   08/2013-
07/2014
Supervisors: *Nicole Green, Ph.D., Peter Kassel, Psy D.,* and *Colby Moss, LCSW*
Pre-doctoral Intern
- Provided brief individual therapy to a diverse population of undergraduate and graduate
  students

- Engaged in crisis intervention which consisted of completion of two urgent evaluations weekly, and two hospitalizations over the course of internship
- Co-facilitated four therapy groups for treatment of mood disorders, anxiety disorders and eating disorders. These groups used The Unified Protocol created by Dr. David Barlow.
- Co-facilitated two support groups dedicated to increasing support for marginalized graduate students of Color and undergraduate students with severe academic concerns
- Served as a consultant to the UCLA Athletics Department and worked at the UCLA CAPS athletic satellite clinic
- Administered, scored, interpreted, and composed 3 integrated ADHD and psychodiagnostic assessment reports
- Implemented over 40 hours of outreach presentations on a variety of topics including improvement of sleep techniques, overcoming procrastination, and recognition of the signs of an unhealthy relationship
- Collaborated with the Office for Students with Disabilities to assist clients with seeking academic accommodations to improve academic performance and retention
- Presented clinical cases weekly in individual and group supervision

University of Southern California Student Counseling Services   08/2012-05/2013
Supervisors: *Elizabeth A. Reyes, Ph.D.* and *Robin Ward, LCSW*
Practicum Counselor
- Provided short-term individual therapy to a diverse population of college students
- Conducted intake evaluations that included 5-axis diagnoses and treatment plans
- Observed and documented process interactions among members for a graduate student process group
- Co-facilitated a CBT-based anxiety group with a licensed psychiatrist
- Presented clinical cases in weekly individual and group supervision

Job Corps, Los Angeles, CA   09/2011- 08/2012
Supervisors: *Joseph Grillo, Ph.D. and Merilee Oakes, Ph.D.*
Psychological Assessment Extern
- Administered, scored, interpreted, and composed integrated psychodiagnostic and psychoeducational assessment reports for vocational students ages 16-24
- Common testing protocols included a clinical interview, WAIS-IV, WJ-III, VMI, BAARS-IV, Conners-3, MMPI-2, and Rorschach
- Participated in multidisciplinary team meetings to develop individual educational plans and to provide reasonable accommodations for students
- Conducted outreach and trainings for students and staff on various topics such as learning disabilities, conflict resolution, and crisis intervention
- Crisis intervention

Santa Monica College Psychological Services, Santa Monica, CA   09/2010-07/2011
Supervisors: *Alison Brown, Ph.D. and Sandra Rowe, Ph.D.*
Psychotherapy Extern

- Provided short-term individual therapy to a diverse population of college students including athletes
- Conducted brief crisis walk-in sessions
- Completed intake evaluations, diagnostic interviews, and treatment plans
- Developed outreach presentations for students and faculty on campus
- Attended campus-safety team meetings to discuss strategies to aid at-risk students

Pepperdine Community Counseling Center, Encino, CA   09/2010-07/2012
Supervisor: *Anat Cohen, Ph.D.*
Graduate Assistant
- Completed phone intakes of prospective clients and consulted with chief psychologist to assign cases to student-therapists
- Conducted trainings for incoming externs
- Audited charts to encourage timely completion of reports and treatment plans

Pepperdine Community Counseling Center, Encino, CA   08/2009-07/2012
Supervisors: *Anat Cohen, Ph.D., Sepida Sazgar, Psy D., and Gitu Bhatia, Psy D.*
Psychology Trainee
- Provided cognitive-behavioral individual treatment to a diverse adult and adolescent population, suffering from mood and anxiety disorders, relational difficulties, behavioral problems, substance use disorders, and personality disorders.
- Provided adjunctive treatment to at-risk adolescent clients (ages 11-17) rehabilitated from sex trafficking
- Implemented crisis interventions
- Conducted intake assessments and diagnostic interviews
- Composed integrated intake reports, which included five-axis diagnoses and treatment plans
- Administered, scored, and interpreted psychodiagnostic and outcome measures to monitor client response to intervention
- Acted as "on-call" therapist on a rotating basis
- Presented clinical cases in weekly individual and group supervision

Valley Women's Center, Canoga Park, CA   01/2008-08/2009
Supervisor: *Bahar Safaei-Far, Psy D.*
MFT Trainee
- Completed Individual therapy sessions with adult and child clients with mood disorders, personality disorders, substance abuse, dual diagnosis, behavioral concerns
- Crisis Intervention
- Facilitated 15-week Systematic Training for Effective Parenting group therapy sessions for parents with open Department of Child and Family Services cases
- Couples/Family Therapy
- Composed letters to lawyers, judges, and probation officers documenting clients' compliance and motivation to complete treatment
- Created curriculum for teen support group for children

OTHER CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Resolve Agency, Oakland, CA   09/2006-07/2007
Supervisor: *Morgan Kazembe, Ph.D.*
Counselor
- Provided school based therapy to children (ages 7-11) at two elementary schools in Oakland Public School District
- Engaged in structured and unstructured play therapy in individual therapy sessions
- Facilitated group therapy sessions for reduce conflict among students
- Collaborated with principals, teachers, and supervisors to create individualized education plans and treatment plans
- Crisis Intervention
- Family therapy

SUPERVISORY EXPERIENCE

Pepperdine Community Counseling Center, Encino, CA   09/2011- 07/2012
Supervisor: *Anat Cohen, Ph.D.*
Peer Supervisor
- Provided support to a first-year doctoral student-therapist for one-hour weekly
- Reviewed session tapes and delivered feedback to student about therapeutic techniques
- Trained therapist on effective crisis intervention
- Audited therapist's charts to ensure timely completion of reports and treatment plans

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Pepperdine Community Counseling Center, Encino, CA   09/2010 –07/2012
Supervisor: *Anat Cohen, Ph.D.*
School Based Therapy Program Coordinator
- Developed school based therapy contract between PCCC and several local schools
- Facilitated direct in service trainings with school staff and ten externs
- Coordinated outreach and psychoeducation presentations to parents about school based therapy and treatment of anxiety in children and adolescents
- Organized multidisciplinary team meetings to discuss each program's effectiveness

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of the West, Rosemead, CA   01/2015 - Present
Department of Psychology, Marriage and Family Therapy Master of Arts Program
Adjunct Professor
PSY 530: Psychopathology and Counseling I
- This course reviews the current classifications of Western psychopathology including, but not limited to, clinical disorders, personality disorders, select medical, psychosocial and environmental problems, and trauma, across the lifespan. Etiologies, prevalence, symptoms, and treatments are introduced and discussed for each. This course examines

conditions in self and society associated with the use and abuse of addictive substances, particularly alcohol and drugs, and explores a variety of treatment models. Additionally, there is consistent focus on students' own beliefs, attitudes and feelings, ethical issues, and sociocultural perspectives.

University of the West, Rosemead, CA   08/2015-12/2015
Department of Psychology, Marriage and Family Therapy Master of Arts Program
Adjunct Professor
PSY 538: Psychological Assessment
- This course includes discussion of topics such as clinical interviewing, evidence-based diagnostic assessment, and behavioral assessment. Various psychological assessment procedures will be covered, including structured and unstructured interviews, self-report inventories, objective personality tests, ability and preference tests, individual intelligence (IQ) tests, and projective tests. Test administration ethics and the importance of psychometrics, such as validity and reliability, will be covered. Cultural limitations and ethical concerns of each will be discussed throughout.

University of the West, Rosemead, CA   01/2015-05/2015
Department of Psychology, Marriage and Family Therapy Master of Arts Program
Adjunct Professor
PSY 530: Psychopathology and Counseling I
- This course reviews the current classifications of Western psychopathology including, but not limited to, clinical disorders, medical, psychosocial and environmental problems, and trauma, across the lifespan. Etiologies, prevalence, symptoms, and treatments are introduced and discussed for each. This course examines conditions in self and society associated with the use and abuse of addictive substances, particularly alcohol and drugs, and explores a variety of treatment models. Additionally, there is consistent focus on students' own beliefs, attitudes and feelings, ethical issues, and sociocultural perspectives.

Pepperdine University, Encino, CA   08/2010-04/2011
Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology program
Supervisor: *Anat Cohen, Ph.D.*
Teacher's Assistant
PSY 600: Clinical Management of Psychopathology
- This course is designed to build practical clinical skills in diagnosis, problem formulation, and crisis intervention. In addition to the DSM IV, the course examines psychopathology from psychodynamic, behavioral, humanistic, and psychosocial perspectives. Students are also taught standard intake skills and an introduction to psychopharmacology.
- Evaluated examinations and assignments
- Provided academic assistance to students during office hours
- Conducted literature review of current interventions pertinent to class material

Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA   08/2009-12/2009
Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy program
Supervisor: *Charlene Underhill-Miller, Ph.D.*
PSY 634: Techniques and Theories of Psychotherapy
Teacher's Assistant
- Through an examination of the application of major techniques of counseling and psychotherapy, students learn how to interview, formulate clinical cases, develop treatment plans, and facilitate therapeutic processes consistent with each major theoretical approach. Students gain practical skills by means of clinical case material and supervised laboratory exercises that supplement classroom lectures.
- Reviewed mock therapy videos
- Evaluated examinations
- Lectured about intake interviews and diagnostic assessments

Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA   09/2008-05/2009
Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy program
Supervisor: *Dennis Lowe, Ph.D.*
PSY 600: Clinical Management of Psychopathology
Teacher's Assistant
- This course is designed to build practical clinical skills in diagnosis, problem formulation, and crisis intervention. In addition to the DSM IV, the course examines psychopathology from psychodynamic, behavioral, humanistic, and psychosocial perspectives. Students are also taught standard intake skills and an introduction to psychopharmacology.
- Assisted students with research papers
- Evaluated examinations and assignments
- Conducted study review sessions

SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS/ PUBLICATIONS

Harrell, S., Coleman, A., & Adams, T., (2015, July). *Conceptual contributions to developing and delivering wellness interventions for persons of African descent.* 120-minute symposium conducted at the 47th Annual Association of Black Psychologists Conference, Las Vegas, NV.

Harrell, S., Coleman, A.E., & Adams, T. (2014). Toward a positive womanist psychospirituality: Strengths, gifts, and the optimal well-being of women of African descent. In T. Bryant-Davis, A.M. Austria, D.M. Kawahara & D.J. Willis (Eds.), *Religion and spirituality for diverse women: Foundations for strength and resilience* (pp.49-70). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Orozco, M., Meono, L., & Coleman, A., (2012, August). *What a Girl Wants: Music and its implications for emotional regulation processes in adolescent girls.* Poster presentation presented at the American Psychological Association Annual Conference, Orlando, FL.

Coleman, A. (2012, March). *Sports-centered psychosocial intervention for African American women.* Poster presentation presented at the Association of Women in Psychology Annual Conference, Palm Springs, CA.

Harrell, S., Coleman, A., & Magallanes, J. (2012, March). *Focus and Flow Intervention and Therapy (FFIT): Empowering women through the energy of conscious engagement.* 90-minute workshop conducted at the Association of Women in Psychology Conference, Palm Springs, CA.

OUTREACH

Coleman, A. (2014, July). *Academic success for freshmen student-athletes.* Workshop presented to incoming members of UCLA Men's Basketball and UCLA Men's Football teams.

Coleman, A. (2014, May). *Blame it on the Alcohol: How to be an effective bystander in the prevention of sexual assault.* In-service training presented to UCLA Women's Basketball Team.

Coleman, A. (2014, April). *Stress Less: How to successfully adjust to UCLA.* Workshop presented to first-year transfer students of Color.

Coleman, A., & Ofek, A. (2014, February). *Coping with grief and loss.* Training presented to UCLA Women's Volleyball Team.

Coleman, A. (2013, September). *Introduction to CAPS services.* Training presented to UCLA Women's Basketball Team.

Coleman, A. (2013, September). *The art of sleep.* Training presented to UCLA medical students.

Grillo, J., Coleman, A., Rhode, K. (2012, March). *How to cope with anger.* Workshop presented for Job Corps Los Angeles students.

Brown, A., Coleman, A., & Ofek, A. (2011, February). *Counseling opportunities for students.* Conducted several classroom presentations to inform Santa Monica College students about available counseling services.

Coleman, A., Young, S., & Birman, S. (2010, June). *Mindfulness interventions for adolescents.* A school based mindfulness group intervention presented to adolescent aged girls and staff at a local private school.

Coleman, A. (2009, April). *New-age substance abuse practices among teenagers.* A workshop presented to teachers, counselors, and administrators at a local high school.

ABSTRACT

Collegiate student-athletes face multiple stressors during their college experience. Examples of these stressors include limited finances, issues with time management, preventing and coping with injuries, managing success and failure, and maintaining relationships. In addition to the general stressors that student-athletes face, African American female student-athletes experience unique stressors due to the intersectionality of their identities as both African Americans and women (as well as other potential dimensions such as socioeconomic status and sexual orientation). These stressors include: race-related stress, feeling silenced, and being subjected to negative stereotypes. Despite the significant representation of African American female student-athletes in collegiate sport, there is only one known stress management intervention specifically designed for African American female student-athletes. Therefore, the purpose of this research project was to develop the curriculum for a stress management workshop to assist African American female student-athletes with engagement in culturally-syntonic and effective stress management techniques. In order to inform the curriculum, three autobiographies of African American female athletes were analyzed with particular attention to descriptions of their college years. Thematic analysis of these autobiographies was integrated with relevant empirical and intervention-related literature to develop a four-session workshop. The curriculum was evaluated by two former African American female student-athletes and two psychologists with experience working with the target population. Strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for the further development of the workshop's curriculum are provided. Practical implications and recommendations for mental health professionals and the athletic community are presented.

Chapter I: Introduction

African American female student-athletes have been largely invisible in the research literature on the well-being of college athletes. Research examining African American male student-athletes has been more widely conducted since the beginning of the 20th Century. Studies focusing on (a) the socialization of the Black male athlete (Beamon & Bell, 2006; Clopton, 2010; Lawrence, 2005); (b) his chronic experiences of racism (Meggyesy, 2000; Njororai Simiyu, 2012; Singer, 2005); (c) his exploitation as a student-athlete and concomitant academic underachievement (Carter-Francique, Hart, & Steward, 2013; Lewis, 2010; Van Rheenen, 2013; Williams, 2012); and (d) his experiences of stressors related to navigating developmental challenges while pursuing academic and athletic excellence simultaneously (Parham, 1993; Pinkerton, Hinz, & Barrow, 1986); continues to dominate sport related literature. What has been missing from the aforementioned valuable conversation is the study of his (in)visible teammate (Edwards, 1999, his female counterpart. The African American female student-athlete has been fighting for her rightful acknowledgement and equal representation since before the passage of Title IX Education Amendments in 1972. Title IX, an extension of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, barred discrimination based on sex and gender in federally-funded universities; thus permitting women's formal participation in collegiate athletics (Pickett, Dawkins, & Braddock, 2012).

Since the arrival of the late invitation for women to participate in college athletics, they have been subjected to several stressors heavily rooted in sexism in their roles as student-athletes. However, initial exposure to these stressors – like sexism in sports - often begins before the female student-athlete arrives on campus to play. Many female athletes can testify that they have witnessed a man critique another man's sport performance by saying that he "plays like a

girl". Many have also probably had the experience of arriving on the local court or field as a young girl and fearing that they will be picked last to play or not at all. Although the historic negative connotations about "playing like a girl" are being challenged by each great achievement of women athletes across generations; sexism in sports still persists. In addition to sexism, female athletes are subjected to unique stressors including: body image/disordered eating concerns, relationship issues, and navigating family conflicts related to being an athlete (LaFountaine, 2007).

The voices of African American female student-athletes have been muted or silenced in the conversation about college athletics. Most relevant studies and intervention programs focus on the needs of African American male student-athletes or female student-athletes in general (largely interpreted as White female athletes; Bruening, 2004; Bruening, 2005; Bruening, Armstrong, & Pastore, 2005). Given that they contend with barriers associated with the "double jeopardy" of identification with two minority statuses concurrently, African American women athletes' experiences need to be contextualized at the intersection of their race and gender (Bruening, 2004). Social class and sexual orientation are additional dimensions of diversity that are critical to understanding the experiences of some female college student-athletes. Moreover, African American women athletes are asked to navigate the dichotomous and demanding roles of college student and athlete concurrently in environments where they are typically the minority (with the exception of those at historically Black colleges and universities). While there have been advancements in the development of intervention programs for college athletes and African American student-athletes collectively, unfortunately, there are no known stress management interventions that are geared solely toward African American women. Despite not having any formalized intervention programs, African American female

student-athletes are thriving in the face of significant stressors. The National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) annual report of 2007, found that African American female student-athletes had a 63% graduation rate in comparison to the 50% graduation rate for their non-athletic peers (as cited in Hosick, 2007; Libby 2007). Sport participation has led to several benefits for African American female student-athletes. Hall (2008) suggests that sports is beneficial through "reinforcing a sense of sisterhood, interdependence and cooperativeness. It also teaches discipline, concentration, goal setting, team building, fitness, leadership and determination" (p. 110). However, with the growing stressors and lack of attention given to their needs, African American female student-athletes are at an increased risk for several negative consequences associated with high levels of stress for student-athletes; including health issues, academic attrition and athletic burnout (Humphrey, Yow, & Bowden, 2000). This is concerning because African American women are at an increased risk to be silent sufferers due to the internal and external pressures to adhere to the Strong Black Woman stereotype (SBW; Donovan & West, 2015). The SBW stereotype holds that African American women are immune to pain and innately have the resources to endure all stressors given their resiliency and tendency to be self-containing and self-sacrificing (Donovan & West, 2015). In a study of 92 Black female college students, Donovan and West (2015) found that moderate and high endorsements of the SBW stereotype increased the relationship between stress and depressive symptoms. The SBW stereotype can be increasingly dangerous for African American female student-athletes who may already perceive seeking help as a sign of weakness. The dynamic can be intensified by the similar pervasive belief about seeking help within the culture of athletics.

Terms and Definitions

The term *student-athlete* is controversial in nature given the alleged conditions of its

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origin and the purposes of its use. Walter Byers, the first president of the National Collegiate

Athletic Association (NCAA) coined the term, *student-athlete*, during his tenure in the 1950s,

allegedly in response to a collegiate athlete's widow's petition to receive worker's compensation

benefits to cover her late husband's medical costs after he suffered a significant injury while

playing college football (Branch, 2011). Although the term alludes to the assumed prioritization

of scholastic achievement over sports; others believe that the term has been deliberately vague

and not clarified for legal reasons (Branch, 2011; PBS: Public Broadcasting Service, 2011). In

1986, the NCAA defined student-athlete as

> a student whose matriculation was solicited by a member of the athletics staff or other
> representative of athletics interests with a view toward the student's ultimate participation
> in the intercollegiate athletics program. Any other student becomes a 'student-athlete'
> only when the student reports for an intercollegiate squad that is under the jurisdiction of
> the department of intercollegiate athletics. (Pinkerton et al., 1989, p.16)

Over the years, there have been continuous debates, lawsuits and controversy about whether or

not student-athletes are indeed professionals and deserve to be paid. During a summer summit in

2015, Mark Emmert, the current president of the NCAA, reaffirmed that academics are at the

core of the association's mission (NCAA, 2015a). In the discussion of African American female

student-athletes, it is important to acknowledge the embedded stressor of the lack of clarity or

consensus about the definition of student-athlete, which results in varied perspectives about the

appropriate workload for a student-athlete.

The NCAA organizes all 1,200 participating colleges and universities into three

divisions: Division I, Division II and Division III (NCAA, 2015a). Division I universities have

the largest student bodies and largest athletic budgets which allows them to offer the largest

number of generous athletic scholarships to student athletes (NCAA, 2015a). Division II consists

of over 300 colleges and universities that are able to offer scholarships to student-athletes. However, the athletic demands placed on Division II athletes are arguably not as challenging as those athletic demands placed on student-athletes in Division I (NCAA, 2015a). Division III is the largest division within the NCAA with over 170,000 student-athlete members (NCAA, 2015a). Division III colleges and universities are unable to offer athletic scholarships to student-athletes, which some state allow for sport participation to be secondary to academic responsibilities (NCAA, 2015a).

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sports at the University of Central Florida releases a yearly College Sport Racial and Gender Report Card, (CSRGRC; Lapchick, Fox, Guiao, & Simpson, 2015), which analyzes college sports' commitment to diversity at all levels of sports; including student-athlete, coaching and executive. According to the 2015 CSRGRC, Black male student-athletes comprise 18.9% of all student-athletes across all divisions of the NCAA (Lapchick et al., 2015). Similarly, Black female student-athletes represent 13.9% of all student-athletes across all divisions of the NCAA (Lapchick et al., 2015). In Division I competition, Black men constitute 57.6% of all male basketball players, 46.9% of all football players, but only 4.8% of all baseball players (Lapchick et al., 2015). In Division I competition, Black women constitute 51% of all female basketball players, 26.8% of all outdoor track-and-field athletes, and only 7.2% of all softball players (NCAA, 2014 as cited in Lapchick et al., 2015). These statistics are consistent with previous reports of African Americans' channeled participation in basketball, track and field, and football (Hill, 2006; Pickett et al., 2012).

With regard to the coaching and executive levels of collegiate athletics, the CSRGRC, indicated that there continues to be gross underrepresentation of African Americans in leadership positions (Lapchick et al., 2015). In fact, the CSRGRC highlighted significant decreases overall

in diverse hiring practices across all sports with respect to race and gender (Lapchick et al., 2015). However, over the past five years, there have been gradual declines in the presence of African American male and female coaches in basketball and football (Lapchick et al., 2015). These reductions in African American leadership positions are worrisome; especially since they are occurring in sports with the largest African American student-athlete populations. Despite African Americans' student-athletes' dominant presence in collegiate athletics, there continues to be a glass ceiling that prevents African Americans from ascending into coaching and executive positions. This leadership void has important implications for the unavailability of mentors and role models, as well as for the possible complex and challenging interracial dynamics between white coaches and African-American student-athletes.

By neglecting the needs of African American female student-athletes, mental health professionals and the athletic community are discounting a rich history of achievement and a viable avenue for African American young women to pursue higher education and to enhance their development and well-being (Fields, 2000). African American female student-athletes deserve to be included meaningfully in the conversation about college sports as their stressors and needs are valid. It is timely for increased research to contribute to protecting a population of students who are often ignored, silenced, and overlooked. In efforts not to implicitly or explicitly reinforce the SBW stereotype, but to fill the gaps in the intervention literature, this dissertation aimed to create the curriculum for a culturally-specific stress management workshop series for African American female student-athletes. The workshop series: Strengths-based Interventions for African American STudent-Athletes experiencing Stress (S.I.S.T.A.S.) aims (a) to provide African American female student-athletes with engagement in stress management interventions that are consistent with collective values of African-centered psychology and research on African

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Americans; and (b) to enhance the African American female student-athletes' collective

strengths and identities as African American women. The structure and content of the

workshop's curriculum will be discussed further in the results chapter.

Chapter II: Literature Review

African American women's participation in sports significantly predates the passing of Title IX. The rich history of African Americans' involvement in sport has been largely preserved through oral tradition and the publishing of these narratives. Arthur Ashe, who made unparalleled contributions to the sport of tennis, made an invaluable contribution to the preservation of the legacies of African American athletes by publishing three volumes of his book, *A Hard Road to Glory.* In the last volume, Ashe (1988) focuses on the history of African American athletes since 1946. While Ashe's anthology largely focuses on the achievements of African American men in sport, he made a significant effort to include the untold stories of African American female athletes and female student-athletes. Many of these unsung heroes were only allowed to compete in track and field, basketball, and volleyball; yet their excellence was a catalyst for birthing more opportunities for African American female student-athletes' in sport.

Overall, African American female student-athletes have been largely marginalized in sport-related literature. Original studies that included African American female student-athletes focused on their graduation rates as well as the early implications of Title IX, but failed to attend to their lived experiences in sport (Person, Benson-Quaziena, & Rogers, 2001).   Despite the limited representation of African American female student-athletes in the literature, many African American women empowered themselves to document and to celebrate the legacies of African American female athletes (Abney, 1999). One of the first explorations of African American women and sport, was authored by four women from Temple University (Green, Oglesby, Alexander, & Franke, 1981). This anthology included 17 biographical sketches of successful African American women in sport. It is important to note that many of the women

featured were former student-athletes who had assumed leadership positions, which was uncommon, especially during that era. As African American women assumed the power of narrating their own story, additional researchers began conducting qualitative studies with African American female student-athletes. Although literature about African American female student-athletes is still limited in comparison to their athletic counterparts; the seminal articles dedicated to empowering the voices of African American female student-athletes will be reviewed. Additionally, research on the stressors that impact student-athletes at large and African American female student-athletes specifically will be presented. First, however, it is important to present the larger framework for this project that is informed by the stress and coping literature.

Psychological Stress and The Transactional Model

Hans Selye, a physician who is considered the father of stress research, once stated that "Stress is the spice of life" (Humphrey et al., 2000, p.11). His work largely focused on the physical and physiological effects of stress on the body as well as the positive and negative benefits of stress (Humphrey et al., 2000). The earliest conceptualizations of stress in psychology drew upon the stimulus-response literature which viewed stress as an unpleasant stimulus that caused several reactions that could have negative effects (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Implicit in the earlier models of stress was the idea that a certain response was produced when a cue/situation was deemed stressful. However, researchers realized that there are individual differences in what someone identifies as stressful; consequently, producing potential innumerable responses to these cues or situations. Therefore, as a reflection of the understanding that stress is contextualized within an individual's experience, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) broadened and coined their definition of psychological stress to incorporate context, represented

by the transaction or relationship between a person and his or her environment. Psychological stress was thus defined as "a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 19). Drawing upon Selye's early writings about stress stimuli, Lazarus and Cohen (1977) referred to the stress stimuli as *stressors*. Lazarus and Cohen (1977) reported that there are three types of stressors: (a) major changes that are cataclysmic and affect large numbers of people; (b) major changes that affect one or a few persons; and (c) daily hassles. For the purpose of this study, the Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) definition of psychological stress and their transactional stress model will serve as the overarching conceptual framework.

