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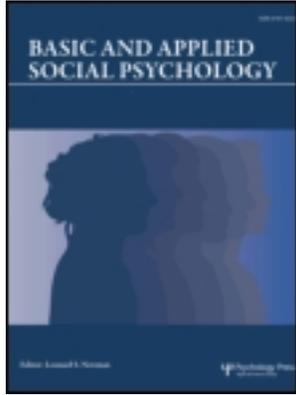
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“Don’t Call Me a Student-Athlete”: The Effect of Identity Priming on Stereotype Threat for Academically Engaged African American College Athletes

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Academically engaged African American college athletes are most susceptible to stereotype threat in the classroom when the context links their unique status as both scholar and athlete. After completing a measure of academic engagement, African American and White college athletes completed a test of verbal reasoning. To vary stereotype threat, they first indicated their status as a *scholar-athlete*, an *athlete*, or as a *research participant* on the cover page. Compared to the other groups, academically engaged African American college athletes performed poorly on the difficult test items when primed for their athletic identity, but they performed worse on both the difficult and easy test items when primed for their identity as a scholar-athlete. The unique stereotype threat processes that affect the academic performance of minority college athletes are discussed.

College students who receive a scholarship to play competitive sports represent a stigmatized group on campus. Research shows that most faculty, administrators, and other “traditional” students view college athletes in terms of the “dumb-jock” stereotype, which characterizes athletes as less intelligent, motivated, or prepared for college courses compared to traditional students who do not play sports (Edwards, 1984; Harrison, 2002; Sailes, 1996; Wininger & White, 2008). When made salient in a classroom or other academic context, thoughts associated with being a college athlete can induce stereotype threat processes that cause them to perform more poorly compared to when their athletic identity is not made salient (Harrison et al., 2009; Yopyk & Prentice, 2005). However, previous research has not examined if stereotype threat plays a differential role in the academic performance of African American college athletes, who represent the largest racial minority group of athletes in the NCAA. In light of the evidence showing that

traditional African American college students are at risk for stereotype threat in academic settings when their racial identity is made salient (e.g., Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002), the present research examines the possibility that, compared to White college athletes, the academic performance of African American college athletes is uniquely undermined by subtle reminders of their stigmatized status on campus.

STEREOTYPE THREAT FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE ATHLETES

According to the integrated model described by Schmader, Johns, and Forbes (2008), stereotype threat is caused by a cognitive imbalance that occurs when cues in a social context activate three links: first, the salience of the stereotype that one’s social group typically underperforms in a domain; second, the salience of one’s positive membership in the target group; and third, the salience of one’s personal goals to perform well in the domain. It is important to note that stereotype threat follows not from the simple activation of each concept

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but from the *propositional relation* that defines the imbalance between the three concepts. In its most virulent form, stereotype threat involves the simultaneous activation of a positive relationship between one's group membership and personal goals; a positive relationship between personal goals and the performance domain; and, as implied by the negative stereotype, a negative relationship between one's group membership and the performance domain. Activation of the imbalance between these three nodes leads to the tension and distress that undermines working memory capacity and increases performance monitoring processes that impair the ability to demonstrate one's full potential. Factors that promote rejection of the negative stereotype about the group, deflect membership in the stigmatized group, diminish motivation to succeed in the domain, or attenuate the association between the components in the triad mitigate the effect of threat cues on a target individual's performance.

The integrated model provides a useful framework for understanding why students who hold multiple stigmatized identities, like African Americans who compete in college sports, should be especially susceptible to the trifecta of imbalance that underlies stereotype threat. However, the cues and mechanisms by which threat affects their academic performance are specific to their unique status on campus. First, research suggests that African American college athletes are acutely aware of how their racial identity adds an additional burden to their experience as students on campus (Gaston, 1986; Martin & Harris, 2006; Singer, 2008). For example, Martin, Harrison, Stone, and Lawrence (2010) recently reported that African American college athletes believe that professors and other students apply the "dumb-jock" stereotype more to them than to White college athletes. African American college athletes reported feeling more pressure to prove that they belong on the academic side of campus, that they can perform equally to their traditional peers, and that they can contribute to classroom discussions and projects. They also reported that White college athletes receive more forgiveness and leniency from their professors and their traditional classmates when they miss class or turn in assignments late due to sport-related travel. Thus, African American college athletes may be especially vigilant about how their racial identity is viewed in the classroom (Jackson, Keiper, Brown, Brown, & Manuel, 2002). As a result, cues linking aspects of their athletic identity to their academic performance should be especially likely to induce stereotype threat processes.

