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Does Race Have An Influence on The Athletic Trainer-Coach Relationship

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DOES RACE INFLUENCE ON THE ATHLETIC TRAINER-COACH RELATIONSHIP

by

CAYCE SLOAN

(Under the Direction of Tamerah Hunt)

ABSTRACT

Introduction**:** Interpersonal relationships are the most frequent types of relationships individuals maintain on a daily basis. Rapport provides the foundation necessary to build positive interpersonal relationships, specifically, collegial relationships such as the relationship between the athletic trainer and coach. However, facilitators and barriers exist that may hinder relationships. Specifically, race appears to influence relationships, but to date, it appears race has not been examined in the athletic trainer-coach relationship. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the facilitators and barriers to building rapport in race-discordant athletic trainer-coach relationships and to examine the role race plays within the athletic trainer-coach relationship. Methods: A convenience sample of ten ethnic minority secondary school athletic trainers were interviewed via a semi-structured interview guide derived using the Gratch model. Purposeful sampling from the convenience sample was obtained through personal contacts, social networking, the Group Me app, and additional snowball sampling**.** Results: Seven themes were developed throughout the study, even a couple of themes had subthemes. Those seven themes were same race mutual understanding, cross-race mutual understanding, same race connectedness, same race communication, cross-race communication, same race barriers, and cross-race barriers. Further, the Gratch model is an appropriate assessment of facilitators for building rapport. However, a sequential approach (Communication-connectedness-mutual understanding) may be necessary for human-to-human rapport building. Conclusion: Facilitators of rapport building included positive communication, connectedness and mutual understanding was necessary regardless of race, which is consistent with the previous literature. Cognitive, emotional, and behavioral rapport are essential for a solid foundation in a positive relationship. Ineffective rapport sectors and various barriers (such as mis trust, being too comfortable, etc.) inhibit positive relationship building in the athletic trainer-coach relationship. Race within this relationship couldn't be determined to be the sole barrier but may be a mitigating factor that intersects with the other facilitators and barriers that affect building a positive relationship between the coach and athletic trainer.

INDEX WORDS: Ethnicity, Rapport, Facilitators, Barriers, Race concordant, Race discordant

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RELATIONSHIP

by

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Race has been the dividing factor within America for centuries; due to racial inequalities that have been instilled throughout history and society. Race is a social trait that can determine your life experiences and perceptions. America has divided and treated people differently based upon the color of their skin for centuries, making it difficult to build rapport between racial groups. During the period America was being built, minorities from other countries were forced into slavery in America.[1]

Slaves were then treated as if they were less than animals.[1] Once slavery was abolished racial minorities were considered free but were still not treated equally.[2] The freeing of slaves led to legally mandated segregation.[2] Minorities were given separate facilities, seating areas, and housing areas because of the color of their skin and were killed and even experimented on for medical use.[2,3] Once America was desegregated, there was still racial tension that remains to this day. These historical issues have created a less than suitable environment to build rapport across races.

Rapport is the foundation to develop a relationship that will result in trust, comfortability, and confidence.[4–7] Based upon the Gratch model, in order to achieve rapport you need to develop a sense of connection, mutual understanding, and communication because these elements are the basis.[8] The Gratch model was originally used for virtual agents' rapport.[8] The Gratch model stated the foundation to building a positive relationship consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral rapport.[8] Building rapport between groups or individuals creates a positive relationship that is comfortable and consists of trust and confidence. This requires social talk, empathy, positive reinforcements, concern, disagreements, and other tasks that will allow

individuals to create a relationship.[9,10] After various numbers of interactions, rapport building can start. The number of interactions and social exchanges will result in social talk that reveals whether rapport is in agreement or disagreement. Initially, humans tend to conform towards socially accepted behaviors and place themselves in favorable lighting, whereas the more interactions you have the more you are relaxed and begin to be "yourself ."[11] Building rapport, therefore, is important to achieving strong, healthy, interpersonal collegial relationships.

The most powerful interpersonal relationships are the ones you create with your colleagues.[12] Most people spend more time with their colleagues on a day-to-day basis than their friends and maybe even family.[12,13] Within a collegial relationship, it is important to have positive foundation because a negative foundation will be "characterized by animosity, exclusion or avoidance of others" within the workplace.[14] Colleagues would prefer not to deal with animosity, exclusion, or avoidance, as it creates unwanted negative experiences within the workplace and creates an unpleasant environment.

The collegial relationship requires that individuals need to share one or more of the following: the same work content or domain activity, the same institutional affiliation or common purpose, and/ or the same status or level of responsibilities.[12] A sports medicine team is an example of colleagues, as they are a group of people who are all involved within athletics with a common goal of athlete health. The sports medicine team consists of the athletic director, team physician, athletic trainer, and coaches.[15,16] Athletic trainers and coaches are considered colleagues that share the same hierarchy status within the sports medicine team. A coach's roles and responsibilities on the sports medicine team are to teach safe playing strategies and techniques, promote injury prevention, and promote appropriate attitude to injury management.[17] An athletic trainer's roles and responsibilities within the sports medicine team are

implementation of various medical and environmental protocols, preventing, recognizing, diagnosing, referring, treating injuries, and communicating with coaches and team physicians.[15] Athletic trainers and coaches discuss practice and game schedules, an athlete's health, what restrictions an athlete may have, diagnosis, rehabilitation plans, and much more. The athletic trainer and coach should have a strong relationship because a dysfunctional relationship may put the athlete and their parents in a tough spot between the coach and athletic trainer.[18] Doing so, can result in putting an athlete's health on the line.

There is limited research involving building rapport between coaches and athletic trainers. The primary body of literature involving this relationship revolves around effective communication as a key component of the relationship.[15,16,19–21] Studies have found that effective communication and cooperative communication is key in this professional relationship.[19–21] Effective communication is considered when both individuals are open, respectful, and understanding.[19–21] Effective communication is needed between athletic trainers and coaches to avoid misunderstanding information and to ensure that each party is on the same page.[22] A lack of effective communication can create barriers to positive relationships.

Literature examining the barriers to the athletic trainer coach relationship suggests power struggles, mistrust, and differing goals are the most common barriers athletic trainers and coaches reported.[23–27] These barriers are common elements within communication, trust, and confidence within the relationship. The coach-athletic trainer relationship has evolved over time as a result of the prominence of winning at all costs.[23] Coaches have been allowed to control more things than just their team dynamics.[24] They have been able to place demands upon athletic trainers to return athlete to participation to enable winning, especially in the professional setting and within the NCAA Division I.[24] This imbalance of power leaves athletic trainers in a position

to make a decision whether to act upon their job duty, but the decision may result in them losing their job.[23,25] Coaches are not supposed to supervise athletic trainers because it is a conflict of interest and becomes a huge barrier.[15,16] In some relationships, a portion of someone's identity can be a facilitator or barrier, such as race.

According to the NCAA demographics database, in all divisions and sports, 85% of head coaches and 75% of assistant coaches are White, providing an 85% chance that the head coach of the team will be White.[28] When the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) was founded, it unintentionally developed a large body of predominantly White male athletic trainers; however over the last three years, NATA members that identify as ethnic minorities has increased to 18.55% of the membership.[29] While data is not available at the high school levels, similar numbers are expected. As the number of minorities entering the profession every year increases, the potential for increased race-discordance in the athletic trainer-coach relationship is inevitable.

There are many studies that look at same-race and cross-race relationships. Concordant is defined as "consonant, agreeing."[30] In same race relationships, race concordance is positively associated with interpersonal factors that impact rapport.[31] In relationships where healthcare providers are a part of the race concordant relationship, they report a mutual understanding of the situation at hand, feel more connected to each other, have improved communication, and both parties are more participatory within making certain decisions than in cross-race relationships.[32–35] Cross-race relationships also involve different expectations, less open conversations, and difficulty establishing interpersonal relationships.[36,37] However, many of these studies were examined in non-collegial relationships.

Race concordant relationships are typically examined through the lens of the shared reality theory to explain opportunities to build better rapport. Shared reality is defined as "the product of the motivated process of experiencing a commonality of inner (mental) states with others about the world."[38] Shared reality between two people consists of an individual's thoughts, attitudes, and reasoning that are influenced by their interpersonal experiences and regulates the dynamics of interpersonal relationships.[39] Consensus about a topic or experience that shares beliefs, attitudes, or agreement is a foundation building block for relationships.[40] Relationships are strengthened when they have more agreement and shared perspectives, as opposed to when they have less consensus or shared perspectives they are weakened.[40] Race discordant interpersonal relationships can lack the feeling of connectedness because of the absences of social sharing or shared perspectives.[38]

Race has an effect on rapport in other relationships, such as the patient-physician relationship[31,32,34,35,41] and the counselor-client relationship[42–44]. Race has yet to be examined to affect rapport within the athletic trainer-coach relationship. This needs to be further explored because if a sense of connection, mutual understanding, and communication cannot be achieved then there is not a good foundation for a positive relationship. If the athletic trainer-coach relationship is not positive, it can result in multiple barriers causing misunderstandings and lack of communication on what is occurring with an athlete's health. It can also cause animosity, exclusion, or avoidance, creating a negative work environment. This can possibly cause further injury to an athlete, or put the athlete at risk of re-injury, or a career damaging injury by not having harmony, trust, or comfortability within each other's decisions. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine if race plays a role in rapport between athletic trainers and coaches.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rapport

Rapport does not have just one definition, but rapport signifies an unconstrained relationship containing comfortability, trust, and confidence between 2 people in harmony.[4,5] When attempting to achieve comfortability, trust, and harmony within a relationship you have to first obtain a sense of connection, mutual understanding, communication. Rapport helps create bonds and is the foundation of developing a relationship.[6,7] Joe and colleagues found rapport to be at the center of a relationship in a therapeutic setting because it was important to develop bonds during the treatment process as it progresses.[45]

Rapport has also been shown to have various effects on outcomes.[45–48] Krupnick and colleagues found a significant relationship between the therapeutic relationship of the patient and their therapist and treatment outcomes.[46] Connors and colleagues found whether the relationship was rated from the client or therapists perspective it was consistent with treatment outcomes.[47] Cloitre and colleagues stated "a positive therapeutic relationship in the initial phase of treatment predicted PTSD symptom reduction at the end of treatment."[48] Joe and colleagues results stated, "counseling rapport as measured during drug abuse treatment was found to predict post-index treatment outcomes" similar to Cloitre and colleagues.[45] Blecher and Jones found once positive rapport was established the natural consequence of it was trust, creating positive outcomes in their patients treatment.[49] Theoretical models can propose different strategies to strengthen or weaken rapport.

