

# “I Felt Like . . . They Left Me to Fend for Myself”: A Mixed-Method Examination of Sense of Belonging Among Minoritized Groups in Sport Academic Programs

Yannick Kluch,<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth A. Taylor,<sup>2</sup> Raquel Wright-Mair,<sup>3</sup> and Dakota Boring<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Center for Sport Leadership, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, USA; <sup>2</sup>Department of Sport and Recreation Management, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, USA; <sup>3</sup>Educational Services & Leadership, College of Education, Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ, USA

Drawing from Strayhorn’s model of educational sense of belonging and Vaccaro and Newman’s model of belonging for privileged and minoritized students, this study utilized a mixed-method approach to examine to what extent students from minoritized groups feel like they belong in the sport management classroom. Significant differences in sense of belonging were found based on visible identities such as gender or race. In addition, our qualitative data revealed five higher-order themes that positively or negatively impacted students’ sense of belonging across identity groups: (a) representation, (b) community, (c) support, (d) accomplishments, and (e) academic and professional experience. Limitations, implications, and directions for future research are discussed.

**Keywords:** discrimination, diversity, inclusion, pedagogy, social justice


Over the past decades, enrollment numbers of students whose racial or ethnic identities have been minoritized<sup>1</sup> (e.g., Asian-American, Black, Indigenous, Latino/a/x, and/or Native American students) and women in higher education have increased substantially (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020), as institutions of higher education have attempted to address and counteract the racist and sexist policies that have led to the historic exclusion of minoritized groups in the first place (Price & Wohlford, 2005; Suro & Fry, 2005; Zambrana & Macdonald, 2009). Despite these advances, systemic barriers remain in higher education that jeopardize the progress made by movements for racial justice and gender equity in the United States. For instance, institutions of higher education often reproduce unwelcoming campus climates for students whose racial identities have been minoritized (Ong et al., 2011), continue to rely on practices that reinforce racial disparities (e.g., standardized testing; Miller & Stassun, 2014), and fail to retain students from racially minoritized groups (Museus & Quayle, 2009). On the faculty side, manifestations of systemic racism are evident in the fact that racially minoritized faculty are awarded fewer grants for their work (Barber et al., 2021; Erosheva et al., 2020) and are often expected to engage in increased service activities despite such work being valued less in the tenure and promotion process (Barber et al., 2021).

In attempts to continue to grow university and college enrollments, institutions have focused on enhancing their campus climates, removing systemic barriers to access, diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus, as well as creating inclusive environments (Museus et al., 2017). Attention to matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion is especially critical in academic programs that lack gender and racial diversity, which continue to be dominated by white men at both the student and faculty level, such as sport management and related academic fields (Jones et al., 2008; Vianden & Gregg, 2017). Indeed,

researchers have found consistently that sport management programs lack racial and gender diversity both within the student body and among faculty ranks. For example, Jones et al. (2008) surveyed sport management programs and found that both women and racially minoritized faculty are severely underrepresented in (or, to be more accurate, historically excluded from) sport management departments, with almost half of the departments included in the study having only faculty members on staff who identified as white men. The vast majority of sport management programs are also located at predominantly white institutions, which often represent environments that are exclusionary, unwelcoming, or outright hostile to racially minoritized groups (Strayhorn, 2012).

While sport management scholars have started to examine issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion within sport management education (DeLuca et al., 2022; Hayes Sauder et al., 2021), the literature historically has focused on gender identity and the experiences of women within sport management programs. Though the experiences of women are important—especially given that men continue to dominate sport and sport management education programs—there are a plethora of student identity categories that remain understudied, including but not limited to those rooted in race, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, and socioeconomic background. Given there continue to exist unjust power relations within sport (and sport management education) that reinforce persistent inequities across social groups (Long & Hylton, 2002), it is crucial to explore the experiences of students from minoritized groups to better understand their sense of belonging within sport management education programs (and related fields).

Sense of belonging, or “the feeling that one fits in, belongs to, or is a member of the . . . community in question” (Good et al., 2012, p. 700), is an important component in the creation of inclusive environments. Developing a sense of belonging means feeling a strong connection to a group of people, or environment, and a strong sense of support, inclusion, acceptance, and celebration of unique identities and lived experiences (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Studies have shown that while sport spaces can serve as a powerful tool to

Kluch (ykluch@vcu.edu) is corresponding author,  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1916-2264>

create feelings of belonging (Brooks et al., 2013), such spaces have failed at creating an environment where individuals from minoritized populations can develop a strong sense of belonging (Waller et al., 2011), which is not surprising given that sport is an institution deeply rooted in the systemic and oppressive reinforcement of whiteness, heteronormativity, and masculinity that makes it easier for those with privileged identities to advance (Hancock & Hums, 2011; Hancock et al., 2018; Parks & Robertson, 2002).