One of the essential elements of Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional stress model is the construct of cognitive appraisal. Embedded in their definition of psychological stress and in their transactional model, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) emphasize the importance of one's cognitive appraisals of the environment in the evaluation of possible harm, threat or danger. Cognitive appraisals are the product of scanning the environment and evaluating encounters with respect to its possible impact on one's wellbeing (Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen & DeLongis, 1986; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The researchers propose that when an individual is in a stressful situation, he or she may engage in primary appraisals and secondary appraisals to select appropriate coping skills.

There are three types of primary appraisal: (a) irrelevant, (b) benign-positive, and (c) stressful (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). When an individual encounters a potentially stressful event (e.g. answering a question in class) yet determines that it does not have any potential effect on their wellbeing, then it is deemed irrelevant. Benign-positive appraisals are formed if an

individual hypothesizes that the outcome of the stressful encounter will be positive (e.g. confidence that they know the correct answer). Stressful primary appraisals include considerations of possible threat, harm/loss, and challenge (e.g., belief that the professor will think that she is stupid; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Collectively, primary appraisals allow one to survey what is at stake in the face of stressor(s).

Once situations are determined to be threatening or challenging situations via primary appraisal, individuals are faced with deciding how they are going to cope. This initiates engagement in another appraisal process called secondary appraisal (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Secondary appraisal is a complex process in which individuals review all of the possible outcomes of the stressful event and engage in introspection to decide if they believe that they have the internal resources to cope with the potential outcome. In the example of being asked a question in class; the individual may feel anxious because of uncertainty regarding the correct answer and may worry that their response may be wrong. These concerns may cause the individual to consider coping strategies to prepare for the embarrassment of stating the wrong answer. Additional factors, such as amount of time spent studying or past performance in similar situations, will influence the stress appraisals and assessment of available coping resources. Primary and secondary appraisals are complex processes that are constantly shifting and sparking new appraisals based on an individual's interaction with the environment.

Coping. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define coping as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (p. 141). Therefore, coping is a sophisticated process that is constantly shifting based on the appraisals and reappraisals that occur. Two main

types of coping methods were initially proposed: problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping.

Problem-focused coping. Problem-focused coping strategies include redefining the problem, weighing the costs and benefits of possible solutions, and efforts to change the environment and change the self (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Problem-focused coping is geared toward managing or changing the problem causing the distress. It is an effective coping strategy when the stressor is able to be controlled and can be changed (Myers, 2012; Campbell, 2015). Using the previous example, problem-focused coping might include increasing the number of hours studying or securing a tutor.

Emotion-focused coping. In contrast, emotion-focused coping is geared toward managing the emotional responses to the problem. This process can include use of several strategies such as avoidance, minimization, distancing, and reappraisal of stressful situations in efforts to find positivity in the midst of adversity (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Although many individuals use the aforementioned strategies to reduce their emotional distress, there are some individuals who implement emotion-focused coping strategies such as self-blame and self-punishment in hopes of increasing their motivation– as they may have realized that they need to feel worse in order to take action towards feeling better (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Specifically, athletes may engage in efforts to intensify their emotional distress in order to activate themselves for competition (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Meaning-focused coping. In contrast to problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping strategies, meaning-focused coping aims to accept stressful situations by learning lessons and making meaning of the situations/events (Guo, Gan, & Tong, 2013). The meaning making process is filtered through an individual's global meaning-making and situational meaning-

making processes. Global meaning refers to an individual's main beliefs, goals and sense of purpose (Park & Folkman, 1997; Park, 2011). Situational meaning includes meaning about a specific event (Park & Folkman, 1997; Park, 2011). Park (2011) asserts that both levels of meaning are involved in the meaning-making process which leads to meaning-focused coping. Therefore, an individual experiences stress when there is a discrepancy between his/her appraisal of a stress event and his/her global meaning and goals (Park, 2011). Typically, in cases of loss and threat, meaning-focused coping is utilized in effort to help the individual reappraise global beliefs and reappraise meaning of the situation (Park, 2011). In the previous example meaning-focused coping might include connecting to deeply held values about education and achievement. Meaning-focused coping has been examined in narratives of college students' identity development, (McLean & Pratt, 2006), survivors of natural disasters (Guo et al., 2013) and in lives of bereaved college students (Park, 2005). One of the most salient meaning-focused coping strategies employed by African American women is religious and spiritual coping, which will be discussed in a latter section of the proposal.

In summary, The Transactional Stress Model postulates that stress is a transactional product that is strongly related to cognitive appraisal when it is perceived that the demands of the environment exceed his/her resources. This leads to additional cognitive appraisals in efforts to cope with the stress through changing the problem/environment, changing the emotional weight of the stress on the person or making meaning from the stressful event. The subsequent sections of this review of relevant literature will examine the impact of stress on African Americans, student-athletes collectively, and present specific illustrations of African American female student-athletes' experiences of stress.

African Americans and Stress

As noted above, Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress broadened the conceptualization of stress from earlier conceptualization of stress occurring within a linear relationship of stimulus-response to a transaction that occurs within the context of person and environment mediated by cognitive appraisals. However, a major critique of the Transactional model of stress is that it has not explicitly accounted for the impact of culture in the transaction of person and environment. Therefore, several researchers have advanced the transactional model of stress by centralizing culture in conceptualizations of stress models (Harrell, 2000; Lyris Lewis-Coles & Constantine, 2006; McCreary, Cunningham, Ingram & Fife, 2006).

  PEaCE-based transactional stress process model. One of the culturally-centered stress transactional models is Harrell's PEaCE-based Stress and Resilience Framework (Harrell, 2016; see Figure 1), an application of her Person-Environment-and-Culture-Emergence Theory (PEaCE; Harrell, 2015). PEaCE Theory is a sophisticated and integrative systemic approach to conceptualizing individual and collective wellness outcomes. PEaCE Theory includes the complex dimensionality of a Person (e.g. cognitive, somatic, identity, and spiritual/transpersonal), the multiple levels of contextualization of the Environment (e.g. interpersonal, communal, organizational, temporal) and the processes and patterns of living that comprise dimensions of Culture. PEaCE Theory postulates that the person, culture, and environment are in ongoing transaction ("Person-in-Culture-in-Context" transactions) that are expressed in individual and collective lived experience occurring within a complex and inclusive transactional field (Harrell, 2015). The "Person-in-Culture-in-Context" transactions can lead to wellness-promoting outcomes (e.g. resilience, wellbeing, thriving, and optimism) or pathogenic outcomes (e.g. distress, disorder, dysfunction, and disease) (Harrell, 2015).
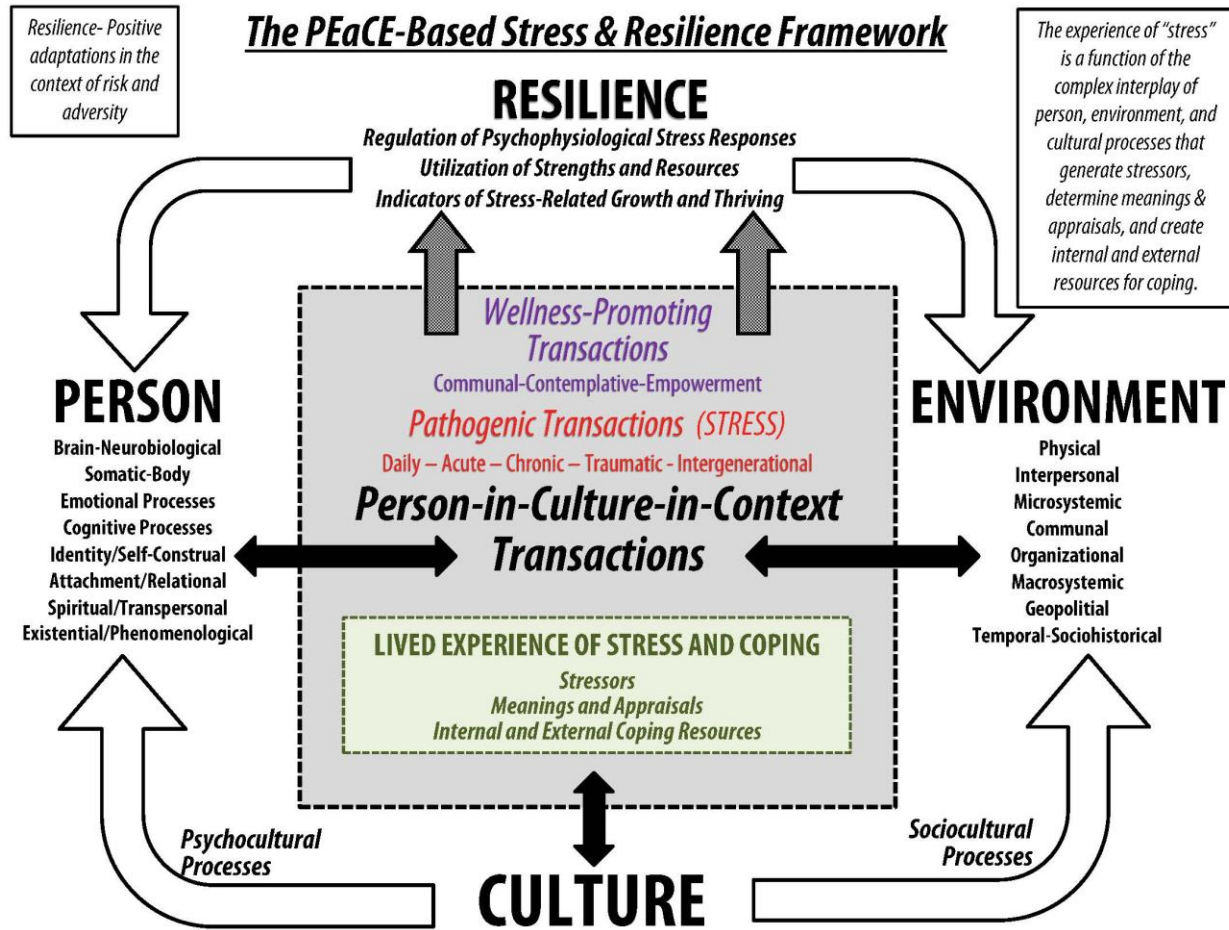
Figure 1. The PEaCE-based stress and resilience framework. From The Resilience and Reconnection (R&R) Group Facilitator Guide. Unpublished treatment manual. Copyright Shelly P. Harrell, Ph.D. 2016. Reprinted with permission.

The PEaCE-based Transactional Stress and Resilience Framework is similar to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model given that stress is conceptualized as a transactional occurrence between person and environment and is mediated by appraisals. However, Harrell (2015) asserts that person, culture, and environment cannot be separated. Therefore, culture is not viewed as an afterthought of her model, but is embedded in the core of the multiple transactional processes. Thus, in the PEaCE-based framework, when an individual experiences a stressor, it does not occur in a vacuum. Instead, it is filtered through the aforementioned Person-in-Culture-in

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Context transactional process such that the ways an individual (a) experiences the stressor, (b) makes meaning and appraises the stressor and (c) assesses the availability of internal/external coping resources, is heavily influenced by culture. Therefore, the goal of PEaCE-informed interventions to assist the individual with actively creating better person-culture-environment fit transactions that will lead to wellness promoting outcomes.

Given that African Americans are exposed to episodic and chronic stressors as a result of their racial-ethnic group membership (Harrell, 2000; Utsey, 1999), embedded in culture-centered models of well-being is attention to the phenomenon of race-related stress. In fact, Utsey (1998) argued that being Black in America takes a psychological, emotional and somatic toll, even for African Americans who have been able to achieve professional and economic success. Chronic experiences of racism have been linked to several stress-related medical conditions; most importantly cardiovascular disease (Krieger & Sidney, 1996 as cited in Utsey, 1998). This is particularly threatening to African Americans women because cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of their deaths in the U.S (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015)

The impact of race-related stress also has a significant impact on African American women. The literature asserts that when African American women experience stress, the intersection of gender and race-ethnicity must be examined (Jackson, Hogue, & Phillips, 2005; Pieterse, Carter & Ray, 2013; Moradi & Subich, 2003) because African American women are more susceptible to race-related stress (Greer, Laseter, & Asiamah, 2009). In a study that investigated general stressful life events and race-related stress, African American women endorsed experiencing several race-related stressors within a one-month span (e.g. being called a racist name, being accused or suspected of stealing an item, or having an argument or fight related to something racist; Pieterse et al.,2013). Results of the study indicated that the frequency

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of racist events was highly correlated with overall general life stress (Pieterse et al., 2013). In an investigation of African American women's use of coping strategies for racism and sexism, Shorter-Gooden (2004) found that African American women utilized religious/spiritual coping, relied on support networks, sustained a positive self-image, and made decisions to confront the antagonist or to avoid the antagonist.

Student-athletes and Stress

Humphrey, Yow and Bowden (2000) completed a qualitative study on the impact of stress on student-athletes, athletic directors and coaches. Participants were instructed to respond to the prompt: "Stress is _____." Results indicated that "pressure" was the most commonly used by student-athletes, athletic directors and coaches to complete the sentence. In fact, 25.5% of all student-athletes in the study created phrases incorporating "pressure" (Humphrey, Yow & Bowden, 2000). Consistent with Parham's (1993) and Pinkerton and colleagues' (1989) findings, the most endorsed stressors by the student-athletes were related to academic problems, athletic demands, time, relationships with others, and finances (Humphrey et al., 2000).

Consistent with the above-mentioned findings, a sample of 210 Kenyan student-athletes identified their top three stressors as interpersonal interactions (e.g. negative interactions with coaches and teammates), environmental (e.g. stagnated performance, lack of team cohesion) and competition training (e.g. lack of progression, isolation) (Rintaugu, Litaba, Muema and Monyeki, 2014). Although the participants of the study were international students; the findings suggest that many international student-athletes of the African Diaspora face similar stressors to African American female student-athletes. (Rintaugu et al., 2014).

Developmental challenges. Like their non-athlete peers, college student-athletes are challenged to negotiate many common developmentally appropriate challenges such as: (a)

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creating identities separate from familial and external influences; (b) developing and managing relationships; (c) enhancing personal competencies to exert some control over one's environment; (d) forming their emerging moral beliefs and working toward consistency of behaviors; (e) setting career goals and choosing a career path (Parham, 1996; Parham, 1993). However, there are additional stressors that are specific to student-athletes. Parham (1993) identified six common stressors specifically for student-athletes as: (a) learning to balance pursuit of academic and athletic goals (b) adapting to isolation from "mainstream" social campus activities; (c) managing success or lack thereof; (d) attending to their own physical health in efforts to minimize risk of injury and subsequent rehabilitation; (e) navigating multiple relationships with coaches, parents, friends & community; and (f) terminating an athletic career and finding other activities in which participation will produce similar levels of passion and satisfaction. Despite the literature being authored twenty years ago, the findings still resonate today. In fact, it can be argued that these stressors are significantly heightened for the student-athlete in 2016. Moreover, the increased media exposure and exponential grossing of revenue incurred by the NCAA (Berkowitz, 2015) can lead to an increase in pressure for the student-athlete to win.

Invisible identities. One can argue that student-athletes are subjected to increased psychological stress when they perceive that they are unable to meet their sport-related and non-sport related challenges, due to the role of (in)visible identities. For instance, student-athletes with physical disabilities (e.g. impaired hearing) may employ coping strategies (e.g. reading lips) as a compensatory strategy to hide their disability from coaches and teammates to prevent reduced playing time and discrimination (Parham, 1996). In concerted efforts to respond to suggestions by Stratta (1995) and Parham (1996), the proposed S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop aims to

create a safe space for student-athletes and athletic personnel to discuss several aspects of diversity.

Sexual orientation. Student-athletes that identify as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) community, may have complex experiences and reactions to stress (Parham, 1996). Within the last five years, society has witnessed the first "Coming Out" announcements in collegiate football and basketball – the top revenue-generating sports in collegiate sports (Fagan, 2014; Connelly, 2014). While there has been significant advancement in creating safe environments to foster acceptance of differences, these individuals were subject to significant and overt and covert discrimination. Therefore, student-athletes who are members of the LGBTQ community may have difficulty establishing relationships, or fully exploring various aspects of their identity due to the fear of being "found out" (Parham, 1996).

African American male student-athletes and stress. The African American student-athlete's presence arguably has been unwelcomed since Jesse Owens won four gold medals at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games as Adolf Hitler and other Swatiska-adorned people watched from the stands. Mr. Owens not only competed but excelled in the face of significant "stress" to say the least. During Mr. Owens' historic performance, it was noted that audience members initially feared cheering for Owens; yet eventually did (Bennett Jr., 1996). At the time of Mr. Owens' competition, he was a standout non-scholarship student-athlete in track and field at Ohio State University. A year prior to the Olympic Games, Mr. Owens had set three world records and tied a fourth world record while competing at the Big Ten Conference track meet in Ann Arbor, Michigan (Bennett Jr., 1996). While it may seem that the hostile conditions of Jesse Owens were episodic, African American student-athletes have continued to be subjected to stressors

housed in overt and covert racist environments at Predominantly White Institutions (PWI).

It is important to note that African American student-athletes can experience racism in non-sport related contexts as a function of being an underrepresented student at a predominantly White institution. A recent example is the courageous stand by the University of Missouri football team who boycotted all football activities and called for the university's then-president's, Tim Wolfe's resignation, due to his unresponsiveness to racist events occurring on campus. These events include racial slurs being hurled at the University's Black student body president as well as feces smeared on the wall in the shape of a Swastika in a residence hall (Tracy & Southall, 2015). This was a powerful protest in which student-athletes prioritized their various identities and roles as people concerned about racism over their role of being a student-athlete. By utilizing their power as student-athletes, the football players significantly aligned with their fellow students who had been staging protests in the previous weeks. As a senior Mizzou football player, Ian Simon stated, "Through this experience, we've really been able to bridge that gap between student-athletes — in the phrase 'student-athlete' — by connecting with the community and realizing the bigger picture" (Culpepper, 2015). Additionally, the football team unified to employ problem-focused coping mechanisms to effect significant change in their immediate environment. As a result of the collective protests, Tim Wolfe resigned without the football team having to miss a game, which would have cost the university approximately one million dollars.

The stressors for the African American student-athlete are complex. Whether they are contending with being the only African American seated in a lecture hall, experiencing isolation due to their complex schedule or having relationship difficulties – the intersection of their identities and developmental stages (internal and external stressors) challenges them to

employ a variety of coping resources to persevere.

African American female student-athletes and stress. As previously stated, the stressors for African American female student-athletes are often rooted in racism and sexism. Teresa Stratta conducted one of the first ethnographic studies with African American female student-athletes at a Division I university. Stratta's (1992) data collection lasted for over fifteen months as she examined the meaning of intercollegiate sport to the student-athletes. Her findings indicated that the participants felt that they had been treated similarly to slaves; given that they felt ordered around by their White coaches and White teammates (Stratta, 1995). Stratta's (1992) seminal study led to recommendations for athletic directors, coaches and teammates that will be detailed in a latter section of the proposal. Several specific stressors can be identified that are particularly relevant to African American female athletes. These include: (a) Silencing, (b) Stereotypes, and (c) Body Image Concerns.

Silencing and stereotypes. Bruening and colleagues (2004; 2005a; 2005b) conducted some of the seminal qualitative studies with African American female student-athlete participants. The overarching main purpose of these studies was to reduce the "silencing" of African American female student-athletes in their immediate environments, in sport literature, and the media. With respect to limited representation of African American female student-athletes in the media, the literature clearly argues that African American female student-athletes would significantly benefit from mentorship and role models (Abney, 1999; Carter and Hart, 2010; Howard-Hamilton, 1993; Sanchez-Hucles, Dryden, & Hucles, 2013; Person et al.,2001). For some African American young women, their role models are established via television portrayals of African American women (Bruening et al., 2005). Although there has been an increase in visibility of successful African American female student-athletes and professional

athletes, their media exposure pales in comparison to the male counterparts in their respective sports. For instance, while some people may recognize former great African American women athletes: Jackie Joyner-Kersee, Lisa Leslie, Althea Gibson, and Laila Ali. Most people, however, will more easily recognize Carl Lewis, Michael Jordan, Arthur Ashe, and Mike Tyson. Some African American student-athletes indicated that this discrepancy in media viewership can be attributed to some young African American women being discouraged to pursue sport participation (Bruening et al., 2005). By providing opportunities for first person narratives, African American female student-athletes were provided a safe forum to also discuss the negative impact of being subjected to stereotypes about perceived innate athletic ability and academic inferiority (Bruening et al., 2005).

Withycombe (2011) furthered qualitative research with African American female student-athletes. She gathered the personal narratives of eight African American female student-athletes to study how the intersection of their identities and interactions with stereotypes had affected their college sport experiences. Analyses of their narratives revealed that the student athletes' sport experiences often included confrontation of gender stereotypes and racial stereotypes, which included assumptions about perceived "laziness" of African American female student-athletes and their "natural" athletic abilities. Despite encountering negative stereotypes, the participants also endorsed positive experiences in sport and resilient attitudes of willingness to overcome any barriers to their success-including racism and sexism.

Carter-Francique, Lawrence and Eyanson (2011) expanded on data collected by (Lawrence, 2005) in order to conduct one of the first phenomenological inquiries with 4 African American female student-athletes to examine their experiences of racism in three contexts: game situations, school settings and stores/restaurants. Analysis of the interviews revealed four

themes: Sting, Isolated/Welcome, Disparity and Rude Awakening. The theme, Sting, included athletes' reports of feeling saddened by not being picked for athletic teams based on race, having difficult relationships with coaches, which led to reduction of playing time or the player eventually leaving the sport (Carter-Francique et al., 2011). The theme, Isolated/Welcome included experiences of the participants hearing racial slurs at sporting events, feeling isolated in classes and on campus and some positive experiences of bonding with teammates and athletic personnel. The theme, Disparity, was comprised of the athletes' experiences of noticing physical, financial and cultural differences between themselves and their other ethnic-identified teammates. The final theme, Rude Awakening consisted of the athletes' first experiences with racial discrimination. These experiences included being refused service by while attending a team dinner at a restaurant, reading derogatory statements about themselves in the local newspapers and being subjected to prejudice related to being restricted from playing premiere positions (e.g. pitcher or point guard) and having premiere status (e.g. captain or co-captain) on sport teams. Furthermore, this study highlighted the nuances of the impact of racism on the African American student female athletes in their own words.

In a study using archival data of over 5,000 student-athletes, Sellers, Kuperminc, & Damas Jr. (1997) examined surveys from a subsample of 154 African American women student-athletes to determine if their college life experiences differed significantly than those of African American male student-athletes and White women student-athletes. The research team found that African American female student-athletes performed above 2.0 grade point average requirements, denied experiencing isolation on campuses, and endorsed minimal racial tension (Sellers et al., 1997). After controlling for effects of the athlete's individual upbringing, Sellers and colleagues found that African American women athletes excelled academically more than

their male counterparts but less than their White counterparts and non-athletic peers. Additional findings indicated that African American women athletes' college experiences were most comparable to African American women non-athletes; except in the area of academic achievement where African American non-athletes were superior. Moreover, these studies emphasis on the first-person experiences of African American women athletes highlighted the overdue analysis of African American women and sport.

It is also important to note that the twenty-first century ushered in an increase coverage of African Americans non-athletes' visibility on television. There have been several positive images that give African Americans some diverse opportunities to have positive African American role models outside of athletes (e.g. news anchors, characters on family-friendly television shows, and images of an all-African American First Family). Unfortunately, negative stereotypical portrayals of Black womanhood have also grown exponentially. These pervasive images not only impact the attitudes, perceptions and beliefs that some African American women can have of themselves but can also shape and "confirm" the prejudiced views and behaviors that others have of African American women. Furthermore, limited positive portrayals of African American women through the media may reduce the opportunities for African American female student-athletes to develop role models outside of sport.

African American female student- athletes are not only exposed to negative stereotypes about being an African American woman, but also about being an athlete. A significant body of investigation has been completed regarding the impact of stereotype threat on African American students (Johnson-Ahorlu, 2013) and student-athletes (Dee, 2014; Hively & El-Alayli, 2014). The concept of stereotype threat posits that African Americans (and other historically oppressed minority groups) are painfully aware when they are in an environment that hold negative

assumptions about their group and that this awareness negatively impacts performance. (Steele & Aronson, 1995). This heightened awareness influences persons in the targeted group to feel increased pressure to disprove the stereotype. Consequently, this increased pressure can influence individuals to underperform.

Since the impact of stereotype threat has been proven with African American male and female students, the investigation of the impact of stereotype threat has expanded to the field of sports. Given the intersection of being an African American woman and an athlete, African American female student-athletes are at an increased risk for racial and gendered stereotypes. Hively and El-Alayli (2014) conducted a study of the impact of stereotype threat on female basketball players and female tennis players. In the experimental settings, the female student-athletes were asked to engage in two tasks related to their sport: one task was described as easy and the other task was described as difficult. Prior to asking the female student-athletes to engage in the difficult task, the investigators told the participants that the task assessed the natural ability of the student-athletes and reported that there was an expected gendered difference on the task.

Results of the study indicated that the female student-athletes underperformed on the difficult task after receiving the feedback that there were expected gendered norms for their performances (Hively & El-Alayli, 2014). The results suggest that a "simple" comment about stereotypes and gender can be internalized and have significant impact on a female-athlete's performance.