Rapport models

Several theoretical models could be utilized to explain the influence of rapport on the Athletic Trainer-Coach relationship. For the purposes of this study, the researchers will utilize the Gratch model to define rapport and examine the influence of race on rapport and relationship building through the lens of the shared reality theory. Gratch model helps us break rapport up into three components, to be able to understand what makes up rapport.

Gratch Model

The Gratch model was developed to evaluate if virtual agents can generate behavior that facilitates feelings of rapport in humans comparable to human listeners.[8] The responsive virtual agent was found to be as good as a human listener in creating rapport.[8] With these findings from the Gratch model, the researchers extended it to human-to-human interactions. The Gratch model consists of three rapport dimensions: emotional rapport, cognitive rapport, and behavioral rapport. Emotional rapport is defined as "an inherently rewarding experience; we feel a harmony, a flow."[8] When individuals are in harmony and flow, there is a connection. When discussing emotional rapport, the researchers will be discussing a sense of connection between individuals. Cognitive rapport is defined as "an understanding with our conversation partner; there is a convergence of beliefs or views, a bridging of ideas or perspectives."[8] When individuals are in consensus about a topic or situation, it is a mutual understanding between individuals. Behavioral rapport is defined as "a convergence of movements with our conversational partner; observers report increased synchrony, fluidity and coordination in partners' movements."[8] When discussing synchrony, fluidity, and coordination with a conversational partner, it is discussing the way in which individuals communicate and the different verbal and non-verbal properties each individuals uses to communicate. Individuals with shared reality experiences and shared ethnic or racial groups may have very similar communication processes.

Shared reality

Shared reality theory states when individuals have shared elements of their identity, the individuals experience similar issues within society.[50] Shared reality theory incorporates a commonality between individual's inner states, which include their feelings, judgements, beliefs, and evaluations.[51] There are four conditions that underlie shared reality.[52] The first conditions is "commonality between individuals refers to their inner states rather than just their overt behaviors."[52] The second condition, "shared reality is about something, it implies a referent or object of inner states."[52] The third condition is "shared reality creation is assumed to be driven by fundamental human needs, specifically the (epistemic) need for a confident understanding of the world and the (affiliative-relational) need to connect with others."[53] The last condition is "the experience of being connected and having common inner states."[52]

The process of sharing experiences directly shows the experience is not unique.[50] It shows that the experience is reality and is "broader and more general than the immediate moment."[50] People value shared reality especially in significant others, to verify their own views and beliefs about an issue or experience.[51] People develop a relationship with different individuals by establishing a consensus about what is reality and true.[39] Conley and colleagues state "according to shared reality, relationships cannot begin or be maintained without relationship partners acknowledging each other's reality."[39] Shared reality theory has determined the extent to which shared aspects control a relationship between individuals who belong to different groups or same groups within their identity.[39]

Examining Gratch's components of rapport through the lens of the shared reality theory.

As the researchers examine each component of the Gratch model, they will discuss how it appears through the lens of shared reality theory. Cognitive rapport is "a sense of mutual understanding."[54] Exploring cognitive rapport through the shared reality who explores the mutual understanding of the world or a situation that affects the shared elements of your identities. The individuals who have shared elements may be able to understand any issues, beliefs, or experiences you may have encountered within that element. Establishing shared understandings form an important basis for building diverse relationships.[55] In the patient-provider relationship, mutual understandings can be affected by the race and ethnicity of both individuals involved.[31] Healthcare professionals must understand a patient's beliefs, health knowledge, and behavior to effectively manage prevalent conditions.[56] When healthcare providers are culturally competent, they are able to show their patients they understand the importance of their culture and be able to develop rapport with their clients. When you have a sense of understanding about an individual's culture you are able to use it as a guide and also capture the importance of the variance within the individuals identity.[55] Margaret stated "mutual understanding is a state that arises from effective communication processes."[57]

Behavioral rapport is rooted in communication properties.[8] Various aspects of an individual's identity affect their communication properties, whether that is the tone, dialect, speed, gestures, etc. Components of individuals' lives that they share will cause them to have very similar verbal properties and communication processes.

Communication is a key component in any interpersonal relationship, but there are various properties that make up communication. Language is the main component of communication. Gao stated "learning a language is an intricate process involving not only learning the alphabet, the meaning and arrangement of words, the rules of grammar, and

understanding of literature, but also learning the new languages of the body, behavior, and cultural customs."[58] When two individuals have different cultures, it is considered cross culture communication or intercultural communication.

In various cultures there are differences in nonverbal behaviors, such as eye contact and hand and arm gestures, in communication.[58] These differences can cause and contribute to misunderstandings between two individuals.[58] Eye contact has a variety of uses with in communication across different cultures.[59] In some cultures eye contact is improper and disrespectful to an older or important individual, especially for young women.[58] Even communicative purposes of hand and arm motions vary between cultures such as Americans use it towards activity, Italians use it for illustration and display, Jewish individuals use it to emphasize, Germans use it for attitudes and commitment, and French use it for style expression and containment.[58]

Cooper- Patrick found racial and ethnic differences are an important barrier when it comes to communication between patients and physicians.[35] "Ethnic differences between physician and patients are often barriers to partnership and effective communication."[35] Sue and Sue found therapists who differ in language and cultures from their patients may encounter inaccurate results due to the client not understanding the verbal or written communication.[60]

When individuals share cultures, their language and ways of communication are nearly identical with little differences. Flaskerud and Liu found when client and therapist shared common language or a common ethnic origin, the number of sessions significantly increase.[42] Cooper-Patrick and colleagues stated "physicians and patients belonging to the same race or ethnic group are more likely to share cultural beliefs, values, and experiences in the society,

allowing them to communicate more effectively and to feel more comfortable with one another."[35]

Cooper and colleagues stated "interpersonal communication is sensitive to race concordance."[33] Where race-concordant relationships were characterized by a different communication process than discordant relationship.[33] Hausman and colleagues found discussions with African American patients involved more rapport building statements than visits with White patients.[9] Stevens and colleagues found communication, trust, and mutual understanding of cultural differences in healthcare in this interpersonal relationship may be affected by the race and ethnicity of both individuals in this relationship.[31] Positive words that are warm, friendly and understanding have a significant impact on relationships.[61] Individuals that share the same race or ethnicity will have some sense of connection.

Emotional rapport is defined as "the sense of connection."[54] Exploring this sense of connection through the shared reality lens explains that the portion of your life that you share in common with other individuals will enable a sense of connection with those individuals. Echterhoff and colleagues stated "the absence of social sharing can have detrimental consequences not only for people's physical well-being and feelings of connectedness, but also for their sense of reality."[51]

Emotional rapport is deemed the sense of connection with other people in various interactions. Within the initial interaction of meeting people, individuals may feel awkward and constrained.[11,62] Individuals only initiate socially appropriate behaviors because the base of initial interactions are limited to culturally accepted and stereotyped behaviors.[11] Several studies have stated individuals present themselves in favorable lightening initially, unless motives were to not create a favorable relationship with the individual.[11,62,63] Whereas during more

interactions, individuals tend to be more relaxed and freer because you have more familiarity with the other individual.[11]

When individuals have more familiarity with one another they begin to show their true selves and not feel that it is a necessity to show themselves in a pleasant or favorable light.[11] Taylor found conversations that revealed more about each individual produced more social exchanges than when less is revealed.[63] The level of rapport in later interactions will be judged on the degree of coordination rather the initial interaction is judged upon feelings and behaviors.[11] Determine the level and strength of rapport between individuals, building rapport within your interactions has to occur. Rapport building can consist of "positive (e.g., compliments and laughter), emotional (e.g., empathic or concern statements), negative (e.g., criticisms and disagreements) and/or social (e.g., chit chat) talk."[9,10] When building rapport there are various types of relationships where rapport is an important aspect to have and influences the relationship, such as interpersonal relationships.

There is not a conclusive definition of interpersonal relationships. Oxford English dictionary defines interpersonal as "between persons" and relationship is defined as "a connection formed between two or more people or groups based on social interactions, or feelings."[64,65] Interpersonal relationships are typically the relationships individuals deal with more frequently than others.[13] Interpersonal relationships are family, friendship, romantic, and professional relationships.

Family relationships are the relationships you have with people that you are related to such as your parents, grandparents, siblings, etc. These relationships are typically the very first relationships individuals develop with people. Individuals typically can't choose their family relationships but do have control over choosing friend relationships or friendships.