The Role of Academic Engagement

The degree to which priming the athletic identity of African American college athletes causes stereotype

threat should, however, depend on their personal desire to succeed in the classroom. African American college athletes are most likely to perceive an imbalance between their athletic identity and the negative academic stereotype if they are intrinsically motivated to succeed in academics. Previous research shows that when target individuals are psychologically disengaged from performance in the stereotyped domain, reminders of the negative stereotype, or of their membership in the stigmatized group, do not impair their performance (e.g., Stone, 2002; Stone, Lynch, Sjomeling, & Darley, 1999; see Schmader et al., 2008). Targets who are psychologically engaged in the performance domain—those who define their self-worth in part through their performance on domain-relevant tasks—are more likely to perceive the imbalance between their group identification and the negative group stereotype that instigates stereotype threat processes. Thus, cues that link athletic identity to an academic performance should cause more stereotype threat among African American college athletes who are psychologically engaged in their performance in academics compared to African American college athletes who are psychologically disengaged from their performance in the classroom.

The Label "Student-Athlete" as a Threat Cue

The effect of stereotype threat on academically engaged African American college athletes should depend on the nature of the cues that bring to mind their athletic identity in an academic context. Cues that primarily activate one component should have less effect than cues that directly activate the imbalanced propositional relationship between the beliefs in the triad (Schmader et al., 2008). Whereas numerous studies show that focusing targets primarily on their stigmatized identity is often sufficient to impair performance, these threat effects likely occur because many target groups develop automatic associations between their group membership, personal goals, and the negative cultural stereotypes about their group's deficiencies. Consistent with this supposition, previous research indicates that focusing college athletes only on their athletic identity in an academic context is sufficient to induce the stereotype threat processes that reduce academic performance when compared to priming a neutral identity (e.g., Yopyk & Prentice, 2005).

Nevertheless, research suggests that some identity cues have the potential to exacerbate stereotype threat processes by more directly activating the imbalanced relationship between a positive group membership, personal performance goals, and the negative stereotype about the group's performance in the domain (Schmader et al., 2008). One such cue for athletes on a college campus is the use of the label "student-athlete." The

term “student-athlete” or “scholar-athlete” officially refers to college athletes who receive a scholarship to play sports in college. The NCAA adopted the label for two reasons: first, to protect universities from the legal obligation to treat college athletes as employees, and second, to emphasize that college athletes are members of the student body. The NCAA’s adoption of the label has not stopped numerous researchers (Lapchick, 2001; Lapchick & Malekoff, 1987), educators (Benford, 2007; Staurowsky & Sack, 2005), and administrators (Bowen & Levin, 2003; Shulman & Bowen, 2001) from publically criticizing the label. Some refer to it an oxymoron that continually reminds people of the inconsistency between being an athlete and a college student—the essence of the dumb-jock negative stereotype (Katz, 2008; Lapchick, 2001). Thus, rather than serving to self-affirm a positive connection between scholastic and athletic identities, the label of scholar-athlete has the potential to increase the accessibility or strength of the imbalanced propositional relationship between their athletic identity, personal achievement goals, and the dumb-jock stereotype, and this could have a devastating effect on their performance of college athletes in the classroom.

Consistent with this reasoning, Harrison and colleagues (2009) reported that female college athletes—who tend to be more academically engaged than male college athletes—performed more poorly on a test of verbal reasoning when primed for their identity as a “scholar-athlete” compared to when primed only for their identity as an “athlete.” Of importance, Harrison and colleagues showed that priming their identity as a scholar-athlete reduced performance on the easy verbal test items, suggesting that priming the concepts “scholar” and “athlete” enhanced the debilitating effects of stereotype threat on academic performance. Similarly, we predict that academically engaged African American college athletes would also perform more poorly in an academic context when primed for their identity as a scholar-athlete, compared to when they are primed only for their identity as an athlete.