Body image concerns. Another stressor for African American female athletes is the consistent contention with scrutiny about their "masculine bodies." In a study comparing perceptions of body image and psychological wellbeing of African American women athletes and nonathletes, Prakasa Rao and Overman (1986) found that the athletes endorsed slightly more

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positive perceptions of body image and wellbeing than the nonathletes. Despite the findings, the researchers acknowledged that the constant comparison of a woman athlete's body to a male athlete's body may impact the woman athlete's self-concept, wellbeing, and body image in the future (Prakasa Rao & Overman, 1986). The scrutiny and degradation of Black women's bodies is often associated with the assumption that muscular and athletic Black women are lesbians (Blum, 1994). For female student-athletes who are navigating a developmental stage that prioritizes establishing relationships – romantic and platonic; these assumptions can be particularly damaging for student-athletes given the stigma and heterosexism in society. Unfortunately, history has provided many lessons regarding the dissection and commoditization of African American women's bodies has been occurring since the Transatlantic Slave Trade and has permeated throughout sports, entertainment, and media. This pervasive preoccupation of Black female athletes' bodies can be observed through recent headlines and discourse.

In December 2015, a retired National Basketball Association player, Gilbert Arenas, posted a video on a social media website showing women playing basketball while wearing thong underwear. The caption of the video alluded to the decrease in viewership of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) games being related to the perceived lack of beauty of the athletes. After receiving backlash from the WNBA and several others on social media, Mr. Arenas responded by saying

> (sic) I don't care if u dont like the truth becuz MEN DON'T WANNA WATCH WOMEN ACT LIKE MEN…. if they came out with an all #gay man sport...I bet they will wear less clothes then the #WNBA and thats a #FACT lol NOW GIVE US WHAT WE WANT and unveil them bodies. (Galanis, 2015, p. 1)

There are several layers to the impact of Mr. Arenas' comments. Not only were the comments misogynistic and hurtful, but they were made by an African American man about a basketball association that predominantly consists of African American women players.

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Additionally, the WNBA players were subjected to misogynistic comments that were made by a peer – a professional athlete. Furthermore, by Mr. Arenas exclaiming that "Men don't wanna watch women act like men;" he was equating playing basketball with masculinity, which is discriminatory against women athletes. Unfortunately, Mr. Arenas' remarks was consistent with research conducted over twenty-five years ago that examined how African American women athletes are characterized as ugly and animalistic (Cahn, 1990). This suggests that Mr. Arenas' remarks are not happenstance but yet represent a systematically oppressive view of African American women in general and African American female student-athletes specifically, across several generations. Moreover, this incident displays how one stressful situation has the ability to provoke several emotional reactions which require African American female athletes to employ complex coping mechanisms. The WNBA elected to engage in problem-solving coping by addressing Mr. Arenas' initial comments directly. However, given Mr. Arenas' unapologetic stance and decision to make additional misogynistic comments, several WNBA players responded by employing emotion-focused coping skills by making statements denouncing the power of his words.

In 2015, Serena Williams became the first African American woman awarded the Sports Illustrated's Sportsperson of the Year. The award is a merited acknowledgement of her outstanding athletic achievements within the past year – which included three out of four major tennis championships. Although the award is titled "Sportsperson of the Year," there were outcries via social media that the award should have been awarded to American Pharaoh, a thoroughbred horse that completed a clean sweep of racing events that led to the awarding of Triple Crown. This response suggested the comparing of an African American woman to a racehorse. The controversy led to CNN creating a poll, inviting people to vote for who they

believed deserved the award. The results were slightly in favor of Ms. Williams. However other

people recognized the implicit message communicated about Serena Williams and Black women

at large. British journalist Borough Scott stated,

> There has been an anti-Serena element because she didn't fit the stereotype of the old-fashioned, elegant white female tennis player. "She was big and muscular and black. Let's be candid about it, there's been plenty of that sort of unspoken prejudice against Serena, I'd have thought, over the years. (Murphy, 2015, p.1)

Consistent with Borough Scott's points – this is not the first time that Serena's appearance has

faced significant critique. As African American young women hailing from Compton, CA,

Serena and her older sister, professional tennis player, Venus Williams, were significantly

critiqued for the beads that they were adorned in their hair. After several complaints masked

under the concern for other tennis players' safety, (should the beads fall on the court) the

Williams sisters changed their hairstyles.

 America's preference for Eurocentric standards of beauty underlies the consistent critique of the

Williams sisters' appearance and supports the rationale for Serena being second in endorsements

to Russian tennis player, Maria Sharapova - despite her dominance in professional tennis. The

former is an African American woman who is a winner of 21 Grand Slams, four Olympic Gold

medals which has equated to over $74 million in prize money (Williams, 2015). The latter is a

Russian woman who is a winner of 5 Grand Slams and one Olympic Silver medal which has

equated to over $36 million in prize money in her fourteen-year long professional (Sharapova,

2015). While both women have been successful in Women's tennis, it is clear that Ms. Williams

has been the dominant force in the sport. Despite the discrepancy in success in sports between

Ms. Williams and Ms. Sharapova, the latter makes $5.1 million more than the former in

endorsements (Badenhausen, 2015). While Ms. Williams does have endorsements for athletic

sport drinks and headphones, Ms. Sharapova's endorsements include athletic and nonathletic

products and do not typically require her to be half-clothed. Public discourse as well as Ms. Williams herself has attributed the discrepancy to Ms. Sharapova's commercial look and White supremacy-based aesthetical preference for a "blonde-haired blue-eyed" cover girl (Fox Sports, 2015). This is consistent with a student-athlete's account of being told by a parent that she would never pitch for her high school's softball team because she was not blonde-haired and blue-eyed (Carter-Francique et al., 2011). Not only is Serena overlooked but her perceived lack of marketability for some major endorsements has led to a missed opportunity for additional revenue that many professional athletes with less success in their respective sports benefit from to supplement their income. If the arguably top African American female athlete of this generation faces significant discrimination – what about other African American female athletes? Additionally, restriction of endorsements for African American female athletes robs African American female student-athletes and young African American girls of opportunities to see representations of beauty and strength that are phenotypically similar to them.

Another example of the scrutiny of African American female athletes' physical appearances occurred when former radio host, Don Imus, who happens to be a White male, referred to the Rutgers University women's basketball players as "Nappy headed hos" (Cooky, Wachs, Messner & Dworkin, 2010). This verbal attack occurred on April 4, 2007; a day after the Rutgers women's basketball team lost the NCAA national championship game against the Tennessee University Lady Volunteers. While there were outcries from the public that led to the eventual removal of Don Imus from his radio show, there were vocal and silent supporters of Don Imus's remarks as well.

Critiques of female athletes' physical appearances are particularly threatening as they can increase the risks for female student-athletes to experience body image dissatisfaction, which can

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lead to disordered eating and health complications. One of the biggest health risks to female athletes is the female athlete triad. The female athlete triad is a term coined in 1997 by the American College of Sports Medicine to describe the concurrent experience of disordered eating, amenorrhea, and osteoporosis in female athletes (Javed, Tebben, Fischer, & Lteif, 2013). The definition of female athlete triad was amended in 2007 to include a spectrum of dysfunction in the areas of menstrual functioning, energy availability and bone mineral density (Javed et al., 2013). In a study of 204 female student-athletes' disordered eating behaviors, over 50% reported being unsatisfied with their weight and of those, 80% wanted to lose an average of 13 pounds (Greenleaf, Petrie, Carter & Reel, 2009). Additionally, 25% of participants presented with symptoms of an eating disorder while 2% of participants actually met criteria for an eating disorder (Greenleaf et al., 2009). It is important to note, that the majority of participants were attempting to control their weight by increasing their exercise time (Greenleaf et al., 2009). Despite the majority of female athletes not meeting criteria for an eating disorder, overall female athletes may be at an elevated risk for developing an eating disorder due to body dissatisfaction fueled by sport participation as well as developmental factors (e.g. the desire to be attractive to and accepted by peers). The occurrence of the "female athlete triad" among African American women is an important area for further exploration.

Overall, the literature suggests that African American female student-athletes are in powerless positions where they are subjected to others assuming an unauthorized position to judge their appearance or significance which can adversely impact her self-esteem and self-worth. While many African American female student-athletes have responded resiliently by proactively defining themselves, the question remains: When will the problem - consistent critique and devaluation of African American female athletes' bodies by African American men,

White women, White men, and some African American women– end? In the meantime,

approaches to managing the stress experienced by African American female student-athletes

must be more actively investigated.

Approaches to Stress Management

According to the American Psychological Association (APA, 2007), stress has been associated

with cardiovascular disease, cancer, accidents, and suicide (APA, 2007). Therefore, it is

imperative to review stress management techniques and protocols that have been proven

effective in reducing stress. While there are several approaches to stress management, three

approaches will be reviewed that have implications for developing a stress management

workshop for African American female student-athletes: (a) stress inoculation training (SIT); (b)

mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR); and (c) resilience training.

Stress inoculation training (SIT). SIT is a cognitive behavioral therapy treatment

approach developed in 1976 in efforts to help individuals cope with stressful events and to serve

as a preventative measure to inoculate individuals to future or ongoing stressors (Meichenbaum,

1996, 2007). Similar to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), SIT subscribes to the transactional view of

stress being a product of one's appraisal that the demands of the environment exceed one's

internal and external coping resources (Meichenbaum, 1996). Overall, SIT aims to expose

individuals to milder forms of stress in efforts to increase their confidence and mastery in

employing a variety of newly learned coping strategies. By increasing opportunities for

individuals to experience mastery while being exposed to milder forms of stress; it is believed

that it helps individuals feel more prepared to cope in the event that they are faced with more

severe and challenging forms of stress in the future (Meichenbaum, 2007). Literature shows that

SIT has been found to be effective with diverse populations including individuals preparing for

medical surgeries, survivors of trauma, and athletes struggling with performance anxiety (Meichenbaum, 2007). SIT has also shown to be effective in assisting African American women college students with coping with suicidal ideation (Wang, Lightsey, Jr., Tran, & Bonaparte, 2014).

Although SIT can be individually tailored for a client and the specific nature of his/her stressors, the majority of SIT protocols consist of 8-15 sessions with subsequent follow-up sessions occurring over a 3 to 12-month period as needed. SIT is organized in three phases: (a) psychoeducation/conceptualization; (b) skills acquisition and skills rehearsal and (c) an application and follow through (Meichenbaum, 2007). During the psychoeducation/ conceptualization phase, the therapeutic relationship is formed, information is gathered about the context of the stressors, and participants are educated about how their cognitive appraisals, coping strategies and behaviors may be maintaining or exacerbating their stressors. Additionally, individuals are encouraged to reframe their perception of threatening stress situations as opportunities for them to solve problems via implementation of coping mechanisms.

During the second phase of SIT, skills acquisition and skills rehearsal, individuals are taught new skills and are assisted with consolidating the skills they already have to expand their coping mechanism toolkit. These skills include emotional regulation, self-soothing and acceptance, relaxation techniques, communication skills training, problem-solving techniques, attention diversion strategies, utilizing social supports and increasing participation in meaningful activities (Meichenbaum, 1996).

The final phase, application and follow through, presents participants with opportunities to test out their newly acquired skills (e.g. guided imagery and behavioral rehearsal) in a graduated hierarchy of stressors, which allows them to experience inoculation (Meichenbaum, 1996). The

overarching goal of the final phase is to engage in significant relapse prevention planning. Any difficulties experienced by participants in implementing the newly learned skills are reframed as "lapses" and opportunities to get feedback and make adjustments as needed. Intentional attention is given to discussion of potential high risk situations in efforts to support the participant in game-planning coping mechanisms while not facing the stressor simultaneously. Additionally, SIT therapists or trainers help clients plan for success by scheduling bolster sessions and encouraging social supports to participate in assisting client with follow-through of follow-up treatment guidelines. Involving social support in treatment also helps to potentially change the stressful system/environment that the client will return to - in efforts to reduce the transactional link between stress and environment.

SIT has been shown to be effective in a variety of contexts, specifically with athletes. In a study of Canadian gymnasts, Kerr and Leith (1993) found that participants assigned to the SIT intervention demonstrated superior performance, mental rehearsal and attention skills than the control group. Additionally, SIT interventions have been used to assist athletes with coping with conflicts with coaches and to reduce performance anxiety (Smith, 1980). With regard to African American women, SIT has shown to be effective with African American female college students who were experiencing significant distress and suicidal ideation (Wang et al.,2014). Furthermore, incorporation of psychoeducation, skills training and skills rehearsal, and relapse prevention appears essential to include in the development of the curriculum of the workshop for African American female student-athletes.

Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR). Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) is an empirically supported stress reduction program created by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts in 1979 (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Woods-Giscombé & Black, 2010).

MBSR incorporates mindfulness meditation practice, which is rooted in Buddhist principles, into psychology and medicine to alleviate suffering related to psychiatric, physical and psychosomatic disorders (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt, & Walach, 2003; Bergen-Cico, Possemato & Cheon, 2013). Mindfulness is defined as the awareness of paying attention to present moments in a nonjudgmental manner (Bergen-Cico et al., 2013; Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Typically, MBSR is implemented in a group format and consists of 8-10 weekly 2.5 hour-long sessions, with an accompanying all-day workshop executed on a weekend (Grossman et al., 2003). Sessions are dedicated to teaching participants formal and informal mindfulness meditation skills, including: body scanning, sitting meditation, and mindful hatha yoga (Miller, Fletcher, & Kabat-Zinn, 1995; Grossman et al., 2003). Participants are encouraged to practice the newly learned mindfulness meditation skills daily for approximately 45 minutes (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, 2003). Additionally, participants are

taught how to observe their thoughts and emotional experiences (Woods-Giscombé & Black, 2010).

Research indicates the MBSR skills have been effective for treating individuals with a wide span of mental disorders, medical conditions and presenting problems including psoriasis, cancer and depression (Bernhard, Kristeller, & Kabat-Zinn, 1988; Saxe et al., 2001; Tacón, Caldera, & Ronaghan, 2004; Miller et al.,1995). Individuals who reported higher levels of mindfulness were found to be more empathic, passionate and accepting toward themselves, exhibited effective communication skills and experienced less relationship distress (Burgoon, Berger & Waldron, 2000; Wupperman, Neurmann & Axelrod, 2008). These findings were consistent with results from a meta-analysis of empirical studies of MBSR, in which Grossman and colleagues (2003) concluded that MBSR was successful in treating a variety of presentations

and subsequently may assist in developing coping strategies for chronic disorders or everyday stress.

MBSR has shown effectiveness with this study's target population of African American women and college students. In a brief MBSR intervention with college students, Bergen-Cico and colleagues (2013) indicated that MBSR reduced the participants' psychological distress, improved their wellbeing, and enhanced their psychological health and self-compassion. Another brief MBSR intervention with eighteen at-risk African American youth participants, who were largely HIV-positive, led to reductions in hostility, emotional discomfort and general discomfort. The participants also reported improvement in relationship functioning, school achievement, physical health and stress reduction (Sibinga et al., 2011). Woods-Giscombé and Black (2010) argued that MBSR could be particularly useful for African American women because their coping strategies are largely related to displays of "strength" which can include emotional suppression, extraordinary caregiving and postponement of one's needs. These displays of "strength" were described as characteristics of Strong Black Woman Script (SBW-S; Black & Woods-Giscombé, 2009) and Superwoman Schema (SWS; Woods-Giscombé, 2010) frameworks, which are both largely related to the Strong Black Woman Stereotype (SBW; Donovan & West, 2015) described in the introduction. Given that MBSR focuses on observation of thoughts and emotions, it may help African American women who subscribe to the aforementioned archetypes to enhance their awareness of and to foster acceptance of their varied emotional experiences (Woods-Giscombé & Black, 2010). Additionally, MBSR may be particularly helpful for African American women to observe and normalize their emotional reactions related to their chronic exposure to psychosocial stressors (e.g. economic stress, race-related stress and gender-related stress (Woods-Giscombé & Black, 2010).

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Moreover, given the effectiveness of MBSR with numerous clinical populations, varied

severity of stressors, and potential utility for reducing stress in African American women, MBSR

interventions may be incorporated into the curriculum for the S.I.S.T.A.S. stress management

workshop.

Resilience training. Resilience training is a systematic manner of teaching skills to

develop and to enhance resilience. Formalized resilience training was first implemented with

military populations. Currently, upon entry into the U.S. military, soldiers are enrolled into a

comprehensive resilience training program in efforts to equip soldiers with mental and physical

skills to help the soldier cope with personal and combat-related challenges (Cornum, Matthews,

& Seligman, 2011). The origins of resilience training began with developmental psychologists'

studies of *resilience*, which was defined as some children's abilities to continue to thrive after

their exposure to chronic stress, experiences of abuse and/or living in a chaotic environment

(Bonnano & Diminich, 2013; Hartling, 2008; Masten, 1994). The initial marker of a child's

resilience was viewed as his/her ability to overcome these aforementioned challenges without

developing psychopathology in adulthood (Bonnano & Diminich, 2013; Hartling, 2008; Masten,

1994). Thus, initial resilience literature examined individual characteristics that were

hypothesized as significant factors in children's abilities to thrive in the face of adversity. These

factors, which were labeled *protective factors,* included: high intelligence, sociable temperament

and a high level of creativity (Rutter, 1987). As resilience literature advanced, researchers

critiqued the individualistic assumption that resilience was an innate quality that some

individuals were privileged to be born with (Anderson, 2009). Therefore, resilience studies

expanded to examine adults, family protective factors and community protective factors

(Bonanno, 2005; Hartling, 2008; Anderson, 2009). These include: social competence, problem

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solving skills, autonomy, sense of purpose and future, caring and supportive environment, high positive expectations, and opportunities for meaningful involvement (Benard, 1996).

The conceptualization of resilience also shifted from identifying specific protective factors of resilience to focus on identifying processes that facilitate the development of resilience and identifying different types of resilience (Egeland, Carlson & Sroufe, 1993 as cited in Anderson, 2009). For instance, Anderson (2009) studied individual and environmental strengths which she argued, are instrumental in promoting resilience. Individual strengths consisted of personal talents, skills and the ability to learn lessons from previous challenges (Anderson, 2009). Environmental strengths consisted of opportunities to develop additional strengths, the presence of caring relationships, and resources available to enhance wellbeing (Saleebey, 2009 as cited in Anderson, 2009). Hartling (2008) built upon Judith Jordan's work on relational resilience by arguing that resilience is fostered in relationships that enhance empowerment, a sense of self-worth, and connection. This is particularly consistent with the literature which states that developing relationships is a primary developmental task for college students and can be a source of support or a source of stress for African American female student-athletes. Hartling (2008) and Jordan's work also provides additional evidence for why African American female student-athletes need mentors.

African American female student-athletes are resilient by virtue of their statuses as college students. As the literature shows, African American female student-athletes face significant stressors as African American women, a college student and a female student-athlete. Whether they have been subjected to economic disadvantages, trauma, or encountering adults who attempted to sully their dreams; they have overcome obstacles to pursue their academic and athletic dreams. The proposed S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop aims to assist African American female

student-athletes with nurturing their resilient spirits as they navigate shifting stressors on their collegiate journeys.

Interventions for Student-Athletes

There is a need for interventions that are designed specifically for African American female student-athletes. Similar to research regarding the experiences of student-athletes, African American women have been marginalized in the development of interventions for student-athletes. While there are intervention programs that focus on student-athletes collectively; that is often interpreted as male student-athletes or female student-athletes; which negates the unique race-related and intersectionality stressors of African American women. There is a semester-long seminar dedicated to African American female student-athletes (University of Southern California, 2013); however, there is no known formalized stress management intervention programs created specifically for African American women. Researchers have acknowledged the dearth of literature focusing on African American female student-athletes and have advocated for the development of interventions and programs with specific considerations (Stratta, 1992, 1995). In this section, the existing interventions for student-athletes will be reviewed and the implications for the proposed stress management intervention program will be outlined with particular attention to developing interventions that consider cultural aspects of African American mental health.

Existing interventions for student-athletes. The initial interventions and programs created for student-athletes focused on improving the student-athletes' sport performance enhancement other aspects of the student-athletes' lives (Haney, 2004). Eventually, student-athletes' paramount struggles with maintaining academic eligibility led to the expansion of athletic departments to include additional personnel such as academic tutors and academic

counselors available for one-to-one intervention with student-athletes. While these interventions

served to improve the student-athlete's academic performance, they did not respond to the

student-athlete's holistic developmental needs. As athletic personnel noticed that attending to the

academic needs of student-athletes only addressed one facet of their needs, the goal of

interventions broadened to focus on improving the student-athlete's wellbeing. This new

awareness of the complexity of the student-athletes led to the creation of life skills intervention

programs.

Psychoeducational group/life skills programs. The psychoeducational group/life skills

intervention program was patterned as a developmental model; in efforts to respond to the

gradually shifting needs of a college student as he/she matriculates through the university. For

instance, a life skills program may include information regarding substance use, time

management, career development and safe sexual health (Broughton, 2001; Harris, Altekruse &

Engels, 2003). The NCAA responded by establishing the Challenging Athletes' Minds for

Personal Success/Life Skills program in 1991 [CHAMPS/Life Skills; NCAA 2015b). The

program currently is divided into five components that aim to increase student-athletes' levels of

commitment in the areas of academics, athletics, personal development, career development and

service (Harris et al., 2003; NCAA, 2015b) CHAMPS/Life Skills is interactive and provides user

manuals, computer software, and financial support for universities that offer the program

(Carrodine, Almond and Gratto, 2001, as cited in Harris et al., 2003). While the CHAMPS/Life

Skills program has expanded to include more than 100 universities, The NCAA announced that

they are rebranding the CHAMPS/Life Skills program and expanding their life skills

programming in partnership with the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics,

in 2016 (NCAA, 2015b). The psychoeducational/life skills program has emerged as the current

standard format for providing comprehensive and holistic care to student-athletes.

LaFountaine (2007) implemented a life skills psychoeducational seminar for 71 freshman female student-athletes enrolled into two Midwest Catholic universities. At the conclusion of the seminar, she administered the Wellness Evaluation of Lifestyle (WEL), to measure wellness behaviors. Results indicated that the female student-athletes scored highest on wellness scales related to exercise, love, and sense of worth. This demonstrates strengths in their abilities to maintain physical health, to form supportive relationships and to feel worthwhile while also acknowledging personal shortcomings. However, the female student-athlete participants acquired one of their lowest wellness scores on the stress management scale. Their low score suggested that the participants had significant difficulty with recognizing and managing stress (LaFountaine, 2007). Although there was a small sample size, the results of LaFountaine's (2007) study provide additional support for the need for stress management interventions for female student-athletes.

Existing interventions for female student-athletes. In Fall 2013, The University of Southern California (USC) established a semester-long freshman seminar for African American female student-athletes entitled "Black Women Foundations of Self" (University of Southern California, 2013). The course aims "to examine the complex experience of being a Black/African American woman within athletics by addressing topics as Black feminism, Black/White sisterhood, social mobility, activism, sports, and media from a socio-historical perspective" (University of Southern California, 2013). This course is taught by Dr. Nohelani Lawrence, a licensed African American female sport psychologist and former student-athlete (University of Southern California, 2013). Uniquely, the course also pairs each student-athlete with a mentor within the university. USC's course is an affirmative response to African

American athletes' suggestion from Terese Stratta's (1992) ethnographic study to have a course or forum offered available to discuss cultural relations (Stratta, 1995). While this course is pioneering in many ways, it is important to note that the course is patterned after a successful piloting of a Foundation of Self course that was developed specifically for African American male student-athletes at USC. This is another example of how African American female-athletes' needs are often not prioritized first in comparison to their male counterparts.

The University of Tennessee-Knoxville created TEAM ENHANCE: a multidisciplinary team comprised of physicians, sport psychologists, athletic trainers, nutritionists, substance abuse counselors, clinicians to work with student-athletes with disabilities, academic counselors, social worker, chaplain, and athletic department officials dedicated to providing comprehensive services to the female student-athletes (Gardiner, 2006 as cited in LaFountaine, 2007). The program's name is an acronym that represents: enhancing nutrition, health, academic performance, networking, community and excellence (University of Tennessee, 2016). This robust program also offers individual therapy, group therapy, and crisis intervention services for female student-athletes, as needed (University of Tennessee, 2016). It is not merely a coincidence that this program was established at a university with one of the most successful college women's basketball programs in history. Similar to USC, The University of Tennessee-Knoxville also has a comprehensive program for their male student-athletes, titled TEAM EXCEL (University of Tennessee, 2016). The order of the programs' respective creations is not reported.

While the University of Tennessee has appeared to respond to most of the student-athletes' needs with their programs; there is no explicit mention of attending to cultural diversity.

The C in TEAM ENHANCE represents community, however, there is no articulation of what processes the university engages in to foster a sense of community. In addition, the program describes efforts to assist student-athletes with their pursuit of excellence. It can be argued that attending to the multifaceted aspect of one's identity is an important aspect of a comprehensive approach to helping athlete's pursue excellence. Given that the University of Tennessee's women's athletic teams have several African American members who are attending college at a predominately White Institution in a southern U.S. state, it makes sense that there should be continuous discussions about culture in order to address stressors related to race relations and identity.

African American Mental Health Considerations for Intervention Development

Research has shown that religion/spirituality, racial socialization and racial identity are essential components that contribute to African Americans' mental health and well-being. Thus, these concepts will be reviewed as research implicates that they would be vital to integrate into the proposed workshop.

      Religion and spirituality. Research suggests that religion and spirituality are foundational interwoven threads in African American women's lives (Banks-Wallace & Parks, 2004; Harding, 2007; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Martin, 2000; Mattis & Jagers, 2001). African American women express a range of religious and spiritual beliefs and practices spanning from traditional African faiths to Judeo-Christian practices (Coleman, 2013). Engagement in religious and spiritual practices have been found to be preferred coping strategies for African American women who have experienced stress, trauma, and illness (Bryant-Davis, Ullman, Tsong, & Gobin, 2011; Chatters, Taylor, Jackson, & Lincoln, 2008; Lee & Sharpe, 2007; Stringer, 2009; Watlington & Murphy, 2006). Of most important note, religious and spiritual practices have

been paramount in helping people of the African diaspora build resilient spirits in the midst of bondage, oppression, and discrimination (Robinson, 1997).