Friendships are typically based on the level of connection you have created with a person over various interactions and a certain amount of time whether it is a short period of time or for most of an individual's life.[13] Friendships are very complex because there are various levels of friendships, and they can also last for various time periods as well. Some friendship connections will be more important and show stronger effects to an individual than certain family relationships.[66] Friends are sometimes more important within an individual's life because some family members may not always provide support and you still have that relationship.[66] Whereas with friends an individual can remove that relationship if it is not providing support within an individual's life. If a friendship constantly evolves and becomes more important than certain family, it can evolve to much more than just friends and become romantic.

Romantic relationships can evolve from friendships but are completely different from friendships.[67] When you are in a romantic relationship with an individual, they tend to demonstrate their feelings towards them differently than they would their friends and family members. Individuals tend to express their love and affection physically and sexually with an individual when they are in a romantic relationship.[67] The professional relationship is where the actions of a romantic relationship would be deemed inappropriate.

Professional relationships are the relationships individuals develop within their work setting and typically are with their colleagues. Colleagues are defined as "one who is associated with another (or others) in office, or special employment; strictly, said of those who stand in the same relationship to their electors, or to the office which they jointly discharge."[68] Specifically, to be considered colleagues, the individuals need to share one or more of the following: the same work content or domain activity, the same institutional affiliation or common purpose, and/ or the same status or level of responsibilities.[12] The relationship between colleagues is one of the

most prevalent interpersonal relationships.[12,13] Within a collegial relationship it is important to have positive foundation because if you have a negative foundation the collegial relationship will be "characterized by animosity, exclusion or avoidance of others" within the workplace.[14] In adult life, individuals tend to spend more time with their colleagues than their friends and family members.[12,13] If individuals have been colleagues for years and they have daily interactions that relationship can develop into a friendship.[69]

Within each type of interpersonal relationship there are different things that contribute to developing good rapport between the individuals. Specifically, within the professional relationship between colleagues, there needs to be collegial solidarity and collegial recognition to build good rapport.[12] Collegial solidarity can also be deemed as a sense of belonging .[69] Collegial solidarity can also lead to collegial recognition, especially when dealing with a sense of belonging.

Collegial recognition is when colleagues reassure and recognize their colleague's work-related abilities, contributions, and experience.[12] Betzler and Loschke stated "to engage in a successful collegial relationship, one should respect one's colleague as well as do one's work."[12] Estlund stated a collegial relationship requires "at least minimally constructive and cooperative relations" between the colleagues to develop a relationship with good rapport.[69] Without a couple of these aspects within the collegial relationship it is hard to develop good rapport. The athletic trainer-coach relationship is a unique collegial relationship.

Athletic Trainer-Coach Relationship

Athletic trainers and coaches are both members of the sports medicine team. Everyone within the sports medicine team have unique roles and responsibilities. A coach's roles and

responsibilities on the sports medicine team is to teach safe playing strategies and techniques, promote injury prevention, and promote appropriate attitude to injury management.[17] An athletic trainer's roles and responsibilities within the sports medicine team are implementation of various medical and environmental protocols, preventing, recognizing, diagnosing, referring, treating injuries, and communicating with coaches and team physicians.[15] As a unit, the sports medicine team works together to help athletes.

The athletic trainer's role on the sports medicine team is typically directly supervised by the athletic director in regards to administrative tasks.[15] In regards to medical competence, the athletic trainer is directed and supervised by the team physician.[15,16] A coach has no authority over any sports medicine providers on the sports medicine team.[15] The athletic trainer works with the coach as colleagues. Within this unique collegial relationship, the primary expectations are frequent communication and autonomy.[15,16] "A strong working relationship with open communication is necessary between the medical staff and the coaches to optimize care for the athlete. It should be clear to all parties that they share a common objective."[16] The team physician and athletic trainer should meet with the coach frequently both during the season and in the off season to discuss athletes injuries and treatments.[15,16] These meetings are typically regarding decisions involving the athlete and everyone must be give a certain level of autonomy to work together as a team.[16] It gives everyone a sense of contribution to the overall care of the athlete and the common goal of keeping the athlete healthy and safe.[15,16] There are certain facilitators that will help the athletic trainer-coach relationship that applies to a interpersonal relationship in general.

Facilitators to rapport

When trying to build rapport in an interpersonal relationship communication, self-disclosure, and common ground are a part of the foundation of building rapport. As previously stated, communication has multiple layers. Communication is very important to rapport, no matter the differences between the individuals. Communication can cause the relationship to be successful or problematic based on the communication and the knowledge gained from the communication.[70] Allareddy and colleagues found "according to MDs, the key to establishing positive relationships among physicians is communication."[71] Lasater stated "when used effectively, active listening skills allow others to feel heard and understood—thus building rapport and establishing trust."[72] Leach found in practitioner-client relationships, communication and behavior has a significant impact on the relationship.[73] Within communication self-disclosing personal information may come about.

Self-disclosure helps personalize the relationship and build rapport between the individuals.[74] Vallano and Compo found therapist self-disclosure will successfully build rapport in the therapist-client relationship.[75] Trust, rapport, satisfaction, likeability, and behavioral intention perceptions increased from self-disclosure in provider-client relationships.[32] Self-disclosure has been found to increase liking, feeling of closeness, rapport, and perceived similarities between individuals.[76–78] Gabbert and colleagues found when interviewers self-disclosed information about themselves participants perceived the rapport with the interviewer increased.[7] Self-disclosure can help individuals discover common ground, finding overlapping identities or interests between one another.[74]

Echterhoff and colleagues defined common ground as "the background information that participants in a conversation take for granted as being mutually understood."[51] Gabbert and colleagues found common ground and highlighting similarities useful in facilitation of

rapport.[7,76] Common ground also facilitates conversation because of shared background knowledge.[51] Lack of common ground would then be a barrier to the relationship. When a relationship lacks a facilitator, it often becomes a barrier to that relationship and makes it harder for the individuals to build rapport.

Barriers to Building Rapport

Relationship conflicts can evolve and create barriers in building rapport. Barriers to building good rapport between two individuals that can result in conflict are lack of communication, perception, behavior, previous interactions, and sex and culture. Not every relationship between individuals will have an issue within these areas. Lack of communication is a major barrier to building rapport. Too little communication can result in parties not being coordinated in what is or is supposed to occur.[79] If the parties aren't coordinated or on the same page it can cause conflict depending on how severe or important is the topic.[22] Lack of communication can also lead to conflict because it can result into misunderstanding of each other and their perception.[22]

Perception typically causes issues when they have differing goals, misinterpretation, or misunderstanding of other's intentions.[79] Individuals tend to infer the other's intentions and when intentions are not directly communicated parties might have differing intentions that may cause conflict because they are opposing intentions.[80] If each party communicate their intentions there would be minimal misinterpretation or misunderstandings and each party would be able to discuss their intentions thoroughly if there are opposing intentions that may cause conflict. Opposing intentions can be advertent and then an individuals' behavior can be a barrier to building rapport.

Behavior can be a barrier to building rapport. If an individual's actions are stopping a party from achieving their goals or aspirations it can cause a conflict.[81] This behavior can be purposeful or inadvertent. If an individual's behavior is purposeful rather than inadvertent the barrier can be intense to navigate. Another behavior barrier that may cause conflict is power struggle. When an individual's power is minimized, it may cause conflict. The reduction of someone's power can be advertent or in-advertent.[82] Power reduction is perceived as attacks by the party whose power was reduced and the party whose power increases is guilty.[82] When someone's power is reduced that individual is going to restore their power by counterattacking.[82]

Previous interactions can be barriers as well. At the beginning of every relationship there is no previous interactions between the individuals. Without any previous interactions the individuals have to go off of their past interactions with other individuals and their past experiences.[79] If the individual has had issues with another individual that is in the same position as the new individual it may cause them to put up a barrier. If one's past was filled with conflict then their expectation is conflict.[79] An individual's past can impact the present and how they act or deal with other individuals.[79] There are some barriers and facilitators specific to specific interpersonal relationships, such as the collegial relationship between athletic trainers and coaches.

Facilitators and Barriers to the Athletic Trainer-Coach Relationship

The research about coach and athletic trainer's relationship all states that effective and cooperative communication is key to the athletic trainer-coach relationship.[15,19–21] Courson and colleagues stated "communication is essential among the athlete, team physician, athletic trainer, coaches, strength coaches, parents or guardians, spouse, and administration regarding the approval for participation and injury and illness management".[15] Good communication is crucial when

developing a good relationship between coaches and athletic trainers because it is how they get a mutual understanding of what decisions are being made and what is better and safest for the athlete within the sports medicine realm.[20] Adam and colleagues found it was important the coach and athletic trainer respected each other and understood the medical decisions as long as it was in the best interest of the athlete.[19] Larson and colleagues stated, "communication is necessary between members of the sports medicine team to maintain the safety and promote the recovery of the athlete."[21] Communication is a specific facilitator to this unique collegial relationship but there is limited research on specific barriers.

There are very prominent barriers to this collegial relationship. Specifically, the barriers to this relationship are power struggle, mistrust, and differing expectations and goals.[23–27] Athletic trainers expect a degree of autonomy, so they can make their own decisions and notify the coach about their decision, but that is not always the case and causes power struggle within the relationship.[23]

Sports are evolving and getting more competitive as time goes on and coaches are gaining more control than their role entails.[23,25] In the athletic setting coaches are in control of the team and may place demands on the athletic trainer to return the athlete to play when the athletic trainer may feel otherwise.[24] Which in return could lead to a power imbalance.[24] Athletic trainers and coaches are colleagues and contain the same level of responsibility and status, but when there is a power imbalance the athletic trainer is left with a decision that could possibly result in them losing their job.[23,25] The athletic trainer's degree of autonomy is important to make their own decisions and keep the athletes from further injuring themselves, but the political aspect of the sports culture, the unspoken aspect of the personnel hierarchy, and the increase of pressure to win creates an environment that devalues the athletic trainer's role.[23] The power

struggle is one of the biggest barriers in the athletic trainer and coach relationship because the athletic trainer is unable to do their job as they wish, which can lead to or can be a result of mistrust within the dyad.