Academically engaged White college-athletes, in contrast, may be somewhat immune to cues that activate their identity as an athlete in the classroom. As previously suggested, if they receive more preferential treatment on campus than African American athletes, then the label “student-athlete” may activate more positive, self-affirming associations that provide a buffer against stereotype threat (Martens, Johns, Greeneberg, & Schimmel, 2006). Another possibility is suggested by Settles, Sellers, and Damas (2002), who showed that college athletes who separate or “compartmentalize” their role as an athlete from their role as a student report higher levels of psychological well-being compared to athletes who suffer “interference” or overlap between their

athletic and academic identities. This could suggest that some college athletes learn to cope with the conflict between their athletic and academic identities by cognitively isolating or bifurcating one identity from the other (e.g., Pronin, Steele, & Ross, 2003). Thus, for academically engaged White college athletes, if their athletic identity brings to mind self-affirming attributes or a bifurcated relationship between their academic and sports identity, priming any aspect of their athletic identity in the classroom will not automatically activate the imbalance that leads to stereotype threat.

Overview

The present experiment tested the effect of academic engagement and identity priming on the academic test performance of African American and White college athletes. We predicted that academically engaged African American college athletes, when primed for their identity as an athlete, would experience stereotype threat and perform more poorly on the difficult test items than both African American college athletes in a neutral identity control condition and White college athletes. This pattern would conceptually replicate the standard stereotype threat effect (Steele & Aronson, 1995). However, when primed for their identity as a “scholar-athlete,” academically engaged African American college athletes would perceive a greater imbalance and sense of threat, which would lead them to underperform not only on the difficult test items but on the easy items too (replicating Harrison et al., 2009). In contrast, because they are not motivated to succeed in the classroom, the test performance of academically disengaged college athletes was not predicted to vary by race and the identity prime conditions.

METHOD

Participants

A total of 151 college athletes at a large state university in the southern United States were recruited over a 3-year period to complete the study. The final sample included 75 African American athletes and 76 White athletes who represented nine varsity sports on campus.¹ Participants were recruited from the athletic department with full cooperation from coaches and staff and they were compensated with \$12 for their participation.

To be eligible for the study, participants completed an adaptation of the Intellectual Disengagement subscale of the Intellectual Orientation Inventory (see

¹The varsity sports (*N*) included track (30), football (79), basketball (17), rowing (16), baseball (5), soccer (2), and golf and softball (1 each).

Major, Spencer, Schmader, Wolfe, & Crocker, 1998). The Academic Disengagement Scale (ADS) consisted of the items “No academic test will ever change my opinion of how scholarly I am,” “How I do academically has little relation to who I really am,” and “I really don’t care what tests say about my academic ability.” Each question was answered using a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale. The items on the ADS scale demonstrated an acceptable level of internal consistency in the sample ($\alpha = .63$) and scores on the ADS were distributed normally among the sample (ADS $M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.34$, range = 1–7). Participants were recruited if their average score fell above or below the median of the distribution ($Mdn = 4.0$).

Procedures

Prior to each athletic team’s practice, participants completed an informed consent form and then a pretest packet that included demographic information and the measure of academic engagement. Following the pretest participants signed up for the experiment in the Behavioral Lab that would take place in the weeks that followed the pretest and was conducive to their academic and athletic schedules.

To simulate a typical classroom environment in the lab, traditional undergraduate students (i.e., nonathletes) were also recruited to complete the procedures as part of a course requirement (although their data were not analyzed). Once they arrived for the study, participants were asked to sit at a desk that had an envelope on it. They were told that the envelopes contained a standardized verbal analogies test and that they would have 55 min to complete the test. Participants were instructed to put the test back in the envelope and to raise their hand if they finished the exam early. The experimenter explained that they would receive a second packet with some questionnaires to complete when they finished the exam. After questions were answered, the experimenter instructed participants to remove the test booklet and begin.