Utilization of religious and coping practices have been particularly useful for African American college women. Marion and Range (2003) found that religiosity, collaborative religious problem solving strategies, family support, social support, and a non-accepting view of suicide were buffers for suicidal behavior in African American college women. In a qualitative study of 14 African American college women attending a PWI, Patton and McClure (2009) learned that the participants utilized a variety of religious and spiritual practices to cope with adversity. Analysis of the rich interviews; yielded one of the study's sub-theme, "More Than Conquerors." This resilient theme was comprised of instances when the participants had overcome trauma and adversity such as domestic violence, rape, and lack of campus support (Patton & McClure, 2009). In addition to implementing religious and spiritual coping, the participants described "turning their bad into good" by exercising their faith to manage their emotions, creating new organizations, and edifying their social support networks (Patton & McClure, 2009). Furthermore, these studies exemplify how religion and spirituality can be essential in implementation of problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping and meaning coping.

Several researchers have advocated for the integration of womanism and spirituality in efforts to enhance African American women's well-being and mental health (Harrell, Coleman, & Adams, 2014; Heath, 2006; Williams & Wiggins; 2010). Womanism is a theory, which was developed based on Alice Walker's "Womanist Prose" (1983) that celebrated the uniqueness, personhood and fortitude of African American women as they faced gender and racial oppression. Harrell and colleagues (2014) presented an integrative spiritually-centered positive womanist framework intended to enhance the wellbeing of African American women. Similar to

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Harrell and associates (2014); Williams and Wiggins (2010) offered a womanist-spiritual

approach to African American women facing the double bind of racism and sexism.

The intersection of religion, spirituality, and mental health has been healing for African

American women. In addition to facilitating coping; religion and spirituality positively

contributes to optimal wellbeing and provides a vehicle for the development of supportive

relationships (Colbert, Jefferson, Gallo, & Davis, 2009; Taylor, Lincoln & Chatters, 2005).

Spiritually-based therapy groups implemented with African American women participants

identified effective group activities such as art, music, dance, rituals, imagery and journaling

(Williams, Wiggins, Frame, 1999). As this researcher proposes to develop a stress management

workshop for African American women, it is essential to be aware of and to build on their

existing strengths – which largely includes celebrating communalism and transcendence by

engaging in personal and communal religious and spiritual practices. For African American

women participants who do not subscribe to specific religion or spiritual practices, there will be

opportunities for them to engage in freedom of expression that is consistent with their values and

personhood.

Racial socialization. Racial socialization is defined as a set of interactions, behaviors,

and communications that occur between African American parents and their children in efforts to

provide the latter with an understanding about their racial background, to instill cultural pride,

and to prepare them for how they may be perceived by society due to their race (Stevenson

Cameron, Herrero-Taylor, & Davis, 2002; Peters, 1985). In studies spanning over thirty years,

researchers have concluded that racial socialization is an important component in the

development and psychological wellbeing of African Americans (Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph,

& Nickerson, 2002; Coard & Sellers, 2005; Frabutt, Walker, & Mackinnon-Lewis, 2002;

Stevenson et al.,2002). Hughes and associates (2006) reviewed the ethnic-racial socialization literature and found that racial socialization had been linked to positive outcomes such as academic achievement (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Caughy et al., 2002) self-esteem (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002) and positive mental health outcomes (Fischer & Shaw, 1999; Stevenson, Reed, Bodison, & Bishop, 1997). In a study examining predictors of resilience in a sample of African American college students, racial socialization processes and social support were identified as protective factors (Brown, 2008). Specifically, receiving messages that communicate racial pride and the importance of knowing one's cultural history was found to be related to resiliency in the college student participants (Brown, 2008). Brown's (2008) findings are consistent with Bynum, Burton, and Best (2007) conclusion that parents' communication of specific cultural pride messages to their children predicts lower psychological distress in African American freshmen college students.

Furthermore, the literature shows that racial socialization is an important aspect in the wellbeing of African Americans. For African American college students, racial socialization is imperative in helping them succeed as they may have to exist in invalidating environments. Although Thorton and colleagues (1990) stated that approximately two out of three African American parents reported that they engaged in some level of racial socialization, it is unknown the current percentage of parents who engaged in racial socialization over the last twenty-five years. Thus, the current African American female student-athletes whose birth years typically range from 1992-1998, may not have had any exposure to racial socialization. Additionally, even if they have had some exposure to racial socialization, Hughes and associates (2006) recommended that the level of racial socialization and the type of conversation a caregiver has with their child

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changes as the child enters adulthood. Since the literature shows that African American female student-athletes are often asked to survive in the face of implicit and explicit racist environments, the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop will encourage positive expression of cultural pride because of the benefits described above.

Racial identity. Similar to racial socialization, racial identity is essential in the buffering of African Americans from any damaging psychological consequences of exposure to racism (Cross, Parham & Helms, 1998). Racial identity is defined as "a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular group" (Helms, 1990, p. 3). Several African American psychologists including William Cross, Charles Thomas, Thomas Parham, and Janet Helms have developed and modified racial identity models to explain the process of one accepting their Blackness (Belgrave & Allison, 2006). These models are organized in stages and posit that the degree of racial identity is impacted by developmental stage. In an examination of 215 African American college students, Utsey (2008) found that racial pride and religiosity positively predicted psychological functioning and wellbeing. Overall, the literature suggests that religion/spirituality, racial identity and racial socialization are a trifecta of vital elements that contribute to the wellbeing,

Implications for Curriculum Included in the S.I.S.T.A.S. Workshop

African American female student-athletes encounter significant stressors during their journeys of academic and athletic pursuits. Given that one of the major stressors that student-athletes contend with is time management (Humphrey et al., 2000; Parham, 1993), the curriculum for the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop, intends to provide the student-athletes with multiple stress management techniques for stressors related to their intersection of their roles as African

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American women and student-athletes in a time limited approach. These interventions will include discussion about mentorship, opportunities to interface with athletic personnel, and skill-building activities.

Mentoring. The literature argues that African American female student-athletes would significantly benefit from mentorship and role models who could help them navigate sport-related and non-sport related developmental challenges (Abney, 1999; Carter and Hart, 2010; Howard-Hamilton, 1993; Person et al., 2001; Sanchez-Hucles et al., 2013; Stratta, 1995). Unfortunately, African American women are grossly underrepresented in leadership positions within collegiate athletics (Lapchick et al., 2015), which decreases the likelihood for African American female student-athletes to find racially and ethnically-matched mentors. Therefore, facilitating discussion about securing a mentor is a primary area of focus that is included in the curriculum for the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop.

Collaboration with athletic department personnel. Overall, the literature calls for significant improvement in the relationships between athletic directors, coaches and teammates. One of the major recommendations from the collective literature is to create a safe space for African American female student-athletes to feel empowered to give feedback about their experiences of racism with other teammates, coaches and athletic directors (Parham, 1996; Stratta, 1995). Specific attention should also attend to coaches' communication styles with their African American players; given that negative interpersonal interactions with coaches can lead to low morale, burnout/disengagement, and premature termination of athletic careers for student-athletes (Outlaw & Toriello, 2014). Furthermore, discourse related to increasing involvement from NCAA stakeholders, athletic directors, and coaches in the improvement of African American female student-athletes' well-being will also be featured in the proposed workshop

(Stratta, 1995).

Skill-building activities. As noted above, skill building is an effective component of stress management. Specifically, implementing relaxation techniques, practicing mindfulness to increase awareness of one's transaction with the environment, and engaging in cognitive restructuring of stress-inducing appraisals, can be particularly helpful for African American female student-athletes.

Rationale for Developing a Culturally Specific Intervention

Historically, African Americans as well as other ethnic minorities have been on the periphery by psychologists in the development of theories and interventions (Parham, 2002). It was not until the late 1960's and early 1970's that psychologists collectively realized and promoted the need to adapt or amend certain therapeutic approaches/interventions when working with ethnic minority clients (Parham, 2002**).** Many of these adaptations have been developed by psychologists of color. More specifically, some African American psychologists have argued that it was inadequate to use Eurocentric theories and interventions to treat African Americans and to explain their lived experiences as the cultural worldviews are vastly different. African-centered psychology was developed to address this problem and is defined as

> the dynamic manifestation of the unifying African principles, values and traditions. It is the self-conscious "centering" of psychological analysis and applications in African reality, culture and epistemology. African-Centered Psychology examines the process that allows for the illumination and liberation of the spirit. Relying on the principles of harmony within the universe as a natural order of existence, African-Centered Psychology recognizes: The Spirit that permeates everything that is; the notion that everything in the universe is interconnected; the value that the collective is the most salient element of existence; and the idea that communal self-knowledge is the key to mental health. (Parham, White, & Ajamu, 1999, p. 95 as cited in Grills, 2002, p. 13)

African-centered psychological treatment approaches are not widely taught in psychology doctoral programs which speaks to invisibility of African cultural concepts in interventions,

putting both clients and clinicians of African descent at a disadvantage.   While the stress management program proposed here is not purely African-centered, this literature will be utilized to inform the design and content of the intervention. Given that the S.I.S.T.A.S. stress management workshop is geared toward African American women who are members of the African diaspora, some values that underlie African-centered psychology will be incorporated into the curriculum. Some of these universal principles may include a focus on Spirit, self-definition, nature, communal order and self-knowledge, and metaphysical interconnectedness (Parham, 2002). Consistent with African-centered psychology principles, research on African Americans shows those individuals who hold communal, spiritual and affective values are more resilient (Mattis, Bell, Jagers & Jenkins, 1999).

 Person et al (2001) advocated for the development of a culturally-responsive approach specifically for athletes of Color; by stating that "a culturally responsive approach advocates a holistic perspective in serving students…and includes knowledge of cultural dynamics and knowledge of how race and power influence human functioning" (p. 59). Additionally, use of Africultural coping strategies (e.g. spiritual-centered, cognitive/emotional debriefing, and collective) was found to be effective for African American who were contending with high institutional racism-related stress (Lewis-Coles & Constantine, 2006). Given that a person cannot be separated from their contextual elements of their lives (e.g. culture), developing a stress-management workshop without attending to the larger chronic

stressors in the environment and intersection of multiple identities of African American female student-athletes would be futile.

Summary

College presents numerous opportunities for internal growth and development of self –

with sport participation increasing team building skills, leadership qualities and avenues for future occupational success. Collectively, African American female student-athletes continue to thrive academically and athletically in the face of significant stressors. Research shows that they experience psychological stress related to their roles of college student, student-athlete and the intersection of their race, gender, and in some cases sexual orientation. Despite African American female student-athletes' contributions to collegiate sport, they are still silenced and often have their needs prioritized behind those of their White male, White female, and Black male athletic counterparts. While African American male student-athletes endure significant stressors, their needs are often heard by athletic personnel after persistent efforts, because they are participating in "revenue-generating" sports (e.g. The University of Missouri football team's boycott). This implicitly conveys that African American –should be silent and feel grateful that they are allowed to play collegiate sports.

Several researchers have completed invaluable qualitative studies with African American female student-athlete participants who have articulated their stressful experiences, needs, and recommendations for interventions. Despite African American female student-athletes' raising their concerns, there is only known workshop intervention specifically created for African American female student-athletes (University of Southern California, 2013). Therefore, this dissertation created the curriculum for a culturally-specific stress management workshop for African American female student-athletes in efforts to reduce threats to their educational and athletic success and overall well-being.

Chapter III: Methods

The literature suggests that college student-athletes face significant stressors such as difficulties with time management, balancing athletic and academic demands, cultivating interpersonal relationships, navigating sport-related successes and failures, and preparing for life after sport (Broughton, 2001; Parham, 1993). However, African American female student-athletes face additional complex and unique stressors related to their roles as student-athletes and the intersection of their identities as African Americans and emerging women. These stressors include: gender discrimination, body/image concerns, "silencing," and confronting negative stereotypes of African American women (Bruening, 2004; Bruening, 2005, Bruening et al., 2005; LaFountaine, 2007). In general, untreated stress can lead to several negative physical health and mental health outcomes such as cardiovascular disease, depression and anxiety which have been known to disproportionately plague African American women (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). Additionally, lack of healthy coping strategies for college student-athletes can lead to use of unhealthy coping strategies such as engagement in substance use and unsafe sex practices (Humphrey, Yow, & Bowden, 2000). The combination of these aforementioned stressors can be particularly stressful for African American women as they are often navigating educational and athletic environments plagued by undertones of racism, sexism, and underrepresentation. These stressors also pose significant threats to African American female student-athletes' abilities to achieve academic success, athletic success, and to personally thrive.

This chapter will describe the methodology that was used to develop a six-session stress management workshop for African American female student-athletes. The first phase included an extensive review of the existing literature, research studies, and stress management programs

for athletes to inform the creation of the six-session stress management workshop. The second phase involved obtaining data through review of three African American female athletes' autobiographies which included discussions of their student-athlete experience. Specific attention was given to their discussions of any sport-related, racial, gender, sexual orientation and social class stressors they experienced during their college years as well as the effectiveness of the coping strategies that they employed. The third phase included integration of the data and the development of the stress management workshop curriculum. The final phase consisted of the evaluation of the workshop's curriculum by a panel consisting of four individuals: two university-based mental health professionals with expertise in working with African American female student-athletes and two African American women who have personal experience of being student-athletes and have graduated from college with a bachelor's degree within the past five years.

Specific Aims

In response to the lack of attention directed to the stressors of African American female student-athletes, this researcher developed the curriculum for a six-session workshop titled: Strengths-based Interventions for STudent-Athletes experiencing Stress (S.I.S.T.A.S.). The primary objective of the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop is to assist African American female student-athletes with engagement in culturally syntonic and effective stress management interventions. S.I.S.T.A.S. targeted the specific needs of African American female student-athletes; integrating an understanding of the impact of the context of multiple intersections of gender, race, class, and sexual orientation as they navigate developmentally-appropriate challenges to form their identities throughout their collegiate years. Additionally, the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum intended to contribute a resource to address the deleterious effects of stress in African American

female student-athletes which can lead to adverse physical and mental health consequences, burnout, and premature retirement from sport and dropout from college. The S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum aimed to be a resource for the athletic community, specifically student-athletes, mental health professionals, coaches, and additional athletic personnel who regularly interface with African American female student-athletes. An essential aspect of the workshop's curriculum included attention to the need for dialogue among African American female student-athletes, coaches, and athletic directors in efforts to reduce the "silencing" of African American female student-athletes. Additional components of the proposed workshop's curriculum included psychoeducation, skill-building exercises, affirmative cultural exercises, and discussion of relapse prevention techniques and resources for further learning and practice, which have all been demonstrated to be effective components of stress management programs.

Development of the Curriculum for the S.I.S.T.A.S. Workshop

The workshop curriculum was developed utilizing three sources of information: (a) a comprehensive literature review that focused on stress and coping relevant to African American female student-athletes; (b) a review of existing stress management approaches including a resilience-oriented program currently in development (Harrell, 2016); and (c) information gleaned from three autobiographies of former African American female student-athletes who have detailed their experiences of stress and subsequent coping strategies.

Review of the literature and existing resources. The relevant literature used to inform the development of the workshop's curriculum was gathered through an expansive literature search of internet databases which included Psych INFO, Worldcat, Article first, PubMed, Wiley Online Library, EBSCOHOST databases, PsychARTICLES, Research Library, Dissertations and

Theses, and other various online resources. In addition, further pertinent information was obtained from national organizations such as the American Psychological Association (APA) Division 47 – Exercise and Sport Psychology and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The review of literature focused mostly on African American female student-athletes' experiences of stress during their collegiate years. More specifically, keyword searches included various combinations of the following terms: African American female student-athletes, collegiate student-athletes, coping, stress, and stress management. The comprehensive literature review was essential in order to provide supporting evidence related to the need for a stress-management resource for African American female student-athletes, such as the curriculum for the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop that was developed in this study.

Review of existing stress management approaches. Multiple approaches to stress management were reviewed from the existing literature including Stress Inoculation Training (Meichenbaum, 1996, 2007), Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) and Resilience Training (Cornum et al., 2011). Harrell's resilience-oriented approach provided a foundation for the curriculum in its integration of cultural considerations and several specific activities from this intervention approach were included (Harrell, 2016). Finally, approaches specific to student-athletes and African American women, such as psychoeducational/life skills groups (NCAA, 2016), and semester-length seminars (University of Southern California, 2013; LaFountaine, 2007) were also reviewed in order to inform the curriculum content.

Autobiographies of former African American female student-athletes. Despite the significant increase in the number of qualitative studies conducted with African American female student-athlete participants, there is a dearth of literature related to African American female student-athletes in comparison to their student-athlete peers. Therefore, African American female

student-athletes have begun authoring autobiographies in efforts to share their narratives. In efforts to acquire detailed information about the stressors and coping skills utilized by African American female student-athletes, this researcher read three autobiographies by former African American female student-athletes. A Google search was conducted to identify the African American female student-athletes who had composed autobiographies. The inclusion criteria for the authors of the autobiographies included: (a) A self-identified African American woman (b) a former student-athlete who competed in collegiate sport for a minimum of three years at a NCAA designated Division I university, and (c) has obtained at minimum a bachelor's degree. The results of the Google search lead to the selection of the following three autobiographies to inform the development of the curriculum: (a) "In My Skin: My life on and off the Court" by Britney Griner and Sue Hovey; (b) "Beating the Odds" by Chamique Holdsclaw; and (c) "Marion Jones: Life in the Fast Lane" by Marion Jones and Kate Sekules.

Analysis of the autobiographies. Since the autobiographies of the African American female student-athletes are their narratives constructed in their own words, components of narrative research and narrative data analysis were implemented. Narrative research posits that individuals discuss their life experiences in the form of constructed stories (Josselson, 2006; Sarbin, 1986; Wertz et al., 2011). Given that the focus of this project was the development of curriculum for a stress management workshop for African American female student-athletes, this researcher used the following procedures for data analysis provided by Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber (1998) as guidelines to analyze the autobiographies:

1. Select the subtext of the narrative for review. Each autobiography was read in its entirety; however, particular attention was given to the sections rich with discussion of the African American female student-athlete's college years. Specifically, this

researcher read intently to search for each author's discussion of the stressors that each author encountered during her college years and the coping strategies that she implemented. During the reading of the pertinent sections of the autobiography, this researcher made margin notes with a black pen, and used an orange highlighter to mark the stressors and a blue highlighter to mark the coping strategies.

2. Read the subtext to define major content categories. The data was coded to identify the major content categories. Coding is defined as "the transitional process between data collection and data analysis" (Saldaña, 2009, p.4). Coding involves assigning a code, which is a word or phrase that symbolically represents the text (Saldaña, 2009). The researcher specifically used in vivo codes, emotion codes, and versus codes. In vivo codes use the exact language of the participant instead of using researcher-generated words (Saldaña, 2009). Therefore, they were selected by this researcher because they give honor to the participant's voice. For a population who has reported feeling silenced (Withycombe, 2011); empowering their voices was of the utmost priority for the researcher. Emotion codes are most appropriate for narratives where the participant details interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences or behaviors (Saldaña, 2009). Given that the participants are student-athletes who regularly interfaced with teammates, coaches, and others; this researcher hypothesized that interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences should be explored. This is consistent with the literature which has shown that interpersonal relationships and intrapersonal experiences can significantly shape the African American female student-athletes' narratives (Bruening, 2005; Withycombe, 2011; Carter-Francique et al., 2011). Versus codes are suitable when analyzing data that includes discussion of power

issues (Saldaña, 2009). Therefore, versus codes were applied in instances where there was evidence of any actual or conceptual conflicts within the participant or between the participants and another entity (e.g. athletes vs. coaches).

This researcher used different colored highlighters to represent each type of code. In vivo codes were marked with a pink highlighter. Emotion codes were marked with a blue highlighter. Versus codes were marked with a green highlighter. Additionally, a purple highlighter was used to identify the learned lessons and the consequences from the stressors.

3. Sort the material into categories. Once the data was coded, the researcher reviewed the in vivo codes, emotion codes, and versus codes to form categories that reflected the stressors endorsed and coping strategies employed collectively by the participants.

4. Development of Themes. The categories were reviewed and filtered to develop themes that informed the curriculum of the workshop. Themes are abstract entities that bring meaning and identity to a recurrent pattern or experience (DeSantis & Ugarizza, 2000). The themes will be discussed further in Chapter III – Results.

Evaluation of S.I.S.T.A.S. Workshop Curriculum

Information collected during the extensive literature review, review of existing approaches, and three autobiographies of African American female student-athletes were used to inform the development of the curriculum for the six-session workshop. Once the author created the curriculum for the workshop and once the request to the research project was approved by Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board, this researcher began recruiting evaluators to evaluate the workshop's curriculum. The purpose of the evaluation phase of the study was to obtainfeedback on the content and usefulness of the workshop's curriculum to further inform

its development.

Inclusion criteria for evaluators. Two categories of evaluators were recruited to
provide an initial evaluation of the curriculum and inform continuing development of the
S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop. The first category included mental health professionals familiar with
student-athletes and the second included former college student athletes.

Participating university-based mental health professionals had to meet the following
criteria: (a) be a licensed MFT, LCSW, or psychologist; (b) have at least 5 years of experience
working with African American female student-athletes during their career; (c) have a general
understanding of stressors associated with the role of student-athlete, the adverse impact on
stress on African American women, and knowledge of the impact of racism and sexism on
individuals with intersecting multiple minority identities; and (d) identify working with student-
athletes as an area of strong competence or expertise (see Appendix F). Clinicians who indicated
that they limited awareness of the stressors that African American female student-athletes face
(defined as a 1 or 2 on item 7 of Appendix F) were excluded from participation in the project.
Evaluators with personal experience of being African American student-athletes were required to
meet the following inclusion criteria: (a) be a self-identified African American woman (b) be a
former student-athlete who competed in collegiate sport for a minimum of three years at a
NCAA designated Division I university and (c) has graduated with a bachelor's degree within
the past 5 years (see Appendix G).

The therapists and former African American female student-athletes who agreed to
participate were asked to review the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum and complete a brief
feedback survey/evaluation form in order to assess the organization, design, content and
usefulness of the curriculum (see Appendix H). The evaluation form was available in hardcopy

and electronic versions. The electronic versions of all workshop-related materials were password protected. The evaluators had the opportunity to provide additional feedback in the form of comments, recommendations or suggestions for the researcher. The data collected from the evaluation process was reviewed and will be discussed in Chapter III. Finally, the strengths and limitations of the workshop's curriculum will be synthesized in Chapter IV.

Recruitment Strategies and Procedures

Mental health professionals. This researcher utilized both targeted and snowball sampling to recruit two mental health clinicians to evaluate the curriculum for the S.I.S.T.AS. workshop. First, the researcher visited the websites of the local university counseling centers (e.g. University of Southern California, University of California Los Angeles, Loyola Marymount University, California State University, Northridge) to read the clinical interests of the employed clinicians at each site. The goal was to identify any clinician who reports that he/she works with student-athletes. This researcher also looked for clinicians who label themselves as sport psychologists, clinical sport psychologists, and/or performance enhancement coaches. Once the email addresses of the clinicians who worked with student-athletes at the respective counseling centers are located, an email will be sent to each prospective evaluator describing the workshop and the rationale for its development (see Appendix A). Additional potential evaluators were recruited by posting the recruitment email (see Appendix A) on the National Sport Psychology Email List Serve created by Temple University. Potential evaluators who contacted the researcher were if they know anyone else who meets the criteria. The researcher requested that they pass along the information about the need for evaluators to others in their networks who may be interested (see Appendix B and Appendix C).

Former African American female student-athletes. Two African American women who were former student-athletes were recruited to evaluate the workshop. The researcher utilized snowball sampling, beginning with networks known to the investigator via email, and the social media website, Facebook (see Appendix B and Appendix C). Once prospective evaluators were identified, the researcher sent the prospective evaluator an email for the recruitment of evaluators (see Appendix A).

The evaluators who agreed to take part in the evaluation were sent an informed consent via e-mail outlining the nature of the research project, its purpose, the author's affiliation, the risks and benefits associated with participating in the proposed study and issues pertaining to privacy and confidentiality (see Appendix D). The participants digitally signed and return the informed consent form electronically by scanning and emailing the signed consent form to the investigator. Then the evaluators were sent an e-mail with a link to an online survey tool where they were invited to complete a brief questionnaire to assess their eligibility based on the inclusion criteria (see Appendix F and Appendix G). Upon receipt of the signed informed consent, the curriculum was sent via email as a password-protected .pdf document to the evaluators. Each evaluator was given two weeks to review the curriculum and complete the evaluation form (see Appendix H). None of the evaluators elected to discontinue participation as an evaluator.

Compensation for evaluators. Each evaluator received their choice of either a $20.00 Starbucks electronic gift card (eGift Card) or a $20.00 Sports Authority electronic gift card (eGift Card) as compensation for their time upon completion of the evaluation. Once the investigator received the completed evaluation of the workshop's curriculum by each evaluator, the selected eGift card was emailed to each evaluator.

Analysis of evaluation. After the evaluators completed and returned the evaluation

forms, responses were reviewed by the researcher for common areas of feedback: including

identification of the strengths and limitations of the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop's curriculum.

Recommendations emerging from the evaluators' feedback were synthesized and detailed in

Chapter IV of this report to assist the investigator with further development of the workshop's

curriculum

Chapter IV: Results

This chapter will provide an overview of the development and content of the curriculum for the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop series as well as a summary of the evaluation process. First, the thematic analysis of the autobiographies that informed the development of the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum will be reviewed. Next, the structure and content of the curriculum for the workshop will be presented. Finally, the feedback on the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop's curriculum, completed by four evaluators, will be discussed.