Mistrust between coaches and athletic trainers tend to involve an athlete and the return to play process.[83] Some coaches feel that athletic trainers are being too conservative with returning the athlete.[27] Coaches feel as though athletic trainers may err on the side of caution and that the athlete isn't doing enough in their down time.[27] Goodman and colleagues found that mistrust stems from the coach questioning the athletic trainer's judgement and medical decision when dealing with an athlete's injury;[26] Especially when there is a new coach, athletic trainers feel as if they have to reprove their selves, judgement, and medical decisions because of the coach basing their interactions off of previous interactions with other athletic trainers.[19] Mistrust can also be a barrier when the coach has the win at all cost mentality because the coach tends to disregard the athletic trainer's decision if the player is a high valued player.[19] When a coach and athletic trainer have differing goals or expectations it can become a barrier as well.

Typically, when the athletic trainer and coach have differing goals or expectations it involves the return to play process and cause a strain on the relationship.[83] Athletic trainers feel as if coaches with the win at all cost mentality are more concerned with the team winning rather than the athlete's health and welfare.[19] When it comes down to winning, if the athlete is a high valued player, the dyad will have differing opinions if the athlete should play while injured and risk further injury or not.[24] There are some factors that can be a facilitator or a barrier depending on the relationship and the individuals involved, such as race.

Role of race in rapport

Within different relationships, race can be a facilitator or a barrier. Race influences almost all life experiences and shapes our life's perspectives.[84] Same race relationships are more likely to build rapport and become close because the pair is more likely to generate a sense of connection from their backgrounds.[85]

Studies have shown that race can play various roles in certain relationships such as the physician-patient relationship, counselor-counselee relationship, mentor-mentee relationship, and athlete-coach relationship. Within these relationships there can be race concordance or race discordance. Cooper & Powe defined concordance as a state of agreement or harmony meaning they share the same of something.[41] Discordance is the state of disagreement meaning they do not share the same of something.[41] The research on race-concordance and discordance is primarily in the physician-patient relationship.

Physician-patient

Several studies have examined race concordance and discordance within the physician-patient relationship. In race-concordant relationships, patients rated their healthcare providers' participatory decision-making styles as significantly more participatory than race-discordant patients.[35,41] Ferguson and Candib found that racial minority patients are more likely to choose a race-concordant physician because they will feel more connected with the physician and involved in the decisions making process.[34] Nazione and colleagues found "Black concordant relationships perceived greater similarities to their provider than participants in any other conditions" and "Black participants were more likely intended to keep their provider than participants in White concordant conditions."[32] Cooper and Powe also found Black patients with a concordant physician were more likely than patients in discordant relationships to rate their physician as excellent overall, excellent at treating them with respect, being accessible, listening,

and explaining problems.[41] Cooper and Powe also found Hispanic patients in race-concordant relationship were more likely than in race-discordant relationship to be very satisfied with the healthcare overall but were not more likely to rate their physician as excellent.[41] Within this relationship race is primarily a barrier. Race concordant and discordant studies have been also done in the counselor-counselee relationship.

Counselor-counselee

Harrison found that counselors feel the relationship is better when they and their patients' personal characteristic resemble each other.[43] Atkinson found same-race pairings had no effect on the counseling process.[86] Atkinson also found in the limited numbers of American, Indian, Asian, and White subjects, 50% found that ethnic similarity had an effect.[86] Among concordant Hispanics there was no ethnic similarity effect found.[86] Flaskerud and Liu found Black and Asian clients increased significantly their utilization of counseling if the therapist were of the same race, but Latinx and American Indian clients did not.[42] They also discovered that ethnicity concordance had a significant effect on dropout rate within counseling.[42] Participants were less likely to drop out if the relationship was concordant. In Black concordant patients, relationships with counselors allowed a greater depth in exploring the patient.[43] Gardner found that in a race-concordance of African Americans in a counselor-counselee relationship Black therapists treating Black patients were accused of being an "uncle tom" due to the therapists' education and profession status.[44] This created tension and a disconnect of shared reality within the relationship causing a negative effect.

Harrison found Black counselees showed more negative affect in a race discordant relationship than concordant relationship.[43] Gardner stated "if the White therapist gets hung- up on racial issues in a race discordant relationship then the relationship has limited effectiveness"

due to the therapist not understanding how to help the patient through the issue.[44] Within the counselor-counselee relationship, the majority of the research states race as a barrier in dis-concordant relationships, but a facilitator in race-concordant relationships. There is limited research about race within the mentor-mentee and athlete-coach relationship.

Mentor-Mentee and Athlete-coach

A study looked at race discordance or concordance mentor-mentee relationship found "minority racial and ethnic groups less often become proteges (mentees) because they can have difficulty in establishing developmental relationships, especially cross-racial one in predominantly White organizations."[36] This study also found mentees in race concordant relationships reported higher levels of psychosocial mentoring than race discordant relationships.[36] Within the athlete-coach relationship a study found the participants that identified with a race that did use the word British (i.e. Black British, British West-Indian) perceived their relationship as more satisfying and more open relationship than if they identified with a race that did not (i.e. Black African, Black Caribbean) .[37] The participants within this study also stated, "coaches have different expectations of athletes from diverse backgrounds and treat athletes of particular ethnic groups differently as a result."[37] There is limited research on race within the collegial relationship.

In this study, researchers want to determine if race is a factor in building rapport in a positive collegial relationship. Race has been a huge factor that plays a part in the success of various relationships. Carter stated "without a genuine regard for a patient's race, culture, and life-style rapport is never established."[87] American society has a history of racial disparities creating negative perceptions of each other.[88] Common news outlets and reports can create societal perceptions of individuals within one racial group that may be incorrect, leading to a

change in views of the entire racial group influencing cross-race relationships. Race can influence a variety of aspects that affect building rapport in any interpersonal professional relationship. Depending on the individuals involved and the type of relationship, race may be a facilitator or barrier, but what is the effect of race in a cross-racial athletic trainer-coach relationship?

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Participants

Ten African American secondary school setting athletic trainers within a convenience sample with various number of years within the setting completed interviews (See Table 1 for respondent demographics). The target sample consisted of a convenience sample of racial minority athletic trainers working in the secondary school setting. Racial minority athletic trainers make up 18.69% of total athletic trainers.[29] There are a total of 6,994 minority athletic trainers, with plurality (21.37%) of them working in the secondary school setting.[29] Athletic Trainers in the secondary school setting were of interest these athletic trainers have multiple head coaches and assistant coaches in one setting, whereas in the collegiate setting they have one head coach and a few assistant coaches.

Recruitment for the sample population was done through personal contacts, social network platforms, various groups on the Group Me app, opportunities such as The Think Tank and Ethnic Diversity Advisory Committee [EDAC], and additional snowball recruitment techniques. The Think Tank is a message board for racial minority athletic trainers to network and troubleshoot various issues within society and athletic training. EDAC is a committee within the National Athletic Trainers' Association that identifies and addresses issues relevant to the ethnically diverse patients and athletic trainers' needs. These platforms were used because they host a large pool of racial minority athletic trainers. Snowball recruitment was completed by asking participants at the end of their interviews if they knew any individuals that fit the study's criteria. The researcher obtained personal contacts and continued social networking through each participant. Participant recruitment ended once data saturation was obtained.[89] Data saturation

was determined when themes were redundant and could completely answer all of the research questions and the researcher was not encountering new information.[89]

Inclusion Criteria

Participants were included in the study if they; were a certified Athletic Trainer by the Board of Certification; had at least one year of experience being an athletic trainer within the secondary school setting; currently worked within the secondary school setting; identified as a racial and/or ethnic minority and had at least one coach that did not identify as their same race.

Exclusion criteria

Participants were excluded if they were categorized as students; identified as White or Caucasian; primarily worked with middle school or coaches other than high school.

Recruitment

Recruitment consisted of several methods. First, the primary investigator reached out to members of their personal network that fit the inclusion criteria. Second, the primary investigator contacted the leaders of two networking sites for racial minority athletic trainers (The Think Tank and Ethnic Diversity Advisory Committee [EDAC]. Both groups focus on developing a viable network for racial minority athletic trainers to support through their career. In addition, snowball sampling was utilized to identify additional participants.

Once participants who fit the inclusion criteria were identified, the informed consent sheet was provided as well as the link to the demographic form via email.

Instruments

Interview Guide

The interview questions were designed to explore race concordant and discordant AT-coach relationships. The interview guide was based on the Gratch theoretical model of rapport, gaps within the literature, and personal experience. The guide was reviewed by experts in sociology, feminist theory, and athletic training to assure the questions were interpreted the way they were intended and answered the research questions thus establishing content validity.[89] See Appendix 1 for interview guide.

Researcher as an Instrument

The lead researcher has a vested interest within the topic as a minority athletic trainer working in the secondary school setting. As such, she acknowledged her biases associated with previous experience working with coaches of the same and different racial backgrounds. The primary investigator's personal experiences and shared identity with the participants provide opportunities for the researcher to relate to the participants experiences and understand their point of view regarding cross-race athletic trainer-coach relationships. However, all attempts were made to ask questions from a neutral position, actively listening to participants with an open mind and ensuring that coding is interpreted from the participant's perspectives and not the researchers.