Identity Prime Manipulation

The identity primes were the same as those reported in Harrison et al. (2009). Specifically, different identities were primed by providing participants with one of three test booklet covers. If randomly assigned to the *athlete-only prime* condition, the cover page of the exam booklet stated “If you participate in Division I intercollegiate sports, please indicate below:” Participants were asked to check next to the singular statement, “I am an athlete.” If assigned to the *scholar-athlete prime* condition, the cover page contained the statement about participating in Division I intercollegiate sports,

and then participants were asked to check next to the singular statement, “I am a scholar-athlete.” Finally, if they were randomly assigned to the *neutral identity prime* condition, the cover page made no reference to participation in sports; it only said, “If you are a research subject, please indicate below” and participants were asked to mark next to the singular statement “I am a research participant.” In all priming conditions, a statement appeared in a box below the priming manipulation indicating that their test scores would be compared against all students who took the test on their campus, and if they wanted to receive their test score, contact information would be provided at the end of the test session (only one request was made).

After they completed the test, all participants completed demographic questions about their gender, racial identity, and age. They were then fully debriefed about the true purposes of the study, compensated, and thanked for their participation.

Test Performance Measure

The 40-item test of verbal analogies was the same as reported in Harrison et al. (2009) and contained a mix of 32 easier SAT and eight difficult GRE verbal analogy items taken from practice manuals. The GRE analogies appeared as Items 1, 9, 13, 16, 18, 24, 27, and 31 on the test.

RESULTS

To analyze performance on the test, the overall percentage of correct responses on the difficult and easy test items were computed separately by dividing the number of correct responses by the number of attempts on each subset of test items. The percentage correct was then subjected to a 2 (academic engagement) \times 2 (race) \times 3 (identity prime) \times 2 (test items) mixed analysis of variance, with the test items as a within-subject variable.² The results revealed a main effect for academic engagement, $F(1, 139) = 6.27$, $p < .01$, $n^2 = 0.05$; a main effect for race, $F(1, 139) = 26.94$, $p < .0001$, $n^2 = 0.22$; a main effect for the test items, $F(1, 139) = 106.94$, $p < .0001$, $n^2 = 0.45$; and a significant Academic Engagement \times Identity Prime \times Test Item mixed interaction, $F(2, 139) = 4.24$, $p = .02$, $n^2 = 0.02$, all of which were qualified by a significant four-way mixed interaction between the factors, $F(2, 139) = 4.97$, $p = .008$, $n^2 = 0.03$. Planned comparisons within each academic engagement group were conducted to test the predictions within the four-way interaction.

²Preliminary analysis revealed no gender differences on the test performance, and thus conditions were collapsed across gender.

Academically Engaged College Athletes

As predicted for the academically engaged college athletes, the mixed interaction between race, identity prime, and the test items was significant, $F(2, 139) = 3.36$, $p = .04$, $n^2 = 0.02$. The data in Figure 1 show that for the difficult test items, there were no performance differences between engaged African American (40%) and White (44%) participants in the neutral identity control condition, $F(1, 139) = 1.55$, $p = .21$. However, as predicted, when primed for their athletic identity engaged African American participants performed significantly worse (24%) than engaged White participants (41%), $F(1, 139) = 11.32$, $p < .001$, $n^2 = 0.07$. Also as predicted, when primed for their identity as a scholar-athlete, African American participants performed significantly worse (20%) than White participants (43%), $F(1, 139) = 15.77$, $p < .001$, $n^2 = 0.09$, which was not different from the athletic-identity prime condition ($F < 1$). Within each racial group, compared to the neutral control condition, African Americans performed significantly worse when any aspect of their athletic identity was primed, $F(2, 139) = 2.99$, $p < .05$, $n^2 = 0.03$, whereas the performance of Whites was not affected by the identity primes, $F(2, 139) = 0.17$, $p = .84$. Showing that engaged African American college athletes performed

significantly worse than engaged White college athletes when their stigmatized identity as a student-athlete was primed before an academic test demonstrates the predicted stereotype threat effect.