Thematic Analysis

Since autobiographies were used to inform the development of the workshop's curriculum, this researcher used elements of qualitative data analysis as a guide. This researcher organized the eighteen stressors that the African American female student-athletes described in their autobiographies to develop themes (see Table 1). "A theme is a phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of data is about and/or what it means" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 139). Additionally, themes are useful because they give meaning to abstract and recurrent experiences (DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000). The following paragraphs will review the themes gleaned from the autobiographies. These themes include: *Impact of Isms, Silencing the Critics, Weathering the Storm, Carrying the Load, and Complexity of Connection.*

Table 1.

The Five Central Themes

Themes	Categories

(continued)

Themes	Categories
Impact of Isms	Feeling Silenced
	Sexism
	Homophobia
	Racism
	Negative Stereotypes
Carrying The Load	Time management difficulties
	Academic issues
	Managing failures
	Managing other's expectations
Weathering The Storm	Depression
	Injuries
	Breakups
	Self-doubt
	Feeling isolated
Silencing The Critics	Managing Success
	Coaching Conflicts

Themes	Categories
	Managing the Media's Scrutiny
Complexity of Connection	Mentoring by adults
	Peer mentoring/support
	Resilience-oriented relationships
	Discord in relationships (teammates and family)

Impact of Isms. Feeling Silenced was a dominant category within this theme that included experiences in which the authors felt that they could not fully express or celebrate aspects of their identities due to homophobia, sexism, and/or racism. Feeling Silenced also included efforts by others to change the student-athlete's appearance and negative stereotypes that the authors encountered. These themes were pervasive throughout one of the two autobiographies where it was mentioned. Brittney Griner, the first openly lesbian athlete who received an endorsement contract from Nike, openly criticized Baylor and her coach, Kim Mulkey, for silencing her sexual orientation and monitoring her appearance (e.g. forcing Brittney to cover her tattoos), which was a large source of tension in her relationships with her coach. The following are quotes from Brittney's autobiography:

> "But sometimes it feels like people within women's sports don't want to talk about it in public. They just want us to put a happy, smiley face on everything (*look how far we've*

come!), as if ignoring the sexism and the racism and the homophobia will somehow make it less of a problem" (Griner & Hovey, 2014, p. 129).

 "…I felt like I was carrying around a giant weight everywhere I went – a growing sense that who I am, at my very core, needed to be hidden away in order for me to survive my time at Baylor" (Griner & Hovey, 2014, p. 116).

"The more I think about it, the more I feel like people who run the school want it both ways: they want to keep the policy, so they can keep selling themselves as a Christian university, but they are more than happy to benefit from the success of their gay athletes. That is, as long as those gay athletes don't talk about being gay" (Griner & Hovey, 2014, p. 115).

She continued by saying: "It's not like I have a vendetta against the school; that's

not why I'm revealing the struggles I had there, how I felt silenced." (Griner & Hovey, p.

115).

 In contrast, another aspect of this theme consists of assertions by the authors to radically

embrace and celebrate one's cultural identity was also evident in the narratives. This way of

coping with "isms" is reflected in the following experience shared by Holdsclaw.

"She handed me a book about the Delany sisters. I was so fascinated that I started asking questions that I had never asked before about my heritage. I wanted to know where my ancestors were from. I wanted to know more about being a Black woman in this world and our struggles and triumphs as a people. It was on that trip that I fell in love with African American history" (Holdsclaw, 2012, p. 115).

Silencing the Critics. Silencing the Critics was a recurrent theme that appeared in two

out of the three autobiographies. The theme details the African American female student-

athletes' efforts to cope with a myriad of stressors; including sexism, criticism from coaches, and

naysayers by motivating themselves to prove others wrong. For example, Chamique Holdsclaw

stated "I was going to prove that I wasn't soft and fragile but strong and resilient" (Holdsclaw,

2012, p. 86) and "I knew my worth and wanted to quiet the naysayers who thought I didn't

belong or wasn't ready" (Holdsclaw, 2012, p. 130). In response to Coach Summitt's criticism of

her academic performance, Chamique reported, "I was going to prove to Coach Summitt that I was serious about academics and basketball. I wanted to surpass the expectations she had of me" (Holdsclaw, 2012, p. 93). Similarly, Brittney Griner described utilizing Silence the Critics as a coping mechanism in response to being challenged by coaches and older teammates to run a mile within a particular time-limit.

Weathering the Storm. Weathering the Storm was a recurrent theme that appeared in all three autobiographies. This theme consists of the authors' efforts to cope with strong emotional turmoil. It is important to note that all three authors reported experiencing depression while in college. However, only one author was aware that she was experiencing depression at the time. While that author did receive psychotherapy; she did not seek help voluntarily. An angry outburst during her game, led to a referral for psychotherapy, which she found to be effective. The other two authors identified that they were experiencing depression retrospectively.

"Looking back now; I believe I was battling depression that year" (Griner & Hovey, 2014, p. 110). Consistent with Brittney's discussion, Marion Jones stated that she was experiencing depression after breaking her foot for the second time. "I felt myself slipping into a kind of depression." (Jones & Sekules, 2004, p. 62). "I wish that I would have been able to reach out to her [Marion's mother] for consolation, but my pride wouldn't let me" (Jones & Sekules, 2004, p. 65). Brittney credited psychotherapy as a catalyst for her personal growth by teaching her how to manage her emotions effectively:

> "I know now how damaging it was for me to hold everything inside, because if you swallow all your resentments, they just simmer and fester until you explode. And that's exactly what happened with me during my final year at Baylor: I blew my top, and the red-hot lava spilled all over my dad" (Griner & Hovey, 2014, p. 158).

Carrying the Load. The theme, Carrying the Load, appeared in all three autobiographies. Carrying the Load referred to experiences of carrying the brunt of the workload, in a sense serving as a "workhorse" and carrying/managing the expectations placed on them by teammates, coaches, family members, and the media. The consequences of these experiences were often described in the context of feeling fatigued and overwhelmed. However, in many instances, the authors also experienced victory. Some examples of Carrying the Load include:

"Blood, sweat, and tears were shed each practice and it wasn't good enough, we went harder and longer" (Holdsclaw, 2012, p. 82).

"She paused for a second, then told me…You did it for your team and for the crowd. I love you." (Griner & Hovey, 2014, p. 166).

"If I could do it all again, I wouldn't play 2 sports in college. It was not easy as I expected. I juggled 50 things at once – basketball, running, classes, a social life and so many other things" (Jones & Sekules, 2004, p.73).

Complexity of Connection. This theme appeared in all three autobiographies. This theme reflects the dichotomous experiences of both strain and positive interactions that occurred for the authors in their relationships with coaches, teammates, peers, family members, romantic partners and therapists. The discussions of strain were almost always related to relationships with coaches, family members, or romantic partners.

An example of strain is:

"Moments after that comment, a clipboard came flying through the air straight for my head. It just barely missed my eye…" (Holdsclaw, 2012, p. 97).

In contrast to strain, the complexity of connection was also reflected in relationships that were empowering, resilience-orienting, and mentoring.

"Julio and Nash were big fans of Baylor sports, but they were also really down-to-earth guys who let me be myself…I guess you could say I was leaning on those guys for support without thinking about it" (Griner & Hovey, 2014, p. 123).

"I felt like I belonged. Immediately, I hit it off with my roommate who quickly became my best buddy. We went everywhere together. When I met my other teammates, I got close to them fast too" (Jones & Sekules, 2004, p. 54).

"Between the four of us, there was a great mix of personalities. Even though we came from different backgrounds, we got along wonderfully once I warmed up to them" (Holdsclaw, 2012, p. 79).

The five themes described above provided valuable insight into the experience of being an African American college student-athlete. The themes and subcategories within them strongly influenced the development of content and activities for the workshop.

Overview of the S.I.S.T.A.S. Workshop Curriculum

Following the data analysis phase of this project, the curriculum for the six-session S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop was developed. The S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum is 61 pages-in-length and is organized into six 3-hour-long sessions. The workshop is intended to occur weekly for six weeks. The S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum begins with a brief discussion about the purpose of the workshop and then outlines the structure and activities created for each session. A brief overview of the workshop's curriculum is detailed below in the following tables (Tables 2-7). Each table includes two selected interventions from each session. These selected interventions demonstrate how the thematic analysis informed the curriculum content. The full curriculum is attached as an appendix at the end of this document (see Appendix G - S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum).

Table 2.

Session 1 Activities and Themes

Session 1: Introduction	
S.I.S.T.A.S. Activity	Themes influencing the intervention
"My Journey"	Impact of Isms; Complexity of Connection. "My Journey" is an activity that invites each participant to share her journey of becoming a student-athlete. Participants are given a worksheet with prompts to help them organize their journeys with references to important people who supported them, standout moments of success, and challenges they overcame on the journey to college. There is power in the sharing of narratives. This activity was included in the curriculum for several reasons. For one, the sharing of narratives, reduces the participants' likelihood of feeling silenced. By inviting someone to share their story – the value of their story is being affirmed. The former student-athletes who authored the autobiographies that were the foundation for the curriculum went through great lengths to share their narratives with others. Chamique Holdsclaw in particular was so set on sharing her story that she published it independently. It is hoped that through retrospective reflection of their journey, that the student-athlete workshop attendees can identify the learned lessons and highlight the coping skills that they used while also recognizing their inner strengths.
My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper	One of the biggest themes in the autobiographies was The Complexity of Connection. The positive element of this theme reflected the student-athletes' benefit of having strong connections with their peers. Thus, in efforts to further enhance sisterhood and connection for the participants, My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper was created to give the workshop attendees opportunities to have an accountability partner to check-in regarding stress levels, practice of coping skills, and to promote the development of the community.

Table 3.

Session 2 Activities and Themes

Session 2: SISTAS and Stress	
S.I.S.T.A.S. Activity	Themes influencing the intervention
S.I.S.T.A.S. Communal Circle	Impact of Isms**.** During this activity, the attendees are shown a video clip displaying the negative stereotypes about African American women that are displayed in the media. The goal of this activity is to reduce the silencing in African American women by giving them an outlet to share their reflections about the impact of negative stereotypical depictions of African American women on their lived experiences.
Empowerment Journaling	Impact of Isms; Weathering the Storm; Carrying the Load. This intervention presents the attendees with an appropriate and safe outlet to express their thoughts and feelings related to their stressors. It is hoped that empowerment journaling helps the workshop attendees feel less silenced, gain awareness into their emotional states, and empower them to express themselves in a safe outlet when maybe it is unsafe or too risky to do so.

Table 4.

Session 3 Activities and Themes

Session 3: SISTAS can Cope	
S.I.S.T.A.S. Activity	Themes influencing the intervention
Silencing the Inner Critic	Silencing the Critics. The goal of this intervention is to teach the attendees how to engage in adaptive reappraisal of situations. Since stress is defined as the appraisal of situations as taxing or exceeding one's resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984); teaching the student-athletes how to reappraise situations in order to activate their selection of coping skills is essential. This exercise also focuses on reframing negative thinking patterns into more balanced thinking patterns which is important given that internalizing others' critical statements can adversely impact one's inner voice.
Providing psycho-education	Weathering the Storm. In addition to discussing coping mechanisms, Session 3 also includes the important intervention of providing psychoeducation about depression. The participants in this study – the authors of the autobiographies – all described experiencing depression while in college. Therefore, it is imperative to teach the participants how to recognize the signs and symptoms of depression. Possible cultural barriers to seeking help (e.g. subscription to Strong Black Woman archetype and denial of problems in athletics) are also explored.

Table 5.

Session 4 Activities and Themes

Session 4: Culturally Affirmative Activities	
S.I.S.T.A.S. Activity	Themes influencing the intervention
"I Rise" (Harrell, 2015)	Impact of Isms; Carrying the Load; Weathering the Storm. The "I Rise" activity invites the attendees to celebrate their resilience by encouraging them to reflect on the loads that they have carried and the storms that they have weathered, while rising to proclaim their inner strength. These testimonies are accompanied by the witnesses who verbally affirm the testifier by saying "I see you rising."
"What's in a Name?" (Harrell, 2015)	Feeling Silenced vs. Unapologetically Me. This activity empowers the student-athletes to recognize and identify their inner strengths so that they can further developed and utilized.

Table 6.

Session 5 Activities and Themes

Session 5: Resilience and Prevention	
S.I.S.T.A.S. Activity	Themes influencing the intervention
"Team Huddle"	All themes. Team Huddle was designed to reduce the silencing of African American female student-athletes by facilitating constructive conversations between the SISTAS and the athletic community (e.g. coaches and athletic directors). This intervention aims to provide the SISTAS with a forum to discuss their experiences at said university while also having the opportunity to receive feedback. Additionally, the SISTAS are invited to collaborate with the athletic personnel to brainstorm ways to enhance opportunities for mentorship, to create an accepting community for individuals with multiple intersections of diversity, and to develop an action plan to put more African American female student-athletes in leadership positions.
Team Huddle Debriefing	All themes. The Team Huddle Debriefing is an essential complementary activity to the Team Huddle because it gives the SISTAS an opportunity to reflect on their experiences in the Team Huddle. The questions posed during the debriefing will allow the SISTAS to reflect on whether or not they felt heard and how that impacted them. While there are structured questions prepared for the SISTAS to answer; the goal of the debriefing is to allow their emotional reactions to flow freely in a safe environment.

Table 7.

Session 6 Activities and Themes

Session 6: Conclusions and Future Directions	
S.I.S.T.A.S. Activity	Themes influencing the intervention
"Communal Circle"	All themes. During the Communal Circle, the facilitator reviews the core coping strategies taught in the workshop. Following the review, the SISTAS are invited to share reflections about their experiences in the workshop series. Options for follow-up care are discussed and the SISTAS are presented with a coping card to summarize skills taught and contact persons for in cases of emergency.
"Intertwined Team"	Complexity of Connection. This closing activity was selected to honor the connectedness formed among the attendees throughout the workshop. During this activity, the SISTAS lock arms and share affirmations in a circle. This activity cements the sisterhood experienced in the group and allows for the SISTAS to give and receive affirmation from another African American woman; which may or may not be a new experience for them.

Evaluation of the Workshop Curriculum

The S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum was evaluated by four participants: two licensed psychologists with professional expertise of working with the target population and two African American women who were formerly student-athletes at Division I institutions. This section will summarize their feedback on the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum.

The evaluation form consisted of eight Likert-scale items (one to five, one being "Strongly Disagree" and five being "Strongly Agree,") and five open-ended questions. Overall, the evaluators were in strong agreement (as defined as a 5 on the Likert-scale) that the workshop's curriculum was thorough and provided culturally specific interventions (item 2) and was easy to read and understand (item 3) and well-organized (item 4). Additionally, the evaluators indicated that the workshop's curriculum addressed the stated purpose of the workshop (item 6), presented learning activities that are sufficient and appropriate for a

workshop (item 7), and would be helpful for African American female student-athletes (item 8).

Three evaluators strongly agreed that the workshop's curriculum presented coping strategies that

can assist mental health clinicians when working with African American female student-athletes

to reduce stress (item 5). Whereas, one evaluator agreed (as defined as a 4 on the Likert-scale)

that the workshop's curriculum presented coping strategies that can assist mental clinicians when

working with African American female student-athletes to reduce stress (item 5).

The evaluators' responses to the Likert-scale items (see Figure 2) and the open-ended

questions (see Tables 8-12) are reported below.
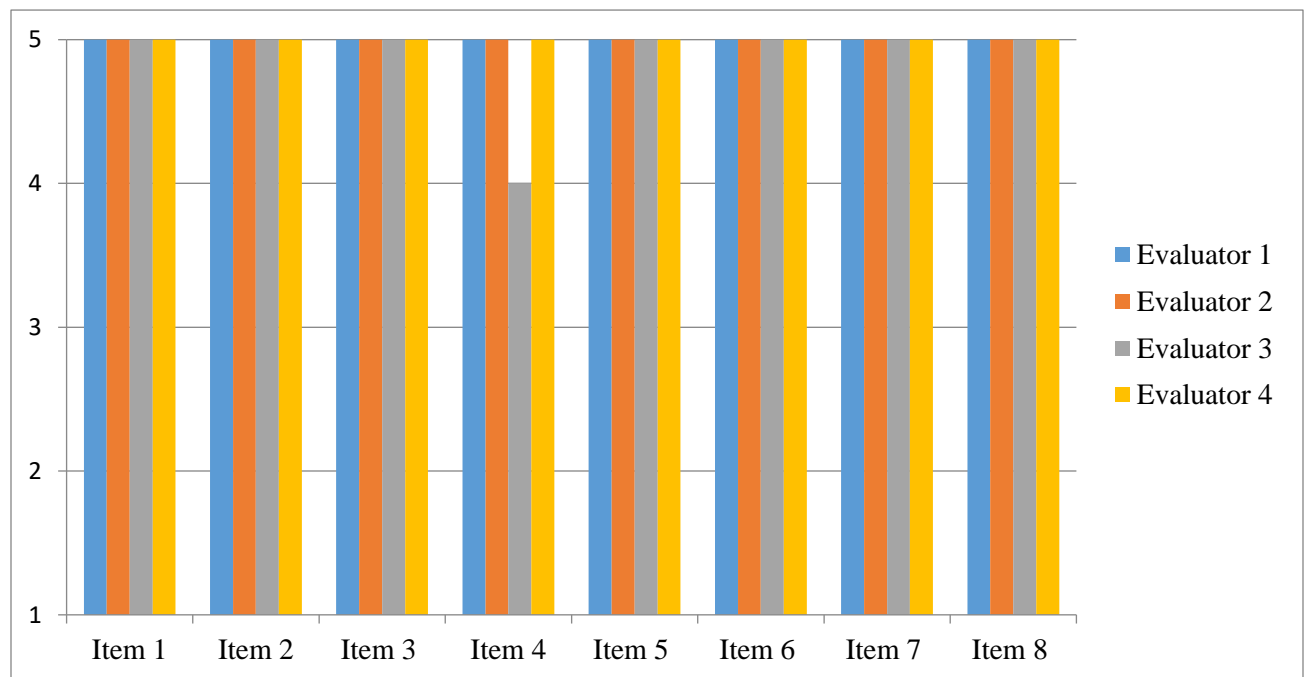

Figure 2. Evaluators' responses to eight Likert-scale items

Table 8.

Evaluators' responses to first open-ended question (Item 9*)*

What do you consider to be strengths of the curriculum?	
Evaluator	Response

1	"The curriculum successfully identifies common and recurring issues faced by female African American collegiate student-athletes. The demographic is highly overlooked in terms of stress management and the availability of psychological/emotional support is scarce, but this curriculum strongly presents specific solution driven issues."
2	"The strengths of the curriculum are the design of the program. The opportunity for African-American female athletes to have a forum to share, learn and support one another is phenomenal. The design is ground-breaking and identifies the unique issues of the African-American female athletes. The mindfulness and breathing exercises in the curriculum were critically important."
3	"The curriculum provides very accurate, and valuable information regarding African American women student athletes. One of my favorite strong points of the curriculum is the "Take away" portion. This portion is a great way for women to continue with coping with stress levels after the workshop sessions. I also think providing women with real life scenarios and examples of successful African American athletes that have been through similar experiences is a great way to show that they are not alone in this battle and it gives hope that they can overcome any obstacle that they approach."
4	"Provides in-depth evidence based research on the unique experience of African American women, their ability to manage stress, and develop effective stress management techniques. Research concerning the particular stressors faced by African American Female student athletes is sorely needed and addressed in this curriculum. In addition, the workshop incorporates particular stressors faced by lesbians of color and former professional athletes. The built-in accountability partners allow athletes to develop support systems with one another and meet other student athletes who they may not interact with on other teams."

Table 9.

Evaluators' responses to second open-ended question (Item 10)

What do you consider to be weaknesses of the curriculum?	
Evaluator	Response
1	"The curriculum provides skills and tips that can be utilized in any context after the six sessions, activities, and assignments, but I would love to see a couple of points about life after college sports and how these tips can be recycled in any stressful situation."
2	"My only concern for the program is the timeframe designated for each workshop (3-hours). Given the academic and athletic demands on student-athletes, a three-hour workshop session may create significant challenges for the

	female student-athlete."
3	"None."
4	"Student athletes may have difficulty meeting for every workshop or the entire workshop due to their various seasons, and rigid practice and class schedules. Six sessions each approximately three hours could be extremely difficult for student athletes to schedule outside of their academic, athletic, and social commitments. Gaining buy-in from athlete department personnel to be willing participants in the workshops (e.g., time commitments, availability, interest, understanding of culture)."

Table 10.

Evaluators' responses to third open-ended question (Item 11)

What are some suggestions of additional stress-reduction/management interventions that are culturally appropriate for African American female student-athletes?	
Evaluator	Response
1	"Apart from music, family, and having strong mentors, food plays a huge role in culture. A discussion on culturally rooted comfort foods affecting stress/performance could be engaging and beneficial for the girls while in a group session. Food is something that people are passionate about talking about, sharing and using as a source of memory or storytelling. This topic allows room for education on healthy food choices and how they can affect overall mood, discussion of history and culture, is well received by all, etc. etc."
2	"I believe the author has identified the critical components needed to address the important stress-reduction/management interventions for African American female student-athletes. However, a short segment on the importance of healthy communication (i.e., passive, assertive and aggressive) could prove beneficial."
3	"Similar to what you have already stated in your workshop, but more relaxation techniques (yoga, aromatherapy, and or women empowerment activities in the communities)."
4	"Providing reading, movies, tv shows, other materials from Female African American culture for them to review at a later date. *Sister Citizen*-Melissa Perry-Harris, *Mind Gym* (documentary), *Pariah.*"

Table 11.

Evaluators' responses to fourth open-ended question (Item 12)

Please provide any other suggestions for improving this workshop.	
Evaluator	Response
1	(No response)
2	"Possibly a section to address emotional management issues. Learning how to address, manage and cope with anger."
3	(No response)
4	"Instead of a workshop making it into a course/seminar (2 credit) for incoming freshman student-athletes. Making the senior Accountability partners connect with the incoming freshman. Having guest speakers come in to talk about their process from becoming a student-athlete to a professional, provide advice in areas of coping/success."

Table 12.

Evaluators' responses to fifth open-ended question (Item 13)

Additional comments:	
Evaluator	Response
1	"I am reviewing this curriculum from this perspective of a retired (after two D1 program and an early retirement) track & field athlete/humanities major and wanted to note how exciting this area of study is! After my freshman year of school and sports I transferred from a predominantly white polytechnic university (where I was on academic scholarship rather than athletic scholarship) after experiencing many of the race-related stressors discussed. I truly wish there were groups available to talk with the countless other girls I now know faced the same issues…maybe I would have felt more secure in the hard decision of transferring schools and ultimately quitting my sport due to STRESS. Thank you for your hard work."
2	"I truly enjoyed reading through the curriculum. In my 20+ years

	working with African American female student-athletes, this curriculum has been the most comprehensive and culturally sensitive model to assess and manage the mental- health issues of African American female athletes."
3	"Excellent workshop, and a great way to give us African American women a voice! Thank you!"
4	(No response)

Chapter V: Discussion

The purpose of this dissertation project was to develop the curriculum for a stress management workshop for African American female student-athletes. The workshop's curriculum was informed through the review of the extant literature related to African American women, African American female student-athletes, and the themes uncovered from the analysis of three autobiographies of former African American female student-athletes. Once the workshop's curriculum was developed, it was then evaluated by four volunteers: two licensed psychologists with expertise in working with African American female student-athletes and two African American women with personal experience of being student-athletes for a minimum of three years at a Division I institution. Based on the feedback provided by the evaluators, the identified strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and suggestions for further improvement of the curriculum will be summarized in this chapter. Furthermore, this researcher will provide recommendations for mental health clinicians, the athletic community gatekeepers, and report the implications of this research project.

Identified Strengths of the S.I.S.T.A.S. Workshop Curriculum

The four evaluators identified several strengths of the S.I.S.T.A.S. Workshop Curriculum. Some of these strengths include: (a) the "groundbreaking" design of the program is comprehensive and provides an opportunity for African American female student-athletes to have a forum to support and share; (b) successfully identifies common and recurring issues faced by African American female athletes; (c) presents in-depth evidence based research on the unique experiences of African American female student-athletes; and (d) offers accurate and valuable coping skills; outlined as "Take-aways" that equip the student-athletes with skills that they can use after the workshop is over.

There was a consensus among the evaluators that the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum was a much needed response to the scarcity of supports in place for African American female student-athletes' stressors.

Identified Weaknesses of the S.I.S.T.A.S. Workshop Curriculum

Three out of the four evaluators identified weaknesses of the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop's curriculum. Two out of the three evaluators identified the same weakness: the time frame designated for each workshop session may create some barriers for the impacted schedules of African American female student-athletes. An additional weakness identified by an evaluator is that the workshop's curriculum did not incorporate discussion about life after college sports and coping mechanisms to cope with this stressor. This feedback was essential as it highlighted an oversight of this researcher. The authors of the autobiographies all had preplanned trajectories for life after college; especially given that two out of three of them were the overall number one draft pick in the WNBA Draft during their respective years. Given that there are limited opportunities for female student-athletes to have professional careers in sports, it is important for the curriculum to reflect the potential impact of the stress related to career planning/sport retirement/ transitions for African American female student-athletes.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

One of the limitations of the present research project is the small sample size of participants. In the case of this research project, the participants are the authors of the autobiographies. Given that this researcher selected three African American female student-athletes' autobiographies to analyze, it makes it more difficult to generalize the findings to additional student-athletes. Thus, one of the recommendations for future research is to increase the number of autobiographies analyzed to see if the results (e.g. the themes generated) are replicated or yield new revelations

regarding the sources of stress and the coping strategies implemented by African American female student-athletes. A more extensive qualitative interview study (e.g., individual interviews and/or focus groups) of a larger and more diverse sample of current African-American female student-athletes would also be helpful to provide additional insight into refining the content and design of the workshop curriculum.