Procedures

After Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained, the research team began the recruitment process as previously outlined. The research team contacted potential participants that identified within the inclusion criteria. The qualified participants then filled out a demographic form via google forms. After all screening questions were answered, the primary investigator set up a date and time for the individual interview. The primary researcher conducted the individual interviews via Zoom using a semi-structured interview format to

facilitate detailed responses and allow probing questions during the interview process. Zoom access was provided to the participants which included a passcode to ensure confidentiality. Once the interview started, the participants verbally consented prior to any interview questions were asked.

Pilot interviews were conducted to provide the researcher the opportunity to practice using the semi-structured interviewing. The researcher interviewed 2 racial minority athletic trainers that worked within the collegiate setting to avoid limiting the pool of possible participants. The data collected during the pilot study was not used for the final data analysis.

Data Analysis

Trustworthiness was developed through the use of clarification of research bias and member checks.[89] Clarification of researcher bias provided an opportunity to reduce influencing the participants and impacting the results of the study.[89] All participants were given the opportunity to review the transcripts after the interview to ensure accuracy of information through member checks. Peer debriefing allowed multiple observations and conclusions of coding the data to ensure conformation of interpretation without bias and every perspective was evaluated.[89]

A code book was developed using an iterative process. Interviews one and two were coded independently by the researchers. The researchers identified relevant codes that were consistent between interviews one and two at which time, initial creation of the codebook began. The first two interviews were transcribed by all the researchers to ensure the primary researcher was interpreting the data correctly. After the initial codes were developed, the codebook was revised to further align race with facilitators and barriers. The primary researcher then coded interviews three through five based upon the revised code book. Finally, the researchers

discussed the findings and themes from interviews three through five and revised the code book.

The primary researcher coded the rest of the interviews using the revised code book.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Ten respondents that identified as racial minority athletic trainers completed interviews. (See Table 1 for respondent demographics) Themes were developed through a Gratch theoretical model of rapport perspective with additional factors based upon the research questions. The seven themes include: (1) same race mutual understanding, (2) cross-race mutual understanding, (3) same race connectedness, (4) same race communication, (5) cross-race communication, (6) same race barriers, and (7) cross-race barriers.

Theme # 1: Same race mutual understanding

Mutual understanding evolved within same race relationships through the discussion of shared experiences within their culture and society. Within this theme, participants described having an understanding of their lifestyle, cultural experiences, and issues faced within society.

> "It's just, it's, I guess, it's the understanding of how we grew up you know, it's the understanding of how our kids are whether it's mental or physical like we understand where they come from, we understand what they're going through in so many ways, so I think that's where it comes from, for the most part". (Ashley)

> "When we are talking about the same, I think just those cultural experiences makes the relationship right, I mean obviously the day to day and the conversations and your beliefs, my beliefs like that stuff also makes the relationship, I think when we first meet each other, like there's that Okay, you know we cool we cool like we you know we have that understanding." (Tiana)

A participant stated:

> "Oh, it's like family is easy it's is not hard at all the communication is there is
>
> that's where the mutual understanding comes from that's where the proper
>
> communication comes from its perfect, for the most part it's perfect." (Ashley)

Theme # 2: Cross race mutual understanding

Overall, mutual understanding within the cross-race relationship focused on professional boundaries and alignment of their job duties and roles. Within this theme, many participants supported the discussion of keeping the relationship "strictly business" and independent roles of each partner in the relationship. Participants described what the relationship entailed and the parameters of the relationship:

> "They much more respect my professional boundaries. And that's probably the
>
> biggest difference, I think I experienced and appreciate they don't ask me to go out
>
> with them, they don't. Often text me outside of hours, but like when they do text me
>
> outside of the hours that I know I tell them that I'm working. They don't expect an
>
> answer, like if they text me at 10 o'clock they know I'm not going to answer until
>
> 8am the next day, and they are all fine with that and if they're not." (Erin)

> "It's like hey let's just keep it professional you know your viewpoints are your
>
> viewpoints mine are mine let's just keep it that way you know, and nobody really
>
> came outspoken or hey, this is what we're going to do, I think it's almost one of those
>
> things understood on both parts." (Steve)

Theme # 3: Same race connectedness

Overall, when discussing connectedness within the same race relationship, many participants described the feeling of connectedness within this relationship as the feeling of a family, without being relatives. Participants expressed the relationship being extremely close and the relationship containing the family feel.

> "So, since we're talking about basketball season I'll start with that staff. I'm super-duper close with that staff that is entirely black staff, and they literally treat me more so, like another coach or a sister like it's very familial with that coaching staff." (Stacey)

> "I think having a sense of it's almost like a brotherhood you know um. We all kind of look out for each other, not just physically but emotionally and mentally like hey you know. If I know one of my coaches hasn't 16-year-old boy something happening news to the 16 young kids somewhere else hey how you doing you know how's your son doing how's your family doing how yall dealing with this, so we have those tough conversations." (Steve)

Theme # 4: Same race communication

Same race communication was described as conversations exchanging shared experiences and mutual understandings. Participants stated their communication with their same race coaches was focused on their understanding of their shared cultural experiences, beliefs, and perspectives.

> "When we are talking about same, I think just those cultural experiences makes the

relationship right, I mean obviously the day to day and the conversations and your

beliefs my beliefs like that stuff also makes the relationship." (Tiana)

"It works really well, there are sometimes, where I feel like I can relate to them more

naturally, but we definitely connect and we're able to talk about different movies and

different foods that we eat, and we all just during certain times and that's how we

relate to different cultures and traditions that we have and so it's really good to be

able to bond with them." (Susan)

Theme # 5: Cross-race communication

Cross-race communication was described as being predominantly related to the

business of the coach/athletic trainer relationship. These subthemes revolved around the type of

communication that is occurring within the cross-race relationships. The first sub theme was

described as communication about athletic training tasks. Participants noted with cross-race

relationships they predominantly communicated about items directly relating to work and

athletic training services such as player injuries, practice, and game status, etc.

"The coach may want to prepare or have pregame meals or something and typically I

am like hey maybe we shouldn't have Pupusas before a game you know. This is real

life stuff you know what I'm saying, like maybe we should try something you know, a

different protein and lighter. Maybe some electrolytes or some just little stuff like that

may be a little different because my guys are used to, and you may have to

communicate with them and say, maybe let's try something a little different." (Jared)

Within cross-race communications, participants also described conversations about non-

serious topics. Most participants stated casual conversations with their cross-race coaches help build rapport within their relationship.

> "Some of the guys, you know, obviously I still ask like I said earlier, I build a relationship with all, my coaches so I still ask about their families and things like that." (Steve)

Theme #6: Same race barriers

Barriers to building rapport within same race relationships revolves around being easy going or too casual with coaches and athletic trainers. Participants noted being too casual, relaxed, or tolerant in a manner or approach was a barrier.

> "I think being too comfortable those. A comfortability thing because you know, there is a time for where we can play around or joke around and then there's a time where you know we got to get down business like you know. We gotta be professional we got a game to prepare for like you know I would say, those situations will probably be the most hindering." (Tiana)

> "I have to reinforce that boundary because you get so comfortable being around people that look like you sometimes that you forget we're not at the cookout like playing spades like we are at work and we just happen to be eating dinner all at same table, or something like that so that's kind of what I mean like just having the solid professional solid personal lines, I feel like for me they get a little bit more misconstrued when I'm dealing with black coaches." (Stacey)

Theme #7: Cross-race barriers

Barriers to building rapport existed in the cross-race relationship and was demonstrated through 1) communication, 2) mistrust, and 3) knowledge about the role. Communication appears to serve as a barrier within the cross-race relationship as the inability to have an open conversation, questioning decisions, actions and behaviors, or the absence of communication between parties. Generally, the participants stated being questioned and not being able or open to having conversations about certain topics posed as a barrier.

> "With my white coaches… they respect me, but they questioned me a lot more. And they're quicker to shut down a conversation, and maybe like tell me what they want, and then like not necessarily listen to what my job is what my role is when they're asking you to do something." (Erin)

> "You got to prove to me that you are somebody bad before I you know just like write you off, but you know it, it is especially with how race is, you know being portrayed in the media and the differences, I do think both parties tend to kind of tiptoe around certain things and certain conversations are not had or certain things are not said about a certain kid because he's my race and he is not yours." (Steve)

Another subtheme evolved as mistrust that hindered their relationship. The respondents defined mistrust as, "being suspicious of or having no confidence in each other". This mistrust within the relationship arose from both parties. It appears that both parties were concerned with making a mistake or contributing to mistrust which played a barrier within the rapport building.

> "I think it's a combination of Prejudice and mistrust on both sides because I do have a history of having not being able to see eye to eye with my middle aged Caucasian

counterparts, every time I see one automatically my defenses go up into place, and I mean, I know that about me like that is a mutual mistrust, because I feel like you're going to try to come for me in some way, shape or form during this working relationship, like every time that's how I go into it. And I also think that the same thing happens on the other side. Right okay well we've worked with black women before and they get this attitude, or they just be walking around not looking friendly blah blah blah. And so, we're both just kind of sitting back waiting for the other one to have a misstep so we can prove ourselves right I think that's like a huge part of it."
(Stacey)

Understanding the athletic trainers' role, cultural misunderstanding from the AT perspective and issues that racial minority Athletic Trainers' face when working in cross-race rapport was termed knowledge. The participants felt their cross-race coaches did not have knowledge about their roles as an athletic trainer and the issues they face within the athletic training realm which hindered the relationship.