On the easier test items, highly engaged African American and White college athletes performed similarly in the neutral identity control condition (40% vs. 50%, respectively), $F(1, 139) = 1.12$, $p = .29$, and similarly when their athletic identity was primed (50% vs. 50%, respectively, $F < 1$). However, Figure 1 shows that as predicted by our model, when primed for their identity as a scholar-athlete, African Americans performed significantly worse (34%) compared to Whites (60%), $F(1, 139) = 24.42$, $p < .0001$, $n^2 = 0.11$. Within each group, the differences on the easy test items for African Americans were significant, $F(2, 139) = 4.81$, $p < .001$, $n^2 = 0.04$, which was driven primarily by the differences between the scholar-athlete and the athlete and neutral identity priming conditions ($p = .02$ and $p = .09$, respectively). The differences across conditions did not reach significance for Whites, $F(2, 139) = 2.66$, $p < .11$, $n^2 = 0.02$. Thus, directly priming the link between student and athlete (e.g., "scholar-athlete") undermined the performance of academically engaged African American college athletes on both the difficult and easy test items.

Academically Disengaged College Athletes

As predicted, among the academically disengaged college athletes, the mixed interaction between race, identity prime and the test items was not significant, $F(2, 139) = 1.74$, $p = .18$, $n^2 = 0.01$. The data in Figure 2 show that in the neutral identity control condition, unlike the engaged college athletes, the disengaged African American college athletes performed significantly worse compared to Whites on the difficult (23% vs. 40%), $F(1, 139) = 4.36$, $p < .01$, $n^2 = 0.03$, and easy test items (40% vs. 54%), $F(1, 139) = 4.12$, $p = .05$, $n^2 = 0.01$. African American participants also performed worse (34%) than White participants (52%) on the easy items when their athletic identity was primed, $F(1, 139) = 5.20$, $p = .03$, $n^2 = 0.03$, but given that this difference was present in the control condition, it was not likely caused by stereotype threat. Finally, comparisons within each racial group show that performance was not significantly altered by priming any aspect of athletic identity, for example, largest F for Whites on the easy items (2, 139) = 2.66, $p < .07$, $n^2 = 0.02$. Thus, overall, disengaged college athletes did not show evidence that priming their athletic identity affected their performance on the test items.

Finally, we note that the performance differences between groups were not caused by differences in the level of effort on the exam. All participants completed

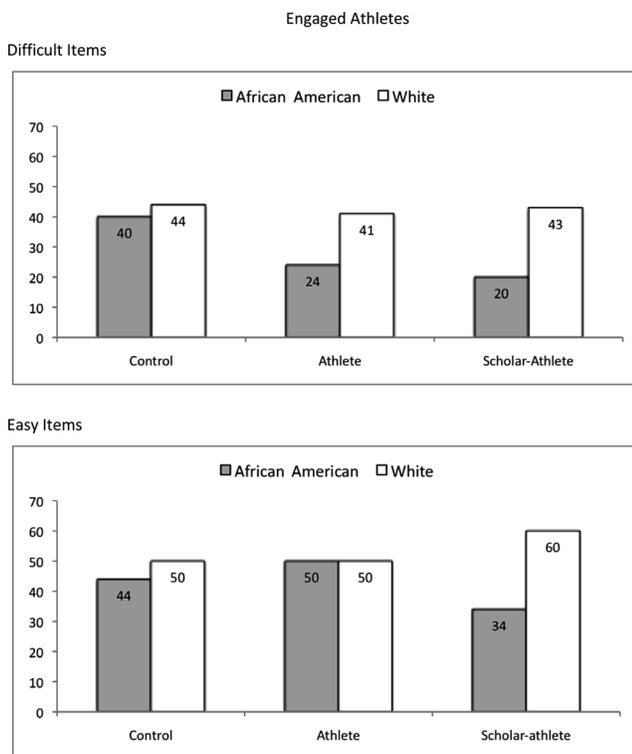


FIGURE 1 The performance of academically engaged college athletes on the difficult and easy test items as a function of the interaction between race and identity priming condition.