Another limitation of this study is that the researcher utilized narrative thematic analysis concepts as a guide; focusing on the selected categorical-content (college-years) but not the whole narrative. Additional thematic analysis of the entire narrative focusing on the plot (e.g. tragic hero, redemption) and roles that the participants employ (e.g. the people pleaser, the workhorse) may be useful to examine to identify additional coping skills implemented by African American female student-athletes.

The results of the evaluation suggest that the following modifications be made to the next version of the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum:

1. The addition of the discussions of about cultural foods, history, and the psychoeducation about the impact of healthy food on mood.

2. Consideration of the revision of the length and duration of the workshop series and each session; due to the impacted schedules of African American female student-athletes.

3. Inclusion of a short segment on the importance of healthy communication (e.g. passive, assertive and aggressive).

4. Incorporation of more relaxation techniques (e.g. yoga, aromatherapy)

5. Attention to opportunities for community-based women's empowerment activities

6. Transformation of the format of the program from a workshop series to a 2-credit seminar for freshman African American female student-athletes.

The future directions for the improvement of the curriculum for the S.I.S.T.A.S.

workshop includes making modifications to the curriculum by incorporating the feedback and

suggestions from the evaluators, the dissertation committee, and this researcher's reflections. The

S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop's curriculum could also be strengthened by conducting a pilot study of the

workshop with African American female student-athletes. A feedback form could be developed

and administered at the end of the workshop to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the

workshop from the perspectives of the participants. In addition, a pre-post assessment of

knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to stress management and other specific content from

the workshop would be helpful to evaluate the potential effectiveness of the intervention. Data

from pilot research could be incorporated into further improvement and development of the

workshop's curriculum.

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations for mental health

professionals working with African American female student-athletes and the university

collegiate athletic community are suggested:

1. Include S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop as a part of the student-athletes' summer seminar.

2. Administer regular screening of African American female student-athletes for Major
   Depressive Disorder.

3. Develop of seminars/continuing education for coaches regarding communication
   style, diversity, and positive ways to increase players' motivation.

4. Incorporate of regular "Team Huddles" between African American female student-
   athletes and athletic personnel to build community and discuss issues of diversity.

5. Create a diversity board comprised of athletic personnel and student-athlete
   representatives, which will allow student-athletes to discuss issues with diversity and/

or raise any concerns (e.g. feeling silenced, experiencing negative stereotypes).

Integration with Existing Literature

The development and evaluation of the S.I.S.T.A.S workshop curriculum reflects the central issues in the extant literature relevant to African American female student-athletes such as: (a) the "silencing" of the student-athletes (Withycombe, 2011; Bruening, 2004), the consistent contention with "isms" (Bruening, 2005; Carter-Francique et al., 2011) and negative stereotypes (Bruening, Armstrong, & Pastore, 2005; Lawrence, 2005).

The S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum builds upon the current intervention literature as it is a direct response to the scarcity of resources and interventions for African American female student-athletes (Sanchez-Hucles, Dryden, & Hucles, 2013). Interventions included the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum such as the Team Huddle and My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper answered the calls by African American female student-athletes included in Stratta's (1995) ethnographic study, who asked for the creation of safe spaces in athletics departments to discuss culture and to provide opportunities for mentorship. Additional S.I.S.T.A.S. activities locate person, culture, and environment in the center of the stress/appraisal process (Harrell, 2016); underscoring that mental health professionals cannot be helpful to African American female student-athletes without understanding how multiple intersections of culture may influence how African American female student-athletes appraise and make sense of their environment. The approach posited by the S.I.S.T.AS. workshop curriculum is consistent with an emerging field of study and practice, cultural sport psychology (Schinke & Moore, 2011). "Cultural sport psychology reflects unique aspirations and needs stemming from race, ethnicity, gender, and geography, among other considerations" (Schinke, Michel, Danielson, Gauthier, & Pickard, 2005, p. 2). The objective of current cultural sport psychology practice is to become more

inclusive and increase work and research conducted with marginalized groups and topics (Schinke & McGannon, 2014). Recent research in the field of cultural sport psychology encourages sport psychologists to self-reflect to increase awareness of their biases and blindsports and to facilitate more understanding of their culturally diverse clients (Schinke, McGannon, Parham & Lane, 2012).

Prior to the development of S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum; there was only one known intervention for African American female student-athletes: a two-unit freshman seminar at University of Southern California (USC; University of Southern California, 2013). The S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum and the USC freshman seminar course both focus on giving voice to African American female student-athletes' lived experiences which includes discussions about identity, relationships with athletic personnel, and balancing athletic and academic demands. However, the S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum is unique in that it is the first program to integrate evidence-based interventions for stress and culturally-specific interventions for African American female student-athletes. Thus, given that unmanaged stress can increase the risk for athletic burnout and academic attrition for student-athletes (Humphrey, Yow, & Bowden, 2000), it is hoped that this research project will encourage future investigations of the impact of stress on African American female student-athletes' well-being. These empirical studies could be strengthened by including administrations of instruments such as coping inventories, well-being inventories and formalized measures of stress.

Conclusion and Implications of this Study

This dissertation project intentionally selected a marginalized clinical population, African American female student-athletes, to be the focus of inquiry and exploration. Despite the success of many African American female student-athletes; all individuals are vulnerable to stress.

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Existing literature has indicated how stress impacts student-athletes and documented the 'isms that African American female student-athletes contend with. However, there were no known specific stress management programs for African American female student-athletes. Thus, this dissertation research project developed the curriculum for the first stress management workshop available in the published scholarly literature that intended to situate African American female student-athletes' needs and lived experiences at the center of priority.

It is the hope of this researcher that this research project will spark continued investigation of the impact of stress on African American female student-athletes, and consequential development of additional programs and supports to assist them during their collegiate careers and equip them with skills to prepare them for life post college. The S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop curriculum prioritized sisterhood and peer connection. After decades of feeling silenced, African American female student-athletes have been asking figuratively, "Am I my S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper?" This researcher says "Yes, I am."

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APPENDIX A

E-mail Script for Recruitment of Evaluators

APPENDIX A

E-mail Script for Recruitment of Evaluators

Dear (Potential Participant):

My name is Ashley E. Coleman and I am a doctoral student of clinical psychology at Pepperdine University. I am contacting you to determine whether you would be willing to review a curriculum for a six-session workshop that I am developing to assist African American female student-athletes with stress reduction and management. This workshop curriculum is a core component of my dissertation research.

I am conducting my dissertation research under the supervision of Dr. Shelly Harrell, a professor at Pepperdine University. The overall purpose of this research project is to develop curriculum for a workshop for African American female student-athletes to assist them with engaging in culturally congruent approaches to stress reduction. I am seeking: (a) two mental health professionals who have at least 5 years of experience working with African American female student-athletes and (b) two former African American female student-athletes who have graduated within the last 5 years to review the curriculum and respond to a brief questionnaire regarding their perceptions of the curriculum for the workshop.

If you decide to participate in this study, I will e-mail you a copy of my curriculum with an informed consent. Your input in this project will be strictly confidential and you are under no obligation to complete the study at any time. If this is something that you are interested in doing, please reply to this email. You may also respond to the questions within the body of the email if that is more convenient. Individuals that complete the research project will receive either a $20.00 Starbucks gift card or a $20.00 Sports Authority gift card.

Thank you sincerely for taking the time to read this email and consider my request. If you have any additional questions regarding my research project, feel free to contact me, Ashley E. Coleman, M.A., or Shelly Harrell, Ph.D.

Sincerely,

Ashley E. Coleman, M.A.

APPENDIX B

Email Script for Snowball Sampling Recruitment of Evaluators

APPENDIX B

Email Script for Snowball Sampling Recruitment of Evaluators

Dear (Potential Participant):

Thank you for your interest in the research project entitled "Strengths-based Interventions for Student Athletes experiencing Stress (SISTAS): A stress management workshop for African American female collegiate student-athletes." I am writing to ask whether you would be willing to pass along the recruitment email to colleagues who may also be interested in learning about this project. You are under no obligation to share this information and whether or not you share this information will not affect your relationship with this researcher or Pepperdine University.

Thank you sincerely for taking the time to consider my request. If you have any additional questions regarding my research project, feel free to contact me, Ashley E. Coleman, M.A., or Shelly Harrell, Ph.D.

Sincerely,

Ashley E. Coleman, M.A.

APPENDIX C

Telephone Script for Snowball Sampling Recruitment of Evaluators

APPENDIX C

Telephone Script for Snowball Sampling Recruitment of Evaluators

Introduction:
Hello, may I please speak to _____? My name is Ashley Coleman. I am a doctoral candidate in Pepperdine University's clinical psychology Psy D. program.

Purpose:

Thank you for your interest in the research project entitled "Strengths-based Interventions for Student Athletes experiencing Stress (SISTAS): A stress management workshop for African American female collegiate student-athletes." I am writing to ask whether you would be willing to pass along the recruitment email to colleagues who may also be interested in learning about this research project. You are under no obligation to share the research project's materials and can choose not to share the information without experiencing any penalty or retribution.

Closing:

Thank you sincerely for taking the time to consider my request. If you have any additional questions regarding my research project, please feel free to contact me or my dissertation Chairperson, Shelly Harrell, Ph.D. Thank you. Goodbye.

APPENDIX D

Evaluator Consent Form

Evaluator Consent Form

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Strengths-based Interventions for Student Athletes experiencing Stress (SISTAS): A stress management workshop for African American female collegiate student-athletes

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Ashley E. Coleman, M.A. and Shelly Harrell, Ph.D., at Pepperdine University, because of your professional expertise (e.g. working with African American female student-athletes/women of African descent/women dealing with stress) or because of your status as a former student-athlete. Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for you records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to develop the curriculum for a stress management workshop for African American female student-athletes. The workshop's curriculum was created to assist African American female student-athletes with engagement in culturally-syntonic and effective stress management techniques. Culturally-syntonic stress management techniques are activities or techniques that are in harmony with one's cultural norms.

STUDY PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to evaluate the curriculum for the stress management workshop which may take approximately 60-90 minutes of your time. Then, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire evaluating its design, usefulness, and potential effectiveness. The questionnaire is 13-items and consists of questions such as "What are the strengths of the curriculum?" and "What are the weaknesses of the curriculum?" Once you submit the questionnaire, you will receive a $20 gift card to Starbucks or to Sports Authority.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The potential and foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study include mild levels

of boredom or fatigue during review of the curriculum and completion of the evaluation form. In consideration of such factors, you are encouraged to read the curriculum and complete the evaluation at a time that is most convenient for you, taking breaks as necessary.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

While there are no direct benefits to the study participants, there are several anticipated benefits to society which include: the development of curriculum for a stress management workshop for African American female student-athletes. The curriculum of the stress management workshop can equip African American female student-athletes with helpful techniques and strategies to reduce the threats to their overall well-being, academic goals, and athletic goals. Additionally, the curriculum for the stress management workshop can make a contribution to the existing literature about interventions for African American female student-athletes.

PAYMENT/COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

You will receive $20 Starbucks gift card or a $20 Sports Authority gift card for your time. You do not have to answer all of the questions in order to receive the card. The card will be given to you when you return the evaluation form.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I will keep your records for this study confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if I am required to do so by law, I may be required to disclose information collected about you. Examples of the types of issues that would require me to break confidentiality are if you tell me about instances of child abuse and elder abuse. Pepperdine's University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Your responses on the questionnaire will be de-identified and will be coded with a pseudonym. Your written feedback on the evaluation form may be published or presented to a professional audience for the purpose of the further development of the curriculum for the stress management workshop. All data will be stored in a locked filed cabinet for a minimum of three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or completing only the items which you feel comfortable.

INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact (Dr. Shelly Harrell, the principal investigator's Dissertation Chairperson, via email at shelly.harrell@pepperdine.edu) if I have any other questions or concerns about this research. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Dr. Thema Bryant-Davis, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional School Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) at Pepperdine University, via email at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu or at 310-568-5753.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Thema Bryant-Davis, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional School Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or gpsirb@pepperdine.edu.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I have read the information provided above. I have been given a chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant   Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I have explained the research to the participants and answered all of his/her questions. In my

judgment the participants are knowingly, willingly and intelligently agreeing to participate in this study. They have the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study and all of the various components. They also have been informed participation is voluntarily and that they may discontinue their participation in the study at any time, for any reason.

_____

Name of Person Obtaining Consent

_____   _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   Date

APPENDIX E

Evaluation Packet Cover Letter

APPENDIX E

Evaluation Packet Cover Letter

Dear (Name of Evaluator),

Thank you for volunteering to serve as an evaluator in my dissertation research study entitled "Strengths-based Interventions for Student Athletes experiencing Stress (SISTAS): A Stress Management Workshop for African American Female Student-Athletes." Enclosed is curriculum for a workshop geared toward clinicians who work with African American female student-athletes, two informed consent forms (one is yours to keep), and a workshop evaluation form. The evaluation form is provided to facilitate your process in evaluating the workshop. It is recommended that the evaluation process be completed at a time that is most convenient to you, taking breaks as needed.

Please remember to review and complete the consent form. Once you have completed your evaluation of the workshop, please return the signed consent form, the curriculum and the completed workshop evaluation form in the postage-paid, pre-addressed envelope provided in this packet or scan the materials and submit them via email. Once the researcher receives the completed evaluation, you will receive a $20.00 Starbucks electronic gift card or a $20.00 Sports Authority electronic gift card.

Although your input is greatly appreciated, please remember that you are under no obligation to complete the study at any time. If at any time, you decide that you would like to discontinue participation in this study for any reason, please return all materials in the enclosed postage-paid, pre-addressed envelope. Thank you very much for your time and contribution to my research project.

Respectfully,

Ashley E. Coleman, M.A.

APPENDIX F

Evaluator Eligibility Form for Mental Health Clinicians

APPENDIX F

Evaluator Eligibility Form for Mental Health Clinicians

1. What is the highest degree you have earned?   ❏ Bachelors   ❏Masters   ❏ Doctorate

2. Do you currently hold a professional license to practice psychotherapy in your state?
    ❏Yes ❏ No

3. Do you have particular competence or expertise on issues related to college student-athletes?
    ❏Yes ❏ No

    Please describe:

4. Have you spent at least 5 years of your career working with student-athletes?
    ❏Yes ❏ No

5. Do you have at least 5 years of experience working with African American female student-athletes? ❏Yes ❏ No

6. What is the nature of your experience working with African American female student-athletes? (check all that apply)

    _____ therapist or counselor

    _____ outreach or support activities

    _____ university administration

    _____ other: _____

7. Please rate your level of awareness of the impact of stress on African American female student-athletes (e.g. intersections of multiple identities, negative stereotypes, and feeling silenced).

1	23 4	5		
Not aware at all	Somewhat aware	Aware	Very aware	Not sure/Not applicable

APPENDIX G

Evaluator Eligibility Form for Former Student-Athletes

APPENDIX G

Evaluator Eligibility Form for Former Student-Athletes

1. Do you identify as an African American woman? ❑Yes ❑ No
   If no, how do you self-identify? _____

2. Are you a former college student-athlete? ❑Yes ❑ No

3. What sport did you play during college?   _____

4. How many years did you play that sport in college? ____

5. Was your program considered Division I? ❑Yes ❑ No

APPENDIX H

Assessment of Curriculum

Assessment of Curriculum

1. The curriculum is thorough and provides adequate information regarding the stressors that are unique to African American female student-athletes.

12345

Strongly Strongly

Disagree Agree

2. The curriculum is thorough and provides adequate information on culturally-specific interventions effective in work with African American female student-athletes.

12345

Strongly Strongly

Disagree Agree

3. The curriculum is easy to read and understand.

12345

Strongly Strongly

Disagree Agree

4. The curriculum is well organized.

12345

Strongly Strongly

Disagree Agree

5. The curriculum provides practical coping strategies that can assist mental health clinicians when working to reduce stress in African American female student-athletes.

12345

Strongly Strongly

Disagree Agree

6. The curriculum directly addresses the stated purpose of the workshop.

12345

Strongly Strongly

Disagree Agree

7. The learning activities in the curriculum seem appropriate and sufficient for a workshop.

    1 2 3 4 5
    Strongly Strongly
    Disagree Agree

8. This is a program that will be helpful for African American female student-athletes.

    1 2 3 4 5
    Strongly Strongly
    Disagree Agree

9. What do you consider to be the strengths of the curriculum?
_____
_____
_____
_____

10. What do you consider to be the weaknesses of the curriculum?
_____
_____
_____
_____

11. What are some suggestions of additional stress-reduction/management interventions that are culturally appropriate for African American female student-athletes?
_____
_____
_____
_____

Please provide any other suggestions for improving this workshop.
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Additional comments:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX I

S.I.S.T.A.S. Workshop Curriculum
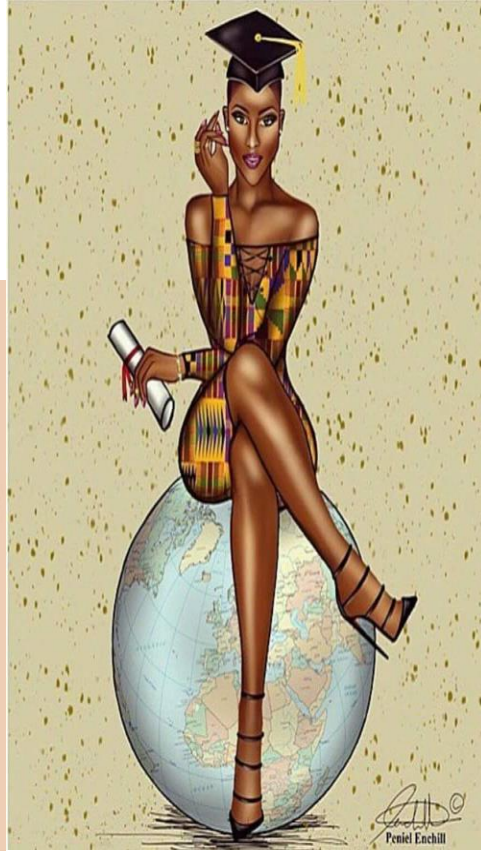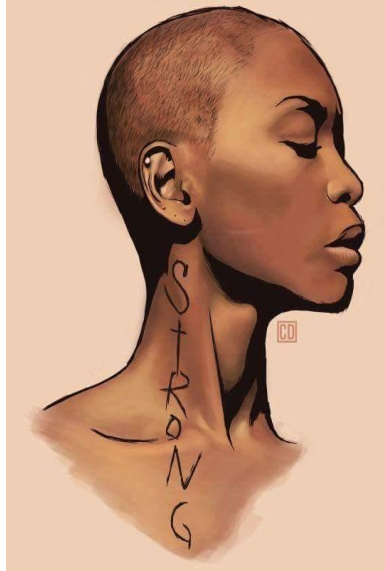
S.I.S.T.A.S.

A workshop series dedicated to implementing

Strengths-based Interventions for African American female

STudent-Athletes experiencing Stress

Developed by Ashley E. Coleman

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VISION STATEMENT

S.I.S.T.A.S. is a 6-session workshop series that was developed to assist African American female student-athletes build resilience and manage stress through engagement in culturally-syntonic and effective stress management techniques. Additionally, S.I.S.T.A.S. aims to provide a safe space for African American female student-athletes to explore the uniqueness of their experiences of stress in relationship to the intersectionality of their identities as both African Americans and women (as well as other potential dimensions such as socioeconomic status and sexual orientation). It is the vision of S.I.S.T.A.S. to provide participants with an opportunity to fully embrace, celebrate, and express their whole personhood. This workshop's curriculum was informed by research on stress with an emphasis on African American women and African American female student-athletes. In particular, the workshop was informed by the autobiographies of three African American women who were former student-athletes: Brittney Griner, Marion Jones, and Chamique Holdsclaw.
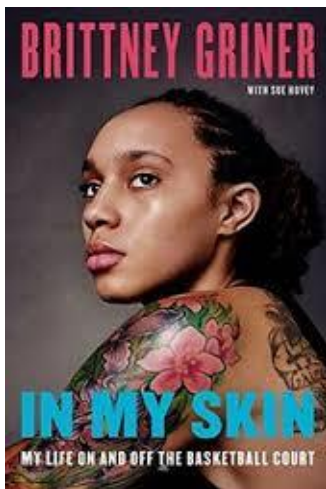
THE S.I.S.T.A.S. WORKSHOP'S STRUCTURE

Each S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop session is three hours. The time allotments are meant to be a guide

for the facilitator but can be amended at the facilitator's discretion dependent on the needs of the

attendees and the number of the attendees. While the number of participants can vary, the

suggested maximum is 30 student-athletes to optimize interaction among participants. The

structure of the sessions is based on the resilience-oriented stress management group intervention

model developed by Harrell (2015). The majority of the sessions will be structured as follows:

  I. **S.I.S.T.A.S. Check-in Circle (15 minutes)**

    a. The S.I.S.T.A.S. check-in circle is used to welcome the attendees to the workshop

     environment. The facilitator can use this time to check-in with each attendee

     briefly about their day/week, have the attendee rate their stress level; and give the

     facilitator opportunities to provide validation and brief recommendations related

     to any immediate stressors that are shared. During workshop sessions 2-5, the

     S.I.S.T.A.S. Check-in Circle will be used to socialize the attendees to the recently

     learned skills or stress management technique (e.g. empowerment journaling,

     relaxation breathing, and prayer/meditation). Additional time may be added to the

     Check-in Circle to review the *My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper* assignments. Since

     Sessions 1 and 6 are focused on the beginning and ending of the workshop series

     respectively, the time dedicated for check-in will be utilized in other ways. See

     Sessions 1 and 6 for additional information.

  II. **Introduction of the Topic (5 minutes)**

    a. A brief introduction of the topic to transition the attendees from check-in to the

     psychoeducation component of the session.

III.   Psychoeducation (30 minutes – 1 hour)

    a.   The purpose of this section of each workshop is to provide information about stress and to teach a new stress management technique, providing a rationale for its use.

IV.   S.I.S.T.A.S. Activities (Experiential Component) (30 minutes – 1 hour)

    a.   This section focuses on implementation of experiential and interactive activities that are intended to assist the attendees with expressing their strengths, practicing the stress management techniques, and experience a sense of community.

V.   Debriefing (20-30 minutes)

    a.   Debriefing gives the attendees opportunities to discuss their personal reactions to the S.I.S.T.A.S. activities and to reflect on their experience in the workshop session as a whole.

VI.   My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper's Assignments (5 minutes)

    a.   In efforts to reinforce practice of newly learned coping strategies and to reinforce community, each attendee will be matched with an accountability partner to practice the techniques learned in the workshop. At the end of each session, participants will receive practice assignments related to the technique that they learned in the day's session. The My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper's dyads are encouraged to check-in with their accountability partner throughout the week to see how their partner is coping with any stress and encourage engagement in the coping skills reviewed in the workshop.

VII.   Closing Activity (5 minutes)

    a.   The group will engage in an activity to honor the time spent in the session.

Note that the structure for Sessions 1, 5, and 6 are slightly different to accommodate the specific activities to be conducted.

SESSION 1:INTRODUCTION

Brief description: Attendees are welcomed to the workshop series; the overview of the workshop is reviewed; and attendees start building community by sharing their personal narrative about their journey to collegiate sports.

Materials Needed: Journals/Binders to distribute to the attendees

Primary Goal of session: To welcome and orient attendees to the workshop.

Specific Session Objectives ("Take-Aways"):

By the end of the session participants will:

1) Experience increased connection with other participants.

2) Understand the structure and process of the SISTAS workshop series.

3) Be paired with an accountability partner.

<u>**Workshop Session**</u>

  I.   **Introductions and welcome to the workshop (15 minutes)**

   a. Introductions: Say your name, your sport, and your favorite woman athlete and why she is your favorite.

   b. Facilitator Note: (Facilitator makes observations and integrative comments that relate to themes of resilience, strengths, cultural pride, overcoming adversity, excellence, performing under pressure, etc.).

  II. **Psychoeducation: Orientation to the workshop series (1 hour)**

   a. Provide overview of the workshop series; briefly review the sessions and the overall objectives of each session.

     i. Discussion point: "During the workshop, I hope that you will have an opportunity to learn a little more about stress and to build upon the coping strategies that you have in your toolkit to cope with your stress in a healthy way.

        ii.   Discussion point: Inform the group about the Team Huddle (group

              discussion with athletic personnel) that will occur in Session 5.

b. Lead attendees in discussion of what creates a "safe space" (e.g. using respectful

     language, keeping information shared in the workshop confidential, and

     maintaining commitment to participation in workshop's activities)

III.   S.I.S.T.A.S. Activity (1 hour):

a. **"My Journey:"** Each attendee describes her journey to college. This gives each

     attendee an opportunity to share her narrative with the other attendees. The length

     of time allotted for each story will depend on the number of workshop

     participants.

        i.   Facilitator notes: (Suggested script): "This next activity is about your

              story. Everybody has a story and this is an opportunity for you to tell

              yours. I'm passing around a worksheet to help you organize your story.

              Let's take a few minutes for you to write down some notes to yourself

              using this worksheet (See Appendix A- "My Journey" Worksheet). Please

              give your story a title. Then we will go around the room and each person

              will tell a 5-minute story."

        ii. It might also be fun for them to locate a "theme song" on their smartphone

              and play a clip of it, stating briefly what about the song relates to their

              journey.

iii. An alternative process when there is a large group of participants is for the young women to tell their story in small groups and then have a few volunteers share their story with the larger group.

iv. Reflect any commonalities among the participants' narratives; highlight differences and underscore how many different paths can lead to a common destination.