"The lack of respect or lack respect for sure um. Ignorance as far as which would be the lack of knowledge of knowing certain things that may be offensive or certain attitudes and actions they may not, they may not know are offensive or knowing being silent isn't okay about certain things, having to address certain issues. When they arise, instead of letting them build up." (Susan)

"No, I think it was truly because of his ignorance, I mean he was in his late 50s. Early 50s late 50s during his tenure, and not knowing you know, like I said, or even being considered or knowing African American history, especially here in Alabama. You

know, he wasn't from here so I'm like I said he just didn't know." (Carol)

"They umm you know you may come back and they try to question your knowledge question, which you know, or question what you umm what you know about the injury or you know, or sometimes you know you know they may treat you know more like being a. Water like a like a water boy than being than Seeing what the profession than seeing the true profession that you are and respecting your certification and the hard work you put in to get to where you are." (Mark)

Overall, based upon the Gratch model of rapport 7 themes emerged within the participants. This supported the model of virtual rapport building in a physical relationship. It appears that while mutual understanding (cognitive rapport), connectedness (emotional rapport) and communication (behavioral rapport) appear to serve as facilitators within cross-race and same race relationships. However, lack of these facilitators as well as other barriers also existed within both cross and same race relationships.

Table 1

Demographic Table

Name	Age	Race	Ethnicity	Preferred Pronouns	How many years have you been a Certified Athletic Trainer?	How many years have you been in the secondary school setting?	How many coaches do you have on average?	What percentage of your coaches identify as the same race or ethnicity as you?
Erin	27	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	She/her	5	4	40	65%
Stacey	36	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	She/her/hers	7	7	35	25%
Carol	39	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	she/her	15	12	40	1%
Susan	37	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	she/her/hers	13	13	40	10%
Steve	32	African American or Black	African American	He/Him	7	5	65	50-60%
Mark	57	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	He	31	10	12	45%
Tiana	34	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	she/ her	13	11	49	90%

Ashley	35	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	She/Her	9	9	20	90%
Jessie	47	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	she, her, hers	20	20	25/season	85%
Jared	42	African American or Black	Non-Hispanic/Latino	Him / he	18	17	40	90%

Table 2

Cross-race Barriers

Domain	Subdomain	Definition	Quotes
Cross race Barriers			
	Communication	Inability to have an open conversation, questioning decisions, actions, and behaviors, or the absence of communication between parties	"With my white coaches is like they respect me, but they questioned me a lot more. And they're quicker to shut down a conversation, and maybe like tell me what they want, and then like not necessarily listen to what my job is what my role is when they're asking you to do something." ~ Erin
			"You got to prove to me that you are somebody bad before I you know just like write you off, but you know it, it is especially with how race is, you know being portrayed in the media and the differences, I do think both parties tend to kind of tiptoe around certain things and certain conversations are not had or certain things are not said about a certain kid because he's my race and he is not yours." ~ Steve
	Mistrust	Be suspicious of; have no confidence in each other	"I think it's a combination of Prejudice and mistrust on both sides because I do have a

			history of having not being able to see eye to eye with my middle aged Caucasian counterparts, every time I see one automatically my defenses go up into place, and I mean, I know that about me like that is a mutual mistrust, because I feel like you're going to try to come for me in some way, shape or form during this working relationship, like every time that's how I go into it. And I also think that the same thing happens on the other side. Right okay well we've worked with black women before and they get this attitude, or they just be walking around not looking friendly blah blah blah. And so, we're both just kind of sitting back waiting for the other one to have a misstep so we can prove ourselves right I think that's like a huge part of it." ~ Stacey
	Knowledge	Understanding the athletic trainers' role, cultural misunderstandings from the AT perspective and issues minority	"The lack of respect or lack respect for sure um. Ignorance as far as which would be the lack of knowledge of knowing certain things that may be offensive or certain

		athletic trainers' face	attitudes and actions they may not, they may not know are offensive or knowing being silent isn't okay about certain things, having to address certain issues. When they arise, instead of letting them build up." ~ Susan
			"No, I think it was truly because of his ignorance, I mean he was in his late 50s. Early 50s late 50s during his tenure, and not knowing you know, like I said, or even being considered or knowing African American history, especially here in Alabama. You know, he wasn't from here so I'm like I said he just didn't know." ~ Carol
			"They umm you know you may come back and they try to question your knowledge question, which you know, or question what you umm what you know about the injury or you know, or sometimes you know you know they may treat you know more like being a. Water like a like a water boy than being than Seeing what the profession than seeing

			the true profession that you are and respecting your certification and the hard work you put in to get to where you are."~ Mark

Table 3

Cross-race Communication

Domain	Subdomain	Definition	Quote
Cross race Communication			
	Athletic training tasks	Items directly relating to work and athletic training services	"The coach may want to prepare or have pregame meals or something and typically I am like hey maybe we shouldn't have Pupusas before a game you know. This is real life stuff you know what I'm saying, like maybe we should try something you know, a different protein and lighter. Maybe some electrolytes or some just little stuff like that may be a little different because my guys are used to, and you may have to communicate with them and say, maybe let's try something a little different." ~ Jared
	Casual Conversation	A conversation about non-serious topics	"Some of the guys, you know, obviously I still ask like I said earlier, I build a relationship with all, my coaches so I still ask about their families and things like that." ~ Steve

Table 4

Cross-race Mutual Understanding

Domain	Definition	Quotes
Cross Mutual understanding		
	What the relationship entails and the parameters of the relationship	"They much more respect my professional boundaries. And that's probably the biggest difference, I think I experienced and appreciate they don't ask me to go out with them, they don't. Often text me outside of hours, but like when they do text me outside of the hours that I know I tell them that I'm working. They don't expect an answer, like if they text me at 10 o'clock they know I'm not going to answer until 8am the next day, and they are all fine with that and if they're not." ~ Erin
		"It's like hey let's just keep it professional yo you know your viewpoints are your viewpoints mine are mine let's just keep it that way you know, and nobody really came outspoken or hey, this is what we're going to do, I think it's almost one of those things understood on both parts." ~ Steve

Table 5

Same Race Communication

Domain	Definition	Quotes
Same race communication		
	A conversation about an understanding with our conversation partner; there is a convergence of beliefs or views, a bridging of ideas or perspectives	"When we are talking about same, I think just those cultural experiences makes the relationship right, I mean obviously the day to day and the conversations and your beliefs my beliefs like that stuff also makes the relationship." ~Tiana
		"It works really well, there are sometimes, where I feel like I can relate to them more naturally, but we definitely connect and we're able to talk about different movies and different foods that we eat, and we all just during certain times and that's how we relate to different cultures and traditions that we have and so it's really good to be able to bond with them." ~ Susan

Table 6

Same Race Connectedness

Domain	Definition	Quotes
Same race Connectedness		
	Feels like a family, but the individuals are not relatives	"So, since we're talking about basketball season I'll start with that staff. I'm super-duper close with that staff that is entirely black staff, and they literally treat me more so, like another coach or a sister like it's very familial with that coaching staff." ~ Stacey
		"I think having a sense of it's almost like a brotherhood you know um. We all kind of look out for each other, not just physically but emotionally and mentally like hey you know. If I know one of my coaches hasn't 16-year-old boy something happening news to the 16 young kids somewhere else hey how you doing you know how's your son doing how's your family doing how yall dealing with this, so we have those tough conversations." ~ Steve

Table 7

Same Race Barriers

Domain	Definition	Quotes
Same race barriers		
	Relaxed and tolerant in approach or manner	"I think being too comfortable those. A comfortability thing because you know, there is a time for where we can play around or joke around and then there's a time where you know we got to get down business like you know. We gotta be professional we got a game to prepare for like you know I would say, those situations will probably be the most hindering." ~ Tiana
		"I have to reinforce that boundary because you get so comfortable being around people that look like you sometimes that you forget we're not at the cookout like playing spades like we are at work and we just happen to be eating dinner all at same table, or something like that so that's kind of what I mean like just having the solid professional solid personal lines, I feel like for me they get a little bit more misconstrued when I'm dealing with black coaches." ~ Stacey

Table 8

Same Race Mutual Understanding

Domain	Definition	Quotes
Same race Mutual Understanding		
	Any experience that makes individuals identify with each other. (Positive or negative)	"It's just it's I guess it's the understanding of how we grew up you know, it's the understanding of how our kids are whether it's mental or physical like we understand where they come from, we understand what they're going through in so many ways, so I think that's where it comes from, for the most part". ~ Ashley
		"When we are talking about the same, I think just those cultural experiences makes the relationship right, I mean obviously the day to day and the conversations and your beliefs, my beliefs like that stuff also makes the relationship, I think when we first meet each other, like there's that Okay, you know we cool we cool like we you know we have that understanding." ~ Tiana
	Great Quote	"Oh, it's like family is easy it's is not hard at all the communication is there is that's where the mutual understanding comes from that's where the proper communication comes from its perfect, for the most part it's perfect." ~Ashley

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Rapport signifies an unconstrained relationship containing comfortability, trust, and

confidence between 2 people in harmony.[4,5] Healthy relationships are important because they

impact our mental and overall well-being.[90] Numerous factors influence building positive

relationships, however, the most researched factor is race.[90] If race effects the basic foundation

of a relationship, according to the Gratch model, it may impact communication, mutual

understanding and connectedness which could lead to poor communication, and poor

relationships ultimately effecting the job duties for the coach and athletic trainer to provide

appropriate healthcare and safe environment for athletes. This study initially set out to

understand the role that race plays within the AT-coach relationship, however surprisingly, it

also built upon the utilization of the Gratch model in a human-human relationship.