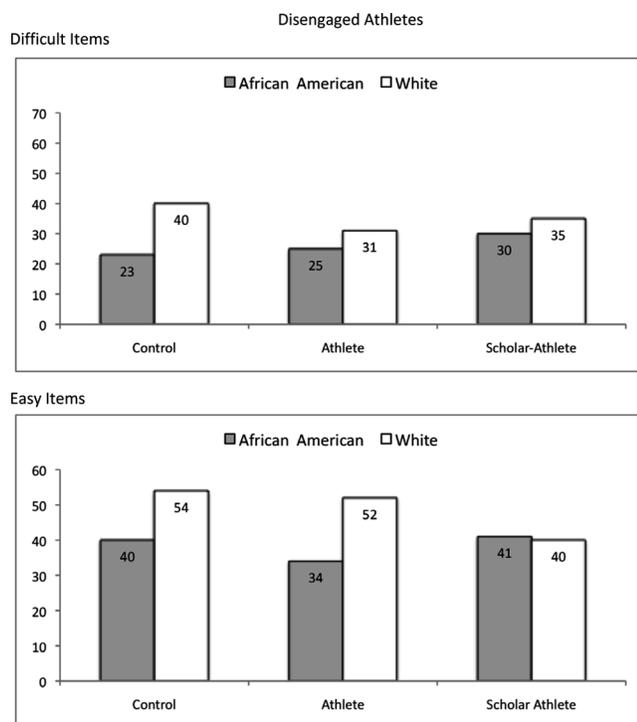


FIGURE 2 The performance of academically disengaged college athletes on the difficult and easy test items as a function of the interaction between race and identity priming condition.

all eight (100%) of the difficult items, and almost all completed 100% of the 32 easy test items, with the exception of academically disengaged African American college athletes, who completed, on average, less than one fewer of the easy test items in the identity control ($M = 31.30$) and athletic identity priming conditions ($M = 31.67$). Thus, despite these small differences, effort was generally high for all groups and testing conditions.

DISCUSSION

The results of the experiment support the predictions regarding the effect of stereotype threat on the test performance of academically engaged African American college athletes. Rather than activating a positive connection between their scholastic and athletic identities, priming the identity “scholar-athlete” induced stereotype threat among African American college athletes who place high value on their scholarship, which caused them to perform more poorly on the test of verbal reasoning, compared to academically engaged White college athletes and compared to college athletes in each racial group who do not place a high value on their educational outcomes. The data are consistent with theory and research on stereotype threat, suggesting that when stigmatized individuals are highly invested in a

performance domain, cues that directly activate an imbalance between their group identity, personal performance goals, and the negative group stereotype can consume the cognitive and emotional resources they need to demonstrate their true potential. The present evidence for stereotype threat also challenges the NCAA’s assumption that the label “student-athlete” provides a buffer against the traditional divide between academics and athletics for African American college athletes who are motivated to succeed in school.

An important finding in the present data is that priming different identities appeared to cause different levels or types of stereotype threat for the academically engaged African American college athletes. Consistent with other research (Yopyk & Prentice, 2005), priming just their athletic identity reduced the performance of academically engaged African American college athletes, compared to similarly engaged White college athletes, on the more difficult test items. However, that this occurred only on the difficult test items suggests that priming just one component in the imbalanced relationship between their athletic identity, personal goals, and the negative academic stereotype had a significant but moderate effect on the cognitive and emotional resources they needed in order to perform well on the overall test.

In contrast, the label “scholar-athlete” apparently enhanced the level of stereotype threat for academically engaged African American college athletes. Highlighting their identity as a scholar-athlete not only reduced their performance on the difficult test items but also sabotaged their performance on the easy test items, and this was not because they withdrew effort. This finding is consistent with our hypothesis that priming their identity as a scholar-athlete directly brought to mind the imbalanced relationship between their athletic identity, the dumb-jock stereotype, and their desire to succeed in academics. The direct activation of these imbalanced cognitions induced a relatively high level of tension that, in turn, overwhelmed the working memory processes that facilitate performance on both the difficult and easy test items. In contrast, priming their athletic identity by itself activated only part of the imbalanced triad, which created less tension but, in line with previous research, enough to reduce working memory and reduce performance on the difficult test items. Thus, from our perspective, priming different identities had different effects on the performance of academically engaged African American college athletes because the primes varied the strength of the activation between the relevant set of personal and social identities (cf. Shapiro & Neuberg, 2007).

The data also suggest that not all college athletes are susceptible to stereotype threat: The performance of the academically disengaged athletes, and the performance

of engaged White college athletes, was generally unaffected by priming any aspect of athletic identity in the testing context. Whereas the latter is consistent with the research suggesting that White college athletes may not suffer the same level of stigma on campus as African American college athletes, the racial difference may also reflect the use of different coping responses by White and African American college athletes. Whatever the case, the growing evidence for group and individual differences in how college athletes respond to the salience of the dumb-jock stereotype indicates that they are not a homogenous group of students.