IV. **My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper Assignment (20 minutes):**

a. **Selection of Accountability Partner:**

i. Facilitator note: The goal of this activity is to pair each participant with an accountability partner. This can be determined in various ways. Option 1: The participants can be randomly matched (e.g. putting numbers in a hat and pulling them). Option 2: The facilitator can match the participant strategically by region of origin (e.g. pairing two participants from a Midwestern U.S) or year-level (e.g. pairing a freshman student-athlete participant with a senior student-athlete participant. Within-sport partners may be easier for the students to coordinate due to commonality of schedules. However, cross-sport partners could broaden their campus social network and sources of support. If the majority of the participants are freshman and are from a variety of locations, then you may want to consider matching the participants with other participants from the same region, especially given the common experience of homesickness during the first year of college. Option 3: The participants can select their own

accountability partners. This method is risky as the potential for students to feel left out or unwanted is increased.

    ii. Facilitator note (Suggested script to introduce the activity): "Many African American female student-athletes reported that they have benefitted from peer support and mentorship. While many of you may have other sources of support, your experiences as student-athletes are unique and at times, may only be understood by other student-athletes. Therefore, while you are a participant in this workshop, you will be paired with an accountability partner, also known as a fellow SISTA. Your accountability partner is someone who you may check-in with during the week to see how your partner's week is going and to check if they are practicing the coping strategies/skills reviewed in the workshop. At minimum, text with your partner once a day and meet with them in person for at least 20 minutes between now and our next workshop."

V.   **Closing Activity (25 minutes)**

   a. **Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)**

     i. Facilitator note: (See Appendix A for script; adapted from Bourne, 2011).

    ii. Share psychoeducation with group: Progressive muscle relaxation and music therapy have been found to be effective in reducing stress for college students (Ferrer et al., 2014).

SESSION 2: SISTAS AND STRESS

Brief description: Attendees receive psychoeducation about stress processes and common stressors that African American female student-athletes

Materials Needed: Copies of the adapted stress diagram, large post-its, and markers

Primary Goal of session: To provide a safe space for attendees to discuss their sources of stress, and to increase awareness of sources of stress and consideration of personal vulnerability to encounter certain types of stressors.

Specific Session Objectives ("Take-Aways):

By the end of the session participants will:

1) Know how to rate their stress level.

2) Recognize the unique stressors that impact African American female student-athletes differently.

3) Understand the benefit of empowerment journaling.

Workshop Session:

    I.   **S.I.S.T.A.S. Check-in Circle (15 minutes)**

        a. "Take your (stress) temperature" (Facilitator note: Teach the attendees how to rate their stress level on a scale 1-10; no stress-highest stress level.)

            i. Facilitator note (Suggested script): "Welcome back to Session 2. We are going to start today's session by learning how to take our stress temperature. Similar to using a thermometer to take someone's temperature to detect if someone has a fever, you are going to use your inner thermometers to take your stress temperature. This can be really helpful to increase your awareness to detect if you are stressed, to determine how stressed you are, and to signal to you that it is time to do something about your stress level.

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You will rate your stress level on a scale of 1-10, with 1 meaning no stress and 10 meaning so much stress that you cannot stand it. Knowing your stress level will allow you to make decisions about which coping skill to employ."

b. Introduce 5-minute journaling activity. "Now we are going to do a 5-minute empowerment journaling exercise. The purpose of empowerment journaling is to use writing to help you gain a better awareness of yourself, your needs, your thoughts and feelings and your lived experiences (Harrell, 2011) The prompt for today's journaling exercise is to write about one stressful experience you encountered this past week."

c. Provide psychoeducation about the usefulness of journaling (Facilitator note – Suggested script: "Research has shown that journaling about stressful events - with particular attention given to expressing thoughts and feelings - is linked to positive health outcomes and a reduction of distress"; Ullrich & Lutgendorf, 2002).

II. Introduction of the Topic (5 minutes)

a. Provide psychoeducation about how stress impacts student-athletes

  i. (Facilitator note – Suggested script: "Today we are going to discuss stress at length because when stress is unaddressed there can be several negative consequences for student-athletes. For instance, stress has been linked to athletic burnout, academic attrition, and early retirement from sport for student-athletes" (Humphrey, Yow, & Bowden, 2000).

b. Discuss the health consequences of chronic stress: (Suggested script: "Chronic stress, especially race-related stress has been linked to cardiovascular disease, which is the #1 killer of African American women" (Centers for Disease Control, 2015)

III. Psychoeducation (30 minutes – 1 hour)

a. Group brainstorming about the definition of stress. (Facilitator note: Try to engage group prior to giving definition. Pose question to group: "What is stress?")

b. Define and explain the stress process in lay terms

   i. Facilitator note Suggested script: "Stress occurs when one perceive that a situation will tax or exceed his/her internal and external resources"; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This definition of stress implies that stress occurs as a bi-directional transaction between the person and the environment. While this definition of stress is widely accepted, one critique of the definition is that there is no mention of culture. Therefore, a researcher, Dr. Shelly Harrell, revised the definition by noting that person and culture cannot be separated; therefore, cultural context is essential in understanding how people experience stress in various environments."

   ii. Facilitator note: (Pass out the abbreviated Harrell PEaCE diagram – See Appendix C).

   iii. Facilitator note (Suggested script): "The following is an example of how person, culture, and environment, may interact to impact how someone experiences stress.

1. Let's consider Kim, an African American woman who is incoming
    freshman student-athlete from The Bronx, NY, but recently
    moved to a rural southeastern university to play basketball. She is
    accustomed to taking public transportation or walking everywhere.
    Now Kim relies on a nice junior on her team who has a car to hitch
    a ride to the Target that is 40 minutes away from campus. Of
    course, Kim gives her teammate gas money, but she can only
    afford to go to Target once every 2 months. Kim is living in a new
    state, that has its own swagger and culture. There are no bodegas,
    she is far from Times Square and she cannot attend family dinners
    in Jersey. Kim, who is accustomed living in one of the largest
    metropolitan cities in the U.S., now is one of the students that
    comprises the 3% of African American student-body and 7% of the
    total ethnic minority student-body at the Predominantly White
    Institution that she attends. Kim views her environment as cold and
    isolating and is tired of "sticking out" when she is off or on
    campus.

    Kim has yet to make friends outside of her teammates which is
    ok with her for now because at least her teammates are cool but
    she is noticing that she has not been able to go out on a date which
    she was really looking forward to doing in college. She has not
    been able to go to any parties on campus so she joined a regional
    online dating site. Kim has yet to meet any matches and when she

is paired with someone they "are not her cup of tea." Kim was able to go to an on-campus banquet for all the student-athletes but noticed that many of the African American male student-athletes she was attracted to, were with white women. Kim was cool with everyone having a choice but felt frustrated because she felt that her options were limited.

- How might Kim's lived experience be impacted by the cultural context that she is in? (Facilitator note: Guide the attendees toward the dimensions of diversity that we know about Kim).

- What may be some sources of stress that may impact Kim during her first year? (Sample answers: homesickness, adjustment to college, adjustment to sport, desire to date)

- How may her identity impact her experiences of stress, if at all? (She may experience race-related stress, discrimination, may feel isolated or silenced, etc.)

c. Discuss the common stressors student-athletes face collectively:

i. Facilitator note: Solicit participation from group; Pose question: "What are the common sources of stress for student-athletes?" Write responses on large post-its). If not mentioned say "Some common examples of stressors that African American female student-athletes face include: Balancing academic and athletic demands, time management, managing success and failure, cultivating interpersonal relationships, preparing for life after

support (Parham, 1993). Additional sources of stress include limited

finances and conflicts with coaches (Griner & Hovey, 2014; Jones &

Sekules, 2004).

d. Identify the stressors that African American female student-athletes commonly

encounter

    i. (Facilitator note: Pose question to group: "Can you think of any stressors

that may impact student-athletes differently based on how the student-

athlete identifies?

        1. Let's consider this scenario: a student-athlete returns to her

political science class after travelling on a road trip for 4 days. The

professor is discussing class material that was reviewed while the

student-athlete was on the road trip. The professor poses a question

to the class and then spontaneously calls on the student-athlete for

the answer. The student- athlete starts freaking out internally, is

quiet for a few seconds and then says "I don't know."

   The following are questions for the group:

        2. How did you visualize the student-athlete?

        3. What are some assumptions that you made about the student-

athlete?

        4. What are some assumptions that the professor may make about the

student-athlete?

        5. What are some assumptions that the student-athlete's classmates

may make about the student-athlete?

6. If the student-athlete was a White male – would the assumptions made about the student-athlete change?

7. If the student-athlete was an African American woman – would he assumptions made about the student-athlete change?

8. If it was a female student-athlete unknown race or ethnicity – would the assumptions be different?

9. How might this situation impact the student-athlete internally?

10. Facilitator note: Continue to build upon different dimensions of diversity with this example. For instance – consider changing disability levels. What if this was a White female student-athlete who was registered at the Office for Students with Disabilities? An African American female student-athlete with a history of successful completion of Advanced Placement classes? A first-generation African American male student-athlete who dislikes talking in class because he is articulate and grew up being judged by his peers for "talking White."

ii. If not mentioned by the attendees state: "Research shows that African American female student-athletes may be subjected to stressors such as feeling

silenced, being negatively stereotyped, and body dissatisfaction.

IV. **S.I.S.T.A.S. Activities (Experiential Component) (30 minutes – 1 hour)**

a. **S.I.S.T.A.S. Communal Circle: Bearing Witness/Giving Testimony:**

i. **Show YouTube Clip of video discussing negative stereotypes**.

(Facilitator note: Show clip--

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MveYqOO06Ic&app=desktop--from

0:40 seconds – 1:15 seconds)**.** This clip displays images of negative

stereotypes of Black women portrayed on reality television shows, in

movies, and in music videos.

   1. Discussion questions/prompts:

- Any reactions to the clip?

- Do you think the clip represents your lived experience?

- Do you think these images impact how others view or judge you? If so, how?

- What does it mean to you to be an African American woman? (Facilitator note: You can add "Name 3 words that describe what it means to you to be an African American woman?"

- What I most enjoy about being an African American woman is _____. What I least enjoy about being an African American woman is _____.

- Are there times when you feel like aspects of your identity are ignored or that it is not safe to express them?
    - i. Facilitator note: If the group is having a difficult time identifying examples, then read this excerpt from Brittney Griner's book: "I was carrying

around a giant weight everywhere I went – a

growing sense that who I am, at my very core,

needed to be hidden away in order for me to survive

my time at Baylor" (Griner & Hovey, 2014, p. 116).

"In this particular example, Brittney is referring to

not feeling safe openly sharing that she was a

Lesbian while attending a Christian university that

had a written policy discouraging same-sex

relationships and engagement in sexual activity

before marriage. In Brittney's autobiography she

describes experiences of feeling stressed about

wanting to be her authentic self while receiving

feedback from her coach to "keep her business to

herself because she was the face of the program."

ii. "Other examples of feeling silenced may include:

feeling uncomfortable wearing clothing or jewelry with

cultural symbols on campus or around the athletic

department, feeling uncomfortable wearing certain

hairstyles, avoiding/ feeling uncomfortable of discussing

aspects of your background (e.g. areas of privilege or

under-privilege) due to fears of being judged by others).

V. **Debriefing (20 minutes)**

a. Debriefing the S.I.S.T.A.S. Communal Circle:

      i.   What was it like for you to share your experience with the group?

      ii.   What was it like for you to hear about other experiences in the group?

      iii.   What are you taking away from this conversation?

VI.   My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper's Assignment (5 minutes):

    a.   Empowerment journaling: Spend 10 minutes every day journaling about your day.

    b.   Remind participants about structure for being in touch with your accountability

       partner.

VII.   **Closing Activity (15 minutes):** Re"CENTER"ing Exercise (Harrell, 2015). The

    ReCENTERing exercise invites the attendees to:

    <u>C</u>lose your eyes and open your heart-mind.
    <u>E</u>xhale into the present here-and-now moment.
    <u>N</u>otice your internal experience by observing (without evaluating) what is going on
    physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.
    <u>T</u>rust in what matters most to you by bringing it to consciousness using a meaningful
    word, an affirmation, proverb, sacred text passage, image, symbol, etc.
    <u>E</u>xplore your choices.
    <u>R</u>elease what does not serve your highest purpose and return to the situation more
    centered.

    (Suggested script: "We are going to close today's workshop session with a re-
    centering exercise. Sometimes when someone is feeling stressed it may easy for them
    to get lost in thoughts, emotions, and to feel disconnected from their center.
    Sometimes feeling stressed and overwhelmed can occur at the worst times like right
    before an important game or the night before a big exam. This goal of this exercise is
    to help you learn how to reCENTER yourselves, wherever you are."

SESSION 3: SISTAS CAN COPE

Brief description: Attendees receive psychoeducation about coping skills for stress.

Materials Needed: Thinking Traps Handout; Large Post-It, markers

Primary Goal of session: To engage the attendees in practice of coping skills.

Specific Session Objectives ("Take-Aways"):

By the end of the session participants will:

1) Understand the difference between healthy coping skills and unhealthy coping skills.

2) Be able to challenge and reframe their negative thoughts.

3) Recognize the symptoms of major depressive disorder.

Workshop Session:

I.   S.I.S.T.A.S. Check-in Circle (20 minutes)

a. Take (your) stress temperature (Facilitator note: Remind the attendees of the instructions on how to rate their stress level. See instructions in Session 2).

b. 5-minute journaling activity (Prompt: Write about one stressful experience you encountered this past week. How did you cope?) Invite volunteers to share with the group.

c. Review My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper assignment: "What was your experience with journaling?" What did you notice about yourself before journaling and after journaling?"

   i. Facilitator note: You can anticipate that some participants may not find journaling to be a positive or useful experience. Therefore, normalize that empowerment journaling may not be a stress management technique that

is effective for everyone, but it is good that they attempted it. Reiterate that one of the goals of the workshop is to present the attendees with a bevy of stress management techniques and allow you to custom tailor their toolkit.

II.   Introduction of the Topic (5 minutes)

a.   Define coping ("Coping is the constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141).

     i.   Give example: "Let's consider this scenario. Imagine that you miss your alarm and are late for your first class. You're feeling stressed and overwhelmed. Well, you can respond to that situation in a variety of ways. You can rush to get to class before it ends, email your professor and explain that you overslept, or you may freak out even more and have thoughts like "Oh my goodness, what if I missed a pop quiz?" "What if my coach finds out?" "Is my coach going to bench me for missing class?" The process of you contemplating how you are going to respond to the situation is the process of coping. Let's say you choose a possible solution like rushing to class before it ends, you may stop in the middle of rushing to class and say "No, I'm not going to come in with only 10 minutes left in class. What is my professor going to think?" So then you may revisit the other possible solutions you came up with or choose a new solution.

Again, this process is coping and shows how it is constantly shifting based on how we appraise and reappraise the situation.

III.   Psychoeducation (30 minutes – 1 hour)

a.   Facilitator note: Pose questions to the group: "How do you cope with stress?" What has helped you get through difficulties in the past?" The goal is to help the attendees build upon their strengths.

b.   Discuss the difference between healthy and unhealthy coping skills (Facilitator note - Suggested script: "For some individuals when they experience stress, they are drawn to use unhealthy ways of coping. Can you think of some unhealthy ways of coping with stress?" If not mentioned say: "Some examples of unhealthy coping strategies include substance abuse, unsafe sexual practices, binge eating, and "retail therapy" also known as excessive spending."). Unhealthy coping skills often involve avoidance and an attempt to numb one's negative emotions whereas healthy coping skills often contribute to greater emotional and physical health."

c.   Provide psychoeducation about the symptoms of major depressive disorder.

  i.   Suggested script: "Coping skills can help us with high stress levels but also help us when we are experiencing depression. Recent research on student-athletes and depression suggests that student-athletes are at an increased risk for developing depression in comparison to their nonathletic peers, possibly given to the myriad of stressors that they encounter (Rao & Jong, 2015). Research also suggests that female athletes are less likely to openly endorse depression (Jones, 2013). In the three autobiographies that

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informed the development of this workshop's curriculum, it was revealed

that Brittney Griner, Marion Jones, and Chamique Holdsclaw all

experienced depression while in college."

ii. Facilitator note: Discuss how the Strong Black Woman Stereotype (SBW-

S; Donovan & West, 2015) may adversely impact help-seeking behaviors

in African American women.

1. Suggested questions to pose to group:

a. "Have there ever been times that you have needed help but

were reluctant to admit it or seek help from others? If so,

what got in the way of you seeking help?"

i. Follow-up questions depending on the responses:

1. "Do you think that the environment and

culture that you are a part of such as

athletics has any impact on your beliefs on

seeking help?"

2. "Do you think that your environment

encourages help-seeking?"

b. (Suggested script): "Research shows that there is a Strong

Black Woman Stereotype that states that African American

women are immune to pain and innately have the resources

to endure all stressors given their resiliency and tendency to

be self-containing and self-sacrificing (Donovan & West,

2015). This stereotype has several negative consequences

for African American women. For one, it can discourage African American women from admitting that they are experiencing negative emotions and soliciting support from others, due to fears of being viewed as "weak." In a study of 92 Black female college students, Donovan and West (2015) found that moderate and high endorsements of the SBW stereotype increased the relationship between stress and depressive symptoms. Another negative consequence is that since Black women are sometimes only praised for their "strength," the SBW-S can influence some Black women to try to "live up" to the stereotype by ignoring or minimizing their needs.

c. (Suggested script): "Given what you just learned about the SBW-S, do you think it influences how you view seeking help?" "Would you feel comfortable seeking help if you noticed that your stress levels or troubles were becoming unbearable?"

d. "If you hold some of these beliefs, you are not alone. Even the student-athletes who informed the development of this workshop reported experiencing reluctance to share their struggles with others; causing some of them to struggle alone. As Brittney Griner stated, through her experience in therapy, she learned that knowing when to ask for

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help is a sign of strength and therapy can be a place where healing occurs."

    e. "If you are experiencing depression, I want to encourage you to reach out for support. If at any time you have any thoughts of wanting to harm or kill yourself or someone else, then please reach out for support immediately. You can receive support at the nearest emergency home, you can call the local police, the campus police, as well as The National Suicide Hotline. If you are having trouble making these calls alone, you can also find a trusted supportive family member, friend, therapist, or coach to help you make the phone call or reach the emergency room."

IV.   S.I.S.T.A.S. Activities (Experiential Component) (30 minutes – 1 hour)

a.   **"Silence the Critics":** Facilitation of discussion about the coping mechanism commonly endorsed by African American female student-athletes.

    i.   Facilitator note: (Suggested script): "Many student-athletes described using other people's criticisms and doubts as them as motivation to accomplish their goals." (Read the following quotes from the autobiographies):

- "I was going to prove that I wasn't soft and fragile but strong and resilient" (Holdsclaw, 2012, p. 86).

- "I wanted to prove to Coach Summitt that I was serious about academics and basketball. I wanted to surpass the expectations

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she had of me" (Holdsclaw, 2012, p.93).

    ii.   Facilitator note: (Suggested script): "Have you ever coped with stress by working hard to silence the critics? What are the pros of that strategy? Has that strategy ever been unhelpful to you?"

    iii.   (Facilitator note: If not mentioned – describe how the criticism from others can become negative self-talk. Also, highlight the use of the strategy is dependent on someone on receiving negative energy from others to fuel motivation).

        1.   Suggested script: "One of the dangers of constantly hearing critical messages from others is that it can be internalized. Have you ever repeated someone else's criticisms to yourself and then it became your words? What happens when you internalize critical self-talk?" The goal is to help the attendees understand that the short-term benefits but long-term consequences.

    iv.   Read the following quotes:

        1.   "Success temporarily silences the (external) critics. Silence the inner critic and then you will permanently win." - Ashley E. Coleman

        2.   "She (Pat Summit – used the term) 'Mental Midgets'… it meant not letting that crafty little sucker on your shoulder tell you that you can't do something."- (Holdsclaw, 2012, p. 95)

b. **Activity "Silencing Your Inner Critic** (see Appendix C)

i. Attendees will learn and practice how to reframe negative self-talk. Attendees will also learn about the power of negative self-talk on one's performance, mood, and overall well-being.

V. Debriefing (20 minutes)

a. What was difficult about silencing your inner critic?

VI. My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper's Assignment (5 minutes):

a. "In your journal: log 3 situations where you notice your critical voice between now and the next week. Pay attention to how you respond to your critical voice and see if you can challenge your negative thoughts and use the reframing techniques learned today in session."

VII. Closing Activity (5 minutes)

a. **"Leaves on a stream" Exercise** (See Appendix F for prompt)

i. Suggested script to introduce the exercise: "We are going to end the today's workshop with an activity, where the goal is not to challenge your thoughts but to help you accept the thoughts that you are having and empower you to decide how to respond to them, if at all."

<center>**SESSION 4: CULTURALLY AFFIRMATIVE ACTIVTIES**</center>

Brief description: Attendees engage in activities that affirm and celebrate their personhood.

Materials Needed: Copies of Dr. Angelou's "Still I Rise" poem; copies of the "What's in a name?" handout; mp3 clip of song "Optimistic" by Sounds of Blackness (or other appropriate uplifting song chosen by the Facilitator)

Primary Goal of session: To engage attendees in affirming and empowering cultural activities that allow them to define themselves and tap into inner strengths.

Specific Session Objectives ("Take-Aways"):

By the end of the session participants will:

1) Empower themselves to celebrate their personhood.

2) Proclaim their resilience and assume power to define themselves.

3) Affirm and bear witness to others' testimonies.

Workshop Session:

I. **S.I.S.T.A.S. Check-in Circle (20 minutes)**

b. Take (your) stress temperature.

c. Music - Sounds of Blackness "Optimistic"

    i. Facilitator note: Pose question: "What messages in this song stood out to you?"

    ii. Facilitator note: If no one responds, note that the themes in the song include: persevering despite challenges, maintaining an optimistic attitude, relying on hope and faith, and transcendence (believing in a being higher than oneself).

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d. My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper Assignment review: Pose questions: When were you aware of your inner critic? What did you notice about your inner critic? Were you able to challenge to your inner critic? If not, how did you respond to it? In retrospect, how would you have liked to respond to your inner critic?

II. **Introduction of the Topic (5 minutes):** "Today we are going to do a variety of activities including a roundtable on relationships and some activities that are related to identity and culture. Interpersonal relationships have been identified as one of the largest sources of stress for African American female student-athletes; especially relationships with coaches; romantic relationships, platonic friendships, and relationships with family members."

III. **S.I.S.T.A.S. Communal Circle: (Let's get REAL about Relationships)**

a. **Segment 1 (Mentorship/Coaching):** Segment One focuses the discussion on the SISTAS' relationships with mentors and coaches. The following questions are meant to serve as a guide. As the facilitator, you can choose to amend the questions as needed based on the flow of the discussion.

- Do you have a mentor? If so, who is your mentor? How did you meet your mentor? How often do you connect with your mentor?

- How often are you in contact with African American women who could possibly become mentors? (Facilitator note: If an attendee asks why you are focusing on mentorship, then you can say that "Research shows that African American female student-athletes have complained about the limited number of African American women mentors and leaders in athletics" (Lapchick, 2015; Stratta, 1995).

- How often are you in contact with women in leadership positions?

- How often are you in contact with African American women in leadership positions?

- (Facilitator note: Be careful not to lead the attendees with the following questions about the player-coach relationship. As the facilitator, highlight areas that are working in their coaching relationships so that those aspects of the relationships can possibly be generalized to other relationships. Additionally, these questions can be used to normalize the occurrence of some conflicts with coaches and to identify areas that they may want to discuss generally in the Team Huddle or in another forum).

    1. How would you describe your relationship with your coach?

    2. What is working in your relationship with your coach? What is not working in your relationship with your coach?

    3. Suggested script: "Coach-player relationships are very unique. You spend a lot of time with your coach during practice, games, conditioning and traveling. Experiencing stress and occasional tension and conflict in relationships commonly occurs in relationships. While there are African American female student-athletes who have discussed having positive relationships with their coaches, there is literature that describes how some African American female student-athletes have reported experiencing negative communication from coaches which has included being on the receiving end of insults, threats of the loss of scholarship

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and decreased playing time, and even having items thrown at
them."

b. **Segment 2 (Romantic and Platonic Relationships):** Segment Two focuses the
discussion on the SISTAS' dating and platonic relationships.

- How have your experiences with dating been since you entered college?

- Do you think that you are in an environment where you regularly interact
  with potential partners?

- How has being an African American female student-athlete affected your
  dating experiences while in college?

- Do you have positive friendships?

- Are you friends with other women?

- Are they any African American women that you admire? If so, whom?

- How often are you in contact with African American women?

- Is the frequency with which you connect with African American women
  okay for you?

- Is connecting with African American women an important value for you?

c. **Segment 3 (Family Relationships):** Segment Three focuses the discussion on the
SISTAS' relationships with family members. Note that family members can
include fictive kin as well (e.g. close neighbors, family friends, and Godparents).

- Is there anyone in your family that you can seek support from?

- Do you ever feel any pressure from family to "make it" and give back?

- Who do you call when you are having a bad day?

d. **Segment 4 (Setting boundaries in relationships):** Segment 4 focuses on introducing setting boundaries as a coping skill for stress in relationships.

- "One of the ways you can manage stress in your relationships is to set healthy boundaries with people."
- Provide psychoeducation about the definition and purpose of boundaries
    1. "Boundaries allow you to understand what behavior feels comfortable and acceptable for you. For instance, how do you like to be spoken to? How do you like to be touched? When do you know if you are feeling violated? Respected? Disrespected?
- Inform the group that one of the first steps to having a healthy relationship is to be aware of your boundaries and to be aware of other people's boundaries.
- Encourage reflection: "How do you feel about saying 'no' to others?"
- Normalize that for some relationships it can be anxiety inducing to set boundaries in all relationships but especially relationships where there is a power differential in the relationship (e.g. player-coach/parent-adult child; professor-student). Individuals may fear experiencing retaliation, experiencing more strain or conflict in the relationship or a complete loss of the relationship.
    1. Sample scenarios include: Reluctantly agreeing to have unprotected sex with a partner because of fears of losing the relationship; Agreeing to do things against NCAA Rules for a coach because of fears that you will lose playing time if you do

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no comply; Repeatedly sending money to relatives despite your desire to say 'no' due to fears that they will say that 'you changed.'