The Gratch model was originally intended for assessing human and virtual agents'

rapport. The model is split into three sectors, which come together to create the foundation of

rapport. The three sectors were cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. These sectors of the model

are considered to be facilitators to building rapport and ultimately leading to a positive

relationship.[8] The absence or contrary of these factors would cause less rapport and become a

barrier.[8] After incorporating the model within the interview guide and themes within this study,

the model appears to work for human-to-human relationships as well.

Researchers might think about adjusting or simplifying the definitions to fit more towards

human-to-human interactions, this would allow the Gratch model to fit within any and every

relationship. After simplifying the definitions to fit within human-to-human interactions the

model worked well, especially in the athletic trainer-coach relationships. Participants stated communication and mutual understandings were essential to the relationship. One participant even stated "Oh, it's like family is easy it's is not hard at all the communication is there that's where the mutual understanding comes from, that's where the proper communication comes from its perfect, for the most part it's perfect."

While the model works well in human-to-human interactions, it appears that a sequential approach to this model would enhance building rapport and resultant positive relationships between the athletic trainer and coach. First individuals need to communicate, this is the only way they will develop mutual understandings. Once they have those mutual understandings, they will start to develop a connection within the relationship. Within the athletic trainer-coach relationship cognitive rapport, emotional rapport, and behavioral rapport has either been a facilitator or barrier despite race. Race has influence on each sector of the model in various ways, within the athletic trainer-coach relationship, making race concordance and discordant relationships look different.

Beyond finding a new approach to use the Gratch model, this qualitative study found seven themes aligned with the Gratch model that emerged: cross-race communication, mutual understanding, and barriers as well as same-race communication, connectedness, mutual understanding, and barriers. Generally, regardless of race status in the relationship, communication and mutual understanding served as facilitators. Likewise, several barriers arose across both same and cross race relationships. These barriers were communication, knowledge, mistrust, and cultural understanding. The emerging themes aligned with the theoretical framework laid out within the Gratch model.

Cognitive Rapport

Within same race relationships cognitive rapport was found in their shared experiences. The understanding of every aspect of their culture, issues within society they faced, and lifestyles were their shared experiences and was very prominent within these relationships. This domain was expressed as mutual understanding. Participants discussed being able to understand and relate to how each other were raised or understanding what each other has gone through or currently going through in various ways was extremely important. Further discussions explained the mutual understanding in their relationship with their athlete because they understand the athletes mental or physical state and how the athletic trainer can help if something occurs as evidenced by "It's just it's I guess it's the understanding of how we grew up you know, it's the understanding of how our kids are whether it's mental or physical like we understand where they come from, we understand what they're going through in so many ways, so I think that's where it comes from, for the most part."

Cognitive rapport also helps create a better relationship with the athletic trainer and coach because they are on the same accord about the athlete's wellbeing. The first interactions or meetings participants described with their same race coaches consisted of being on the same accord initially because they gravitated towards each other because they know that there are at least some experiences they share with each other because of race. "When we are talking about the same, I think just those cultural experiences makes the relationship right, I mean obviously the day to day and the conversations and your beliefs, my beliefs like that stuff also makes the relationship, I think when we first meet each other, like there's that Okay, you know we cool we cool like we you know we have that understanding."

The findings within this study were consistent with the literature. Conley and colleagues found people develop a relationship with different individuals by establishing a mutual understanding about reality and their shared experience.[39] The process of sharing experience directly shows everyone's' experiences are not unique and the experience is reality and true.[39,50] Since, their experiences are not unique then that is why they have that mutual understanding and their experiences align. Echterhoff and colleagues found an absence of sharing experiences may be detrimental to the feeling of being connected, but as well as someone's sense of reality.[38] Conley and Colleagues state "according to shared reality, relationships cannot begin or be maintained without relationship partners acknowledging each other's reality."[39] Similarly to same race relationships, in cross-race relationships there were a mutual understanding that helped facilitate the relationship.

In cross-race relationships, mutual understanding was built on their understanding of their professional boundaries, respecting the boundaries, and understanding their relationship was "strictly business". Participants were adamant about the mutual understanding of the relationship not being more than a professional one since each party could not see themselves hanging out with one another outside of work or being friends outside of co-workers. In support of the Gratch model, positive mutual understanding was a facilitator regardless of race. However, in cross-race relationships, when mutual understanding was not prevalent, it became a barrier.

In cross-race relationships not establishing or having a mutual understanding about each other's realities or experiences became a barrier to that relationship. Within the cross-race relationship, participants felt the lack of understanding for their struggles, culture, and not sharing the same experiences were barriers to the relationship with their cross-race coaches.

Participants described this lack of understanding did not prohibit their ability to being cordial or liking the individual. A participant stated "I feel like my cross-race coach I could say the same thing, but they're not understanding how like bad it is for our young black men to be getting killed or innocent people, little African American kids just walking to the bus stop getting shot like that's crazy right but they don't get they don't get that right, so certain things that I say oh it's just not like they don't get it. Um and I think that's how it differs um do I still like them as a person? Yeah, cool they're cool people right they just don't understand certain culture things that that are going on, or you know problems that we face that they don't necessarily face."

Emotional Rapport

Emotional rapport within same race relationships was built around the individuals feeling the kind of bond you have with relatives. The familial bond felt by the participants consisted of being super close with one another like siblings. Those feelings included actions of looking out for each other mentally and physically. Additionally, the ease of having those tough conversations when things are hard in life or society. Thomas and colleagues stated most people find siblings to help each other out in a crisis.[91] When individuals feel as if they have a support system, are comfortable, share experiences, and respect one another with no questions is when you start to develop that familial bond with an individual who is not actually a relative.[92] Within same race relationships, participants suggested being easy going or being too relaxed was considered a barrier in same race relationships.

Participants stated being too comfortable and not knowing when it is time to be professional hindered the relationship. When you get too comfortable with individuals you may forget what and when things are appropriate. Participants also stated that comfortability because

of their closeness may cause blurring of personal and professional boundary lines. Pettinger found friendship and sociability with colleagues are important, but with work and leisurely interactions the blurring of boundaries will occur.[93] Pettinger also stated a strict division between professional and personal boundaries is unsustainable to blurring of boundaries.[93] Beyond lack of facilitators, this missing professional boundary was the only additional barrier to same-race rapport building. Within cross-race relationships the absence of emotional rapport created a barrier to this relationship.

In cross-race relationships participants couldn't determine if they had ever felt connected or having a close bond with their cross-race coaches. They discussed not feeling connected because their coaches were there to do their job and get home. Participants described not connecting with their cross-race coaches because they were not interested in or not given the time to get to know them more due to them strictly being there for the job and leaving once they were done, "um. I. I don't know like it's I've been in three different school settings so I don't I don't really know like I don't know if it's them just going out to do their job, so that they can go home." Individuals experience rapport and typically describe it by saying they "clicked" or felt the "chemistry" when interacting.[11] When individuals don't experience that "chemistry" or "click" during interactions they are not experiencing that connection with the individual.[11] Factors that limit those connections or ability to develop chemistry create barriers and positive relationships are not formed. Duck et al, found connections are developed based upon attributes, such as attitude, and interests.[94]

Behavioral Rapport

Within same race athletic trainer-coach relationships, behavioral rapport was developed through communication. Participants deemed these conversations to be more natural and their ability to relate to them more natural as well. The type of discussions that arose were easy and seamlessly talk about those shared cultural experiences and traditions. Abbe and Brandon found self-disclosure through communication can help individuals discover common ground.[95] Studies have found communication about common ground and highlighting similarities facilitate communication and rapport, which is consistent with the results the researchers found in this study.[7,38] In cross-race relationships, the behavioral rapport was resulting in uncomfortable communication that did not seem natural or personable.

Behavioral rapport in the cross-race athletic trainer-coach relationship was centered around athletic training tasks and casual conversations. The communication involving the athletic training tasks dealt with items having to strictly do with things involving the athletic trainer such as injuries, games, practice, etc. Participants discussed giving suggestions to the coach such as intervention techniques or things that will allow the athletes to perform better that is within their realm of practice such as "I am like hey maybe we shouldn't have Pupusas before a game you know. This is real life stuff you know what I'm saying, like maybe we should try something you know, a different protein and lighter. Maybe some electrolytes or some just little stuff like that may be a little different because my guys are used to, and you may have to communicate with them and say, maybe let's try something a little different." On the other hand, their casual conversations were about their families, sports, jokes, and other topics that were not considered serious and outside of the athletic trainers' tasks. Studies have found that "chit chatting", compliments, and laughter build rapport within the relationship.[9,10] These results are also consistent with studies that found communication to be crucial between athletic trainers and

coaches because it is how they establish a common ground in each other's roles and the decision making process which enhanced athlete care.[20,21]

Various factors enhance the relationship for athlete care but there can also be factors that instead of enhancing the relationship, they hinder the relationship. Within cross-race relationships participants exhibited additional factors that hindered the relationship. These barriers surrounded communication, mistrust, and knowledge. Participants described the inability to have open conversations with their coaches and even the absence of communication all together. Fu and colleagues found the inability to have an open conversation as a barrier within the athletic trainer coach relationship.[16] This barrier creates a weak working relationship and does not optimize care for the athlete.[16] Participants also discussed that their coaches would question them and their medical decisions and actions, which led to mistrust.