Limitations, Implications, and Future Directions

Whereas the current study provides new insight into the stereotype threat processes that impact college athletes in the classroom, we acknowledge that there are important limitations to the present study that require future research to address. One clear direction is to establish the mechanisms by which academically engaged African American college athletes suffer varying levels of stereotype threat. It is important to determine if the effect of priming different identities reflects different levels of activation of the imbalance between their group identity, personal goals, and the negative stereotype, or if the differences reflect other processes, such as different estimates of the likelihood of being negatively stereotyped (Wout, Shih, Jackson, & Sellers, 2009). It is also important to determine the process by which White college athletes are able to eschew the negative academic characterization when cues make the dumb-jock stereotype salient in the classroom.

Our study was conducted at a single institution and focused only on African American and White college athletes. It is important to examine if academically engaged members of other racial and ethnic minority groups of college athletes (e.g., Latino, Asian, and Pacific Islander) also suffer increasing levels of stereotype threat when aspects of their stigmatized identity are primed. Future research should also examine the potential interplay between gender and race with respect to how stereotype threat affects the academic performance of college athletes (Harrison et al., 2009).

Another important direction for research is to investigate if the performance by college athletes on other types of academic tasks, like writing or learning a foreign language, can be negatively affected by stereotype threat. Research suggests that over time, repeated exposure to the dumb-jock stereotype may negatively affect other academic behaviors and outcomes. If, for example, concern about confirming the dumb-jock stereotype causes poor performance in the classroom, it may eventually motivate college athletes to self-handicap (Keller & Dauenheimer, 2003; Stone, 2002)

or avoid attending class, office hours, or working on small group projects with other students. Not only will these outcomes threaten the eligibility of college athletes to participate in their sport, but it may also cause them to eventually disengage from academics altogether.

To avoid the negative spiral that can cause some college athletes to disengage from academics, it is critical to develop and investigate strategies for reducing the potential negative effect of the label “student-athlete” on college athletes. Assuming that the NCAA will continue to use the term student-athlete, it may be important to provide counterstereotypic information about college athletes that can weaken or eliminate beliefs about the “dumb jock.” As one example, the NCAA created an ad campaign that typically presents college athletes in an academic or professional setting and ends with the statement, “There are more than 380,000 *student-athletes* and most of them go *pro* in something other than sports.” The message is that college-athletes are more than just athletes—they are our future doctors and nurses, lawyers, business owners, and teachers, who, unlike the image of the dumb jock, possess a very high level of intelligence, motivation, and integrity. Using a similar approach to educate administrators, faculty, and traditional students on campus about college athletes may reduce and eventually eliminate the general perception that college athletes are interested only in their sport.

Another approach is to establish interventions that can bolster the coping responses that stigmatized college athletes use when negative stereotypes are brought to mind in a classroom context. For example, athletic departments can adopt programs like the Scholar-Baller[®] curriculum (Harrison & Boyd, 2007) that are designed to reframe the meaning of the label “student-athlete” and retrain college athletes so they no longer associate their identity as a college athlete with the dumb-jock stereotype. Indeed, research suggests that these programs would also benefit college athletes by teaching them about stereotype threat processes and how to defeat them (e.g., Johns, Schmader, & Martens, 2005). Nevertheless, an important step in the development of any intervention is to rigorously test whether exposure to the program can provide the coping resources that empower college athletes to deflect stereotype threat when they enter a classroom on campus.

CONCLUSION

The term student-athlete may not be a positive label for all groups of athletes on a college campus. The results of the present research indicate that for academically engaged African American students who play college sports, cues that bring to mind their status as a scholarship athlete can enhance the threat of being

labeled as a dumb jock. The ensuing stereotype threat processes they experience can decrease their performance in the classroom above and beyond the detrimental effects of just making their athletic identity salient. Educating the campus about the true academic determination and success of college athletes and creating educational programs that help college athletes deflect the negative stereotypes hold promise for eliminating these responses.

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