- Share that this segment is to plant seeds to begin considering where you are with regard to setting boundaries with others and if this is an area that you need to continue exploring.

VIII. **S.I.S.T.A.S. Activities (Experiential Component) (30 minutes – 1 hour)**

    a. **"I Rise" Activity** (Harrell, 2015; See Appendix F)

    b. **What is in a Name?"** (Harrell, 2015; See Appendix G)

IX. **Debriefing (20 minutes)**

    a. What was it like for you to participate in the activities today?

    b. How did it feel for you to share what you are rising from?

    c. How can you continue to honor yourself this week?

X. **My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper's Assignment (5 minutes)**

    a. Suggested Script: "Continue to honor yourself for what you are rising from. Select a song, quote, or a poem that empowers you and listen to it/or recite it at least once a day for this week."

XI. **Closing Activity (5 minutes)**

    a. Facilitator shares her empowerment song.

<p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 5: RESILIENCE AND PREVENTION</p>

Brief description: Student-athlete participants and identified athletic department personnel

engage in the "Team Huddle", a structured group discussion.

Materials Needed: None

Primary Goal of session: To facilitate discussion between the SISTAS and athletic personnel to

give voice to the lived experiences of the student-athletes.

Specific Session Objectives ("Take-Aways"):

By the end of the session participants will:

  1) Share their lived experiences with athletic community members.

  2) Experience engaged and constructive dialogue with peers and staff.

  3) Collaborate to brainstorm solutions to celebrate diversity and increase opportunities for

     mentorship and leadership within the athletic community.

<u>**Workshop Session:**</u>

    I.   **S.I.S.T.A.S. Check-in Circle (30 minutes)**

        a. Take (your) stress temperature.

        b. Review of My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper assignment: "Were you able to honor yourself

           throughout the week?" Solicit a couple of volunteers to share their empowerment

           song, quote, or poem.

        c. Preparation for the Team Huddle: "What insights are you most looking forward to

           sharing about yourself with the Team Huddle?"

        d. Relaxation Breathing Exercise

    II.   **S.I.S.T.A.S. Activities (Experiential Component) (1.5 hours – 2 hours)**

        a. Facilitator note: While in the process of seeking permission to conduct the

           S.I.S.T.A.S. workshop at an university, it is imperative for the facilitator to have

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introduced and talked openly about the objectives of the TEAM Huddle section of the workshop. Buy-in and cooperation from athletic department personnel is critical to the success of the activity. The goals of this consultation are (a) to assess for the university's openness to hearing positive and constructive feedback from the African American female student-athletes; (b) to assess the athletics department administrators' level of willingness to collaborate with them to brainstorm solutions to issues raised; and (c) to assess the athletic department administrators' commitment to implement solutions offered by the African American female student-athletes during the Team Huddle. The facilitator may also need to engage in additional consultation with coaches or other athletic personnel to assess for level of engagement and prepare them for participation in the Team Huddle.

b. **"Team Huddle":** The S.I.S.T.A.S. and participating coaches and administrators (preferably the Athletic Director and Senior Women's Administrator) will sit in a large circle and have a candid discussion regarding the S.I.S.T.A.S. lived experiences as student-athletes at said university. The goals of the Team Huddle are to give the S.I.S.T.A.S. opportunities to describe their lived experiences and to collaborate with the athletic personnel about how to create safe spaces which will allow the S.I.S.TA.S. to thrive holistically.

    i. The specific areas/topics that will be addressed during the Team Huddle will largely depend on the S.I.S.T.A.S. and what they identify as areas that they want to share with the athletic department. Some general areas that may be discussed include:

1. **Mentorship** (e.g. increasing mentorship for African American female student-athletes); addressing the possible lack of African American women represented in the university's athletic department; developing a program to have African American women alumni and African American women who were student-athletes from the university paired with the current African American female student-athletes.

2. **Creating Community** (e.g., issues related to developing environments that are aware of the power differentials in the relationships, yet are built on trust, mutual respect and open communication).

3. **Developing Student-Leaders** (e.g. providing opportunities for African American female student-athletes to develop and enhance leadership skills)

III. **Debriefing (20 minutes):** (Facilitator note: Pose the following questions to the group):

i. What are some of the feelings that you experienced while in the Team Huddle?

ii. Did you feel heard? If so, how did it feel for you to be heard?

iii. Were there times that you felt unheard? If so, when? How did it feel for you to be unheard?

iv. What are some options for coping when you don't feel heard?

       v. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your experience

         in the Team Huddle?

IV.   **My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper's Assignment (5 minutes):** Choose one of the stress

management techniques reviewed during the workshop and do it least three times

during the next week.

V.   **Closing Activity (5 minutes):** Select a volunteer who did not get to share her

empowerment song during the check-in to play for the group.

SESSION 6: CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Brief description: The final session of the workshop series.

Materials Needed: Copies of S.I.S.T.A.S. Coping Card

Primary Goal of session: To reflect on the attendees' experiences in the workshop.

Specific Session Objectives ("Take-Aways"):

By the end of the session participants will:

1) Understand how to implement stress management techniques.

2) Reflect on their experiences participating in the workshop.

3) Know the resources available to seek follow-up care and support.

<u>**Workshop Session**</u>:

    I.   **S.I.S.T.A.S. Check-in Circle (5 minutes)**

        a. Take (your) stress temperature.

    II.   **Summary of core techniques/skills (30 minutes)**

        a. Rating Stress Level (Take your stress temperature)

        b. Empowerment journaling

        c. Silencing the Inner Critic (Cognitive restructuring/Reappraising the problem)

        d. Setting boundaries in relationships

        e. Progressive Muscle Relaxation

        f. ReCENTERing yourself

        g. Affirming self/Empowering self/Celebrating self

        h. Soliciting support (e.g. via resilience-promoting relationships, therapy, clergy; mentors, with fellow SISTAS).

    III.   **S.I.S.T.A.S. Activities (Experiential Component) (1.5 hours)**

a. **S.I.S.T.A.S. Communal Circle:** Guide attendees in reflection on experiences in workshop using the following questions:

- What are you taking away from your experience in this workshop?

- What did you learn about stress?

- Name one stress management technique that you will be willing to use in the future.

b. Questions to prompt attendees' reflections on knowing when to recognize that they need more assistance (Handout copies of S.I.S.T.A.S. Coping Card – See Appendix I)

- How will you know when you need a "timeout"?

- How will you know when you need more support?

- Who will you notify when you need more support?

    1. Facilitator note: Review resources that are available to student-athletes on campus and off campus. (This requires completion of prior research once the workshop is scheduled at a particular university).

    2. Review emergency services available in cases of crises (Include the National Suicide Hotline and nearest emergency rooms; Campus Police; Local Police. Check with the sports departments to see if they have additional emergency services/protocols for student-athletes).

- What could keep you from seeking support?

- During discussion of issues or beliefs that discourage help-seeking behaviors, read the excerpt: "My mom lived down the street and made it clear she was there to support me, but I wouldn't let her near me. And she didn't insist for fear of overstepping her bounds. I wish now that I'd been able to reach out to her for consolation, but my pride wouldn't let me." – Marion Jones

IV. **My S.I.S.T.A.S. Keeper's Assignment:** Suggested script: "For the past few weeks, you have had an accountability/support partner to check in with you to see how your week is going and to see if you are practicing the coping skills taught in the workshop. Going forward, I would like to encourage you to consider continuing this practice in some form, as you may find it to be useful in the future. Research has shown that having healthy relationships with other African American women; affectionately known as "sister friends" can be incredibly beneficial for African American women (Bryant-Davis, 2013).

V. **Closing Activity (20 minutes):**

a. **Intertwined team** (adapted from Williams, Wiggins & Frame, 1999).

- Facilitator note: (Suggested script): "We are now going to do an activity that will honor the time that we have spent together. Let us all stand and form a circle."

- The facilitator invites each participant to visualize that she is a tree whose roots are intertwined with each member of the group. While holding hands and eyes closed, each member is invited to say an

affirmation that the group then repeats in unison. The practice is
repeated until the workshop ends.

<h1 style="text-align:center">References</h1>

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APPENDIX A

"My Journey" Worksheet

APPENDIX A

"My Journey" Worksheet

Directions: The following prompts are to help you organize and complete your narrative.

"I first started playing sports_____." "Some memories that stand out for me when I played in high school are _____." "I knew I was good when _____", "I started thinking about getting a college scholarship when _____," "Experiences and people that supported me to get here included _____", Challenges and obstacles I encountered included _____," "My experience with recruitment was _____". "What would the title of your story be up to this point in your life? _____". "What would be the theme song for your story? _____".

APPENDIX B

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

Adapted by University of Houston, Clear Lake and Edmund J. Bourne, 2011

Psychoeducation: Progressive muscle relaxation is an exercise that relaxes your mind and body by progressively tensing and relaxation muscle groups throughout your entire body. You will tense each muscle group vigorously, but without straining, and then suddenly release the tension and feel the muscle relax. You will tense each muscle for about 5 seconds. If you have any pain or discomfort at any of the targeted muscle groups, feel free to omit that step. Throughout this exercise you may visualize the muscles tensing and a wave of relaxation flowing over them as you release that tension. It is important that you keep breathing throughout the exercise. Now let's begin.

Script: Begin by finding a comfortable position either sitting or lying down in a location where you will not be interrupted. Allow your attention to focus only on your body. If you begin to notice your mind wandering, bring it back to the muscle you are working on. Take a deep breath through your abdomen, hold for a few second, and exhale slowly. Again, as you breathe notice your stomach rising and your lungs filling with air. As you exhale, imagine the tension in your body being released and flowing out of your body. And again inhale….and exhale. Feel your body already relaxing. As you go through each step, remember to keep breathing.
Tighten the muscles in your forehead by raising your eyebrows as high as you can. Hold for about five seconds. And abruptly release feeling that tension fall away.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Now smile widely, feeling your mouth and cheeks tense. Hold for about 5 seconds, and release,

appreciating the softness in your face.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Next, tighten your eye muscles by squinting your eyelids tightly shut.

Hold for about 5 seconds, and release.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Gently pull your head back as if to look at the ceiling. Hold for about 5 seconds, and release,

feeling the tension melting away.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Now feel the weight of your relaxed head and neck sink.

Breathe in…and out. In…and out. Let go of all the stress in…and out.

Now, tightly, but without straining, clench your fists and hold this position until I say stop.

Hold for about 5 seconds, and release.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Now, flex your biceps. Feel that buildup of tension. You may even visualize that muscle

tightening. Hold for about 5 seconds, and release, enjoying that feeling of limpness.

Breathe in and out.

Now tighten your triceps by extending your arms out and locking your elbows. Hold for about 5

seconds, and release.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Now lift your shoulders up as if they could touch your ears. Hold for about 5 seconds, and

quickly release, feeling their heaviness.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Tense your upper back by pulling your shoulders back trying to make your shoulder blades

touch. Hold for about 5 seconds, and release.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Tighten your chest by taking a deep breath in, hold for about 5 seconds, and exhale, blowing out

all the tension.

Now tighten the muscles in your stomach by sucking in. Hold for about 5 seconds, and release.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Gently arch your lower back. Hold for about 5 seconds, relax.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Feel the limpness in your upper body letting go of the tension and stress, hold for about 5 seconds, and relax.

Tighten your buttocks. Hold for about 5 seconds…, release, imagine your hips falling loose.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Tighten your thighs by pressing your knees together, as if you were holding a penny between them. Hold for about 5 seconds…and release.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Now flex your feet, pulling your toes towards you and feeling the tension in your calves. Hold for about 5 seconds, and relax, feel the weight of your legs sinking down.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Curl your toes under tensing your feet. Hold for about 5 seconds, release.

Pause for about 10 seconds.

Now imagine a wave of relaxation slowly spreading through your body beginning at your head and going all the way down to your feet. Feel the weight of your relaxed body. 3 deep breaths.
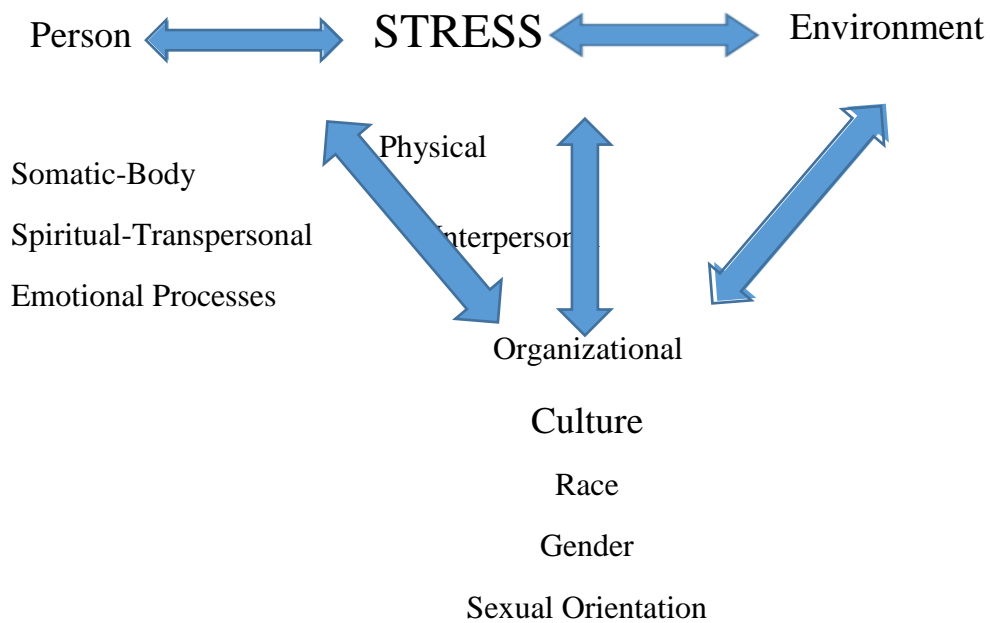
APPENDIX C

An Abbreviated Version of Harrell's (2015) PEaCE Stress and Resilience Framework

An abbreviated version of Harrell's (2015) PEaCE Stress and Resilience Framework

The experience of "stress" is the product of the complex interplay of person, environment, and cultural processes that generate stressors, determine meanings and appraisals, and create internal and external resources for coping.

Person ⟷ STRESS ⟷ Environment

Somatic-Body

Spiritual-Transpersonal

Emotional Processes

Physical

Interpersonal

Organizational

Culture

Race

Gender

Sexual Orientation

APPENDIX D

"Silence the (Internal) Critic: Reframing Negative Thoughts"

APPENDIX D

"Silence the (Internal) Critic: Reframing Negative Thoughts"

Adapted from (Hughes, Gourley, Madson, & Le Blanc, 2011)

Directions: Present 3 prompts of stressful situations to the group. Guide the attendees through consideration of questions to challenge and reframe their thoughts.

Prompt #1: You just bombed an exam. You really need a good grade.

Prompt #2: You have to pay an unexpected bill and it causes an avalanche of financial strain.

Prompt #3: You just had a terrible argument with your best friend or significant other. It ended badly and you will not be able to talk to the person until tomorrow.

Questions Used to Challenge Negative Thoughts:

1. Are these thoughts really true?
2. Are the negative aspects of this situation overemphasized?
3. What is the worst thing that could really happen?
4. Is there anything that might be positive about this situation?
5. Was a negative outcome assumed?
6. How do you know the situation will turn out badly?
7. Is there another way to look at this situation?
8. What difference will this make next week? In a month? In a year?
9. If you had one month to live, how important would this be?
10. Are you setting unrealistic standards for yourself? Would you be this harsh if the event had happened to a friend?

APPENDIX E

Thinking Traps Handout

APPENDIX E

Thinking Traps Handout

(AnxietyBC©)

Thinking Traps	Examples
Fortune-telling: This is when we predict that things will turn out badly. But, in reality, we cannot predict the future because we don't have a crystal ball!	"I know I'll mess up." "I will never be able to manage my anxiety."
Black-and-white thinking: This is when we only look at situations in terms of extremes. For example, things are either good or bad, a success or a failure. But, in reality, most events call for a more "moderate" explanation. For example, cheating once on your diet does not mean you have failed completely. You had a small setback, and all you need to do is to get back on your diet tomorrow.	"Anything less than perfect is a failure." "I planned to eat only healthy foods, but I had a piece of chocolate cake. Now my diet is completely ruined!"
Mind-reading: This trap happens when we believe that we know what others are thinking and we assume that they are thinking the worst of us. The problem is that no one can read minds, so we don't really know what others are thinking!	"Others think I'm stupid." "She doesn't like me."
Over-generalization: This is when we use words like "always" or "never" to describe situations or events. This type of thinking is not helpful because it does not take all situations or events into account. For example, sometimes we make mistakes, but we don't always make mistakes.	"I always make mistakes." "I am never good at public speaking."
Labeling: Sometimes we talk to ourselves in mean ways and use a single negative word to describe ourselves. This kind of thinking is unhelpful and unfair. We are too complex to be summed up in a single word!	"I'm stupid." "I'm a loser."
Over-estimating danger: This is when we believe that something that is unlikely to happen is actually right around the corner. It's	"I will faint." "I'll go crazy."

not hard to see how this type of thinking can maintain your anxiety. For example, how can you not feel scared if you think that you could have a heart attack any time?	"I'm dying."
Filtering: This happens when we only pay attention to the bad things that happen, but ignore all the good things. This prevents us from looking at all aspects of a situation and drawing a more balanced conclusion.	Believing that you did a poor job on a presentation because some people looked bored, even though a number of people looked interested and you received several compliments on how well you did.
Catastrophizing: This is when we imagine that the worst possible thing is about to happen, and predict that we won't be able to cope with the outcome. But, the imagined worst-case scenario usually never happens and even if it did, we are most likely able to cope with it.	I'll freak out and no one will help." "I'm going to make such a fool of myself, everyone will laugh at me, and I won't be able to survive the embarrassment."
Should statements: This is when you tell yourself how you "should", "must", or "ought" to feel and behave. However, this is NOT how you actually feel or behave. The result is that you are constantly anxious and disappointed with yourself and/or with others around you.	"I should never feel anxious." "I must control my feelings." "I should never make mistakes.

APPENDIX F

"Leaves on a Stream" Exercise

APPENDIX F

"Leaves on a Stream" Exercise

(Harris, 2009)

1. Sit in a comfortable position and either close your eyes or rest them gently on a fixed spot in the room.

2. Visualize yourself sitting beside a gently flowing stream with leaves floating along the surface of the water. *Pause 10 seconds.*

3. For the next few minutes, take each thought that enters your mind and place it on a leaf… let it float by. Do this with each thought – pleasurable, painful, or neutral. Even if you have joyous or enthusiastic thoughts, place them on a leaf and let them float by.

4. If your thoughts momentarily stop, continue to watch the stream. Sooner or later, your thoughts will start up again. *Pause 20 seconds.*

5. Allow the stream to flow at its own pace. Don't try to speed it up and rush your thoughts along. You're not trying to rush the leaves along or <u>"get rid" of your thoughts</u>. You are allowing them to come and go at their own pace.

6. If your mind says "This is dumb," "I'm bored," or "I'm not doing this right" place *those thoughts* on leaves, too, and let them pass. *Pause 20 seconds.*

7. If a leaf gets stuck, allow it to hang around until it's ready to float by. If the thought comes up again, watch it float by another time. *Pause 20 seconds.*

8. If a difficult or painful feeling arises, simply acknowledge it. Say to yourself, "I notice myself having a feeling of boredom/impatience/frustration." Place those thoughts on leaves and allow them float along.

9. From time to time, your thoughts may hook you and distract you from being fully present in this exercise. This is *normal.* As soon as you realize that you have become sidetracked, gently bring your attention back to the visualization exercise.

Allow 45 seconds to pass and then invite the group to take 3 deeps breaths which will signal them to return back to the present moment in the group.

APPENDIX G

"I Rise" Activity

APPENDIX G

"I Rise" Activity

(Harrell, 2015)

Directions: The facilitator leads the group in a call and response reading of Dr. Maya Angelou's poem, Still I Rise. The facilitator reads the words in black and the group and facilitator read the words in red in unison. Participants are asked to focus or meditate on the word "rise" and engage in contemplative reflection on what they are "rising from."

After the communal reading of the poem and engagement in contemplative reflection, participants engage in Giving Testimony and Bearing Witness. This ensues by participants standing and declaring what they are rising from. Other group members actively demonstrate their listening and affirmation of the testimony. The format for the Giving Testimony and Bearing Witness is as follows:

Participant: "I am rising from _____"

Group: "My Sister, I see you rising."

After the attendees have shared and affirmed their peers, the group will collectively declare: We Rise (repeat 3 times).

Still I Rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.
Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain

I rise

I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear

I rise

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise

I rise

I rise.

APPENDIX H

"What's In A Name?' Activity

APPENDIX H

"What's In A Name?" Activity

	YOUR FIRST NAME *(use the first or last letter of your first name OR nickname)*	**YOUR LAST NAME (BEFORE HYPHEN)** *(use the first or last letter of the first name of your mother, grandmother, OR another woman who has had a highly significant positive influence on you)*	**YOUR LAST NAME (AFTER HYPHEN)** *(use the first or last letter of the first name of your father, grandfather, OR another man who has had a highly significant positive influence on you)*
a	playful or soulful or kind	radiating or achieving	goodness or freedom or inspiration
b	inspired or loveable	expressing or breathing	happiness or purpose or kindness
c	radiant or faithful or wild	demonstrating or affirming	love or honor or revelation
d	compassionate or brave	renewing or celebrating	excellence or synchronicity or hope
e	grateful or joyous/joyful	exhibiting or creating	positivity or miracles or liberation
f	awesome or thankful	uplifting or embracing	determination or blessings or bliss
g	empowered or blessed	discovering or circulating	magic or presence or understanding
h	fantastic or thriving	knowing or feeling	awareness or virtue or rejuvenation
i	spirited or uplifted	activating or attaining	transcendence or unity or creativity
j	amazing or pure or wise	manifesting or walking in	greatness or focus or generosity
k	courageous or creative	strengthening or bringing	gratitude or authenticity or harmony
l	triumphant or enlightened	revealing or energizing	courage or light or connectedness
m	passionate or dedicated	being or summoning	passion or wholeness or tranquility

n	strong or beautiful	igniting or awakening	beauty or magnificence or joy
o	brilliant or marvelous	multiplying or receiving	illumination or growth or solidarity
p	beloved or extraordinary	inspiring or generating	peace or achievement or optimism
q	determined or gifted	intensifying or enhancing	consciousness or soulfulness
r	magical or genuine	unveiling or expanding	truth or compassion or grace
s	peaceful or magnificent	realizing or magnifying	spirit or character or transformation
t	wonderful or divine	experiencing or learning	wisdom or renewal or connection
u	renewed or grounded	displaying or reaching	energy or change or serenity
v	luminous or devoted	empowering or uncovering	balance or faith or humility
w	authentic or glorious	illuminating or sharing	awe or knowledge or enlightenment
x	excellent or generous	honoring or building	accomplishment or devotion
y	balanced or free-spirited	showing or mobilizing	perseverance or kindness or dignity
z	dignified or inspirational	cherishing or liberating	commitment or intuition
	honored, ecstatic, emerging, spiritual, flowing, natural, vibrant, lovely, purposeful, cherished, glowing, rising, determined, transcendent	accepting, allowing, resonating, appreciating, releasing, seeing, activating, freeing, deepening, focusing, communicating, optimizing	excitement, meaning, success, enthusiasm, expansion, dedication, patience, ecstasy, resonance, character,

***YOUR "FOCUS AND FLOW" MIDDLE NAME** is your "thing", something that you are really into, that you relate to strongly, or that makes you feel amazing. It could be a place in nature, a color, an activity, a plant/flower/tree, an animal, a gemstone, an element, a symbol, or anything else that puts you in your "happy place".

APPENDIX I

S.I.S.T.A.S. COPING CARD

S.I.S.T.A.S. COPING CARD

I will know when I need a timeout when _____.

When I am in a high stress situation, I will _____.

If I need more support, I can call: _____.

_____.

If I am experiencing an emergency I can: Call 911
Go to the Nearest Emergency Room
Call the campus police _____
Call the local police _____
Walk into the campus counseling center
Call the National Suicide Hotline at 800.273.8255.

S.I.S.T.A.S. Toolkit

- Rating Stress Level (Take your stress temperature)
- Empowerment journaling
- Silencing the Inner Critic (Cognitive restructuring/Reappraising the problem)
- Setting boundaries in relationships
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- ReCENTER yourself
- Affirming self/Empowering self/Celebrating self

Soliciting support (e.g. via resilience-promoting relationships, therapy, clergy; mentors, with fellow SISTAS).

APPENDIX J

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

PEPPERDINE

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: April 18, 2016

Protocol Investigator Name: Ashley Coleman

Protocol #: 16-02-196

Project Title: S.I.S.T.A.S.: A stress management workshop for African American female student-athletes

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Ashley Coleman:

Thank you for submitting your application for expedited review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. As the nature of the research met the requirements for expedited review under provision Title 45 CFR 46.110 of the federal Protection of Human Subjects Act, the IRB conducted a formal, but expedited, review of your application materials.

Based upon review, your IRB application has been approved. The IRB approval begins today April 18, 2016, and expires on April 17, 2017.

Your final consent form has been stamped by the IRB to indicate the expiration date of study approval. You can only use copies of the consent that have been stamped with the IRB expiration date to obtain consent from your participants.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for expedited review and will require a submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB. If contact with subjects will extend beyond April 17, 2017, a continuing review must be submitted at least one month prior to the expiration date of study approval to avoid a lapse in approval.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chairperson

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives

Mr. Brett Leach, Regulatory Affairs Specialist