Mistrust within the athletic trainer-coach relationship stems from the coach questioning their judgment and medical decisions, which is consistent with the findings of this study as well.[26] Participants described they felt the mistrust is occurring from both parties from their perspective. A participant stated when discussing mistrust, "we're both just kind of sitting back waiting for the other one to have a misstep so we can prove ourselves right I think that's like a huge part of it."

Knowledge was the last barrier within this relationship. Participants stated ignorance of certain issues the participants faced or understanding the athletic trainer's perspective and what their job entails hindered their relationship. Not understanding what a certified athletic trainer can do, their journey, and respecting their credentials is very important to an athletic trainer and

questioning their medical decisions is hindering their relationship with their cross-race coaches.[26] In previous research, race has been found to be a barrier in certain relationships.

Race

Race has been found to be a facilitator or a barrier within various relationships. Race appears to be able to influence the way individuals connect with each other, the understandings within the relationship, and what the communication may entail. In same race relationships, race may be a facilitator to the relationship and allows the individuals to connect more closely with each other, have more understandings, and communicate more easily.

Within cross-race relationships, race can make it more difficult to connect with individuals, hinder some understandings, and may even limit communication about various topics. It appears that while race can influence the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral rapport between the individuals it may not be the only factor that influences positive relationship building. Several participants stated they felt race played a role within their cross-race relationships but could not pinpoint if it was just their race that affected their relationship or if it was a combination of varying aspects of their identity such as gender, religion, and age.

"My female coworkers had issues with a male coach that I haven't had issues with, and I can tell him the same exact thing, so I do know that sex plays a part of it" (Steve)

"I absolutely believe that part of the reason why we don't get along is, I would say about 40% of that has to color my skin. And then the other 60% is I'm not religious enough for him." (Stacey)

"One of the only issues that has stuck out to me is just when you have that macho

mentality of males can do all and then you are looking at a situation where you're the

only really woman. That amongst the coaches outside of probably girls' basketball yeah,

it becomes difficult, so you got to stand your ground as a woman, not only as a woman,

but as a black woman…." (Ashley)

These comments described by our participants support previous research examining

intersectionality. Intersectionality is defined as "the interactivity of social identity structures such

as race, class, and gender in fostering life experiences, especially experiences of privilege and

oppression."[96] Parent and colleagues state "the intersectionality perspective maintains that

multiple identities construct novel experiences that are distinctive and not necessarily divisible

into their component identities or experiences."[97] Crenshaw states differences need to be address

within the groups because if they are ignored it may cause tensions among the identity groups.[98]

Generally, the various findings of this study aligns with previous research revolving around

rapport and race.

Limitations

This research is not without limitations. The first and probably most influential is that the

interviews were only obtained from one perspective, the ethnic minority athletic trainer. This

approach allowed us to dig deeper into the athletic trainer's perspective of their cross-race and

same race relationships with their coaches. This also created a passageway for further research to

be conducted on the coaches' perspectives of their relationship. The second limitation was that

the majority of the participants were located within the same geographical region, which

happened to be the south. The southern portion of the United States is well known and researched for increased race disparities and relations.[99] As such, these perspectives cannot be generalized to the entire US, but does provide a glimpse in this region of the country. This region also provides strong differences in respect to race and if it does, it established the facilitators for cross-race relationships. This might be a chance to enhance the research in this area to build stronger cross-race relationships

Conclusion and Implications for Research

A positive relationship between the athletic trainer and coach is essential in providing athletes with optimal care and is necessary for a team or athlete to succeed. The Gratch model was originally created for human and virtual agent interactions; however our findings suggest the model can also be used in human to human interactions to create a positive relationship as well.[8]

When creating a positive collegial relationship between athletic trainers and coaches our findings supported cognitive, emotional, and behavioral rapport are essential for a solid foundation. The absence of one or more of the rapport sectors can cause a hindrance within the relationship and potentially cause the relationship to be problematic. Beyond the absence or ineffective rapport sectors, additional barriers such as mistrust, and knowledge further inhibited positive relationship building.

Examination of race within building rapport between athletic trainers and coaches revealed that race does influence factors with rapport building but is not the only component. The findings also suggest one or more aspects of an individual's identity may cause a shift in the relationship or things that may affect the relationship, but it is difficult to attribute a singular portion of their identity as a barrier to the relationship.

This research provides evidence that cognitive, emotional, and behavioral rapport need to be the foundation of the athletic trainer-coach relationship despite anyone's identity to create a positive collegial relationship to optimize the care of athletes. These findings provide evidence that when a positive relationship does not exist between the athletic trainer and coach it may affect the athlete and their health, the coach advocating for the athletic trainer, and the coach being the athletic trainers' eyes and ears when they aren't aware of an issue with an athlete. This preliminary study provides an initial glimpse into the effect of race on building relationships, however future research should examine the athletic trainer-coach relationship between race concordant and discordant relationships and facilitators and barriers of these type of relationships from the perspective of the coach and athletes.

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APPENDIX A

EXTENDED METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

1. RQ1- What factors influence or affect building rapport in a race discordant athletic trainer coach relationship?

2. RQ2- Does race play a role in building rapport in the coach athletic trainer relationship?

Inclusion Criteria

- certified Athletic Trainers by the Board of Certification

- currently working within the secondary school setting

- identify as a minority racially and/or ethnically minority

- has at least one coach that doesn't identify with their race

Exclusion Criteria

- categorized as students

- identifies as white

- primary job responsibilities within middle school or coaches other than high school

The Gratch Model

- The Gratch model was developed to evaluate if virtual agents can generate behavior that facilitates feelings of rapport in humans comparable to human listeners.[8] The responsive virtual agent was found to be as good as a human listener in creating rapport.[8]

- The Gratch model consists of three rapport dimensions: emotional rapport, cognitive rapport, and behavioral rapport.

Definitions

- Race concordant

- o Defined as individuals who are of the same race.

- Race discordant

  - o Defined as individuals who are not of the same race

- Cognitive rapport

  - o Defined as "an understanding with our conversation partner; there is a convergence of beliefs or views, a bridging of ideas or perspectives."[8]

- Emotional rapport

  - o Defined as the sense of connection with other people in various interactions.

- Behavioral rapport

  - o Defined as the way in which individuals communicate and the different verbal and non-verbal properties each individuals uses to communicate.

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Veazey Hall 3000
PO Box 8005 • STATESBORO, GA 30460
Phone: 912-478-5465
Fax: 912-478-0719
IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu

To:	Sloan, Cayce; Hunt, Tamerah; Malcom, Nancy; Gipson, Christina
From:	Eleanor Haynes, Director, Research Integrity
Approval Date:	11/5/2021
Expiration Date:	10/31/2022
Subject:	Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research – **Expedited Review**

After a review of your proposed research project numbered **H22165**, and titled **"Does Race Play a role in the Athletic Trainer-Coach Relationship?,"** it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable. You are authorized to enroll up to a maximum of **20** subjects.

Description: The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that help or hinder the relationships between same-race and cross-race athletic trainers and coaches.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.

If at the end of this approval period there have been no changes to the research protocol; you may request an extension of the approval period. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not it is believed to be related to the study**, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator **prior** to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

"Thank you for meeting with me today. I appreciate your time and look forward to learning more about your journey as an athletic trainer working with White coaches."

"Can you tell me a little about your athletic trainer journey?"

> Follow up questions if not discussed:
>
> How did you decide to get into this field?
>
> Where did you go to school?
>
> How many years have you been a certified athletic trainer?
>
> Have you worked in other settings prior to the secondary school setting?
>
> How long have you been in the secondary school setting?

1. "Describe the relationships you have with your current coaches."
   a. "Can you give me some examples about the interactions with your current coaching staff as a unit?"
2. "Can you tell me how you build relationships between yourself and your coaches?"
   a. *Ask for examples of things they mention*
3. "Can you specifically describe your relationship with your White coaches?"
   a. "What factors do you think helped make this relationship?"
      i. *Communication will probably come up here*
   b. "Can you tell me what hinders the relationship?"
4. "Can you describe a time when you felt connected to your coaches? Same race or different race"
   a. *Ask why they felt connected*
   b. "How do you believe ATs and coaches connect during the beginning of the relationship building process?"
   c. "What do you believe is essential for helping ATs and Coaches establish a strong connection?"

5. "Some research has found that "mutual understanding" is important. In this research, mutual understanding has been defined as "an understanding with our conversation partner; there is a convergence of beliefs or views, a bridging of ideas or perspectives". Do you think that mutual understanding has played a role in shaping your experiences with coaches?"
   a. *"Interesting can you explain why?"*
   b. Could you describe a time when you had mutual understanding in the AT coach relationship?
   c. Could you describe a time where there wasn't a mutual understanding of a decision and why that occurred?
6. "Can you discuss communication within an AT-Coach relationship?"

      a. "Can you describe a time where there was a lack of communication or excellent communication?"

7. "Can you tell me a time when race played a role in the athletic trainer coach relationship?"
      a. "Can you tell me a time when race may have altered the relationship you had with a coach (good or bad)?"
      b. "Can you give me an example of a time race has ever helped or hindered your cross-race relationship with your coach?

8. Is there anything else that I did not ask about, dealing with race in the AT-coach relationship or being a minority athletic trainer working with majority coaching staff that you would like to share?
      a.   *Yes:* (probably will just start talk)
      b.   *No:* I want to thank you for meeting me today and taking the time out of your day to learn more about your journey as a minority athletic trainer working with majority coaching staffs.