While sense of belonging has been studied in various sporting contexts, one area that has received less attention from scholars studying belonging is the sport management classroom. Yet, experiencing a sense of belonging is crucial to the overall success of college students (Strayhorn, 2011). Having a strong connection to one's institution, as well as meaningful relationships with people within the institution (such as faculty, staff, peers), increases not just academic success but also motivational levels, self-efficacy, comfort levels, and overall health and wellness (Strayhorn, 2012). In turn, a lower sense of belonging—even with high levels of academic achievement—may lead students to pursue an alternative major and shift career goals to a field where they feel they will fit in better (Good et al., 2012). Because (a lack of) sense of belonging may impact students' intent to pursue an academic major and career within sport management and related disciplines, it was the goal of this study to provide an understanding to what extent students from minoritized populations feel like they belong in the sport management classroom.

## Literature Review

### Theorizing Sense of Belonging

To examine the sense of belonging among students from minoritized groups in sport management and related academic programs, we draw from Strayhorn's (2012) Model of Educational Sense of Belonging, a theoretical framework that has been used extensively to study sense of belonging in higher education and other contexts (e.g., foster care; see Johnson et al., 2020), as well as Vaccaro and Newman's (2016) Model of Belonging for Privileged and Minoritized Students. Strayhorn (2008) argues that sense of belonging "reflects the extent to which students feel connected, a part of, or stuck to a campus" (p. 505). Looking at the college setting specifically, Strayhorn (2012) notes the following:

In terms of college, sense of belonging refers to students' perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the group (e.g., campus community) or others on campus (e.g., faculty, peers). Indeed, it is a cognitive evaluation that typically leads to an affective response or behavior in students. (p. 17)

As such, sense of belonging (or a lack thereof) is not only an important aspect of one's college experience, particularly for those belonging to minoritized communities, but also a crucial indicator for students' academic success during their time on campus (Strayhorn, 2012). And, in turn, the absence of a sense of belonging leads to feelings of alienation, marginalization, and isolation (Strayhorn, 2012).

In his Model of Educational Sense of Belonging, Strayhorn (2012) draws from the motivational research of Maslow (1962) to map out seven core elements of students' sense of belonging. First, he posits that sense of belonging is a fundamental human need that must be met before students can achieve higher order needs (Johnson et al., 2020; Strayhorn, 2012). Second, Strayhorn

(2012) argues that sense of belonging does not only constitute a human need but also is a driving force when it comes to human behaviors—it can affect why and how students act a certain way. Third, students' sense of belonging is dependent on the context and time they are in as well as on what populations they belong to (Strayhorn, 2012), as "the experience of belonging . . . is context-dependent, such that sense of belonging in a particular context (e.g., department, classroom) has the greatest influence on outcomes (e.g., adjustment, achievement) in that area" (Strayhorn, 2012, p. 20).

Fourth, for students to develop a strong sense of belonging, they have to feel like they matter (Strayhorn, 2012); that is, they need to feel important and appreciated by others (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). Fifth, a student's various social, intersecting identities affect their sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2012). Sixth, the development of a sense of belonging can lead to a variety of other positive outcomes such as overall well-being or happiness (Strayhorn, 2012). Seventh and finally, sense of belonging is fluid rather than static and must be satisfied continuously over time (Strayhorn, 2012). In his research applying the model, Strayhorn (2012) has identified a variety of ways in which students seek to strengthen their sense of belonging, including but not limited to joining student organizations, fostering supportive relationships, and learning about how their values align with those of their future professions (Strayhorn, 2012).

While Strayhorn's (2012) model acknowledges the role social identities play in sense of belonging, we are additionally drawing from Vaccaro and Newman's (2016) Model of Belonging for Privileged and Minoritized Students to get a better sense of how students whose identities have been minoritized specifically develop (or do not develop) a sense of belonging in an academic context. Vaccaro and Newman (2016) identify three primary influences on belonging, the first of which is the campus environment students operated in. They found that environments that lacked diversity served as barriers to belonging for students whose identities have been minoritized, because these students are often perceived as the "only one" that led to them being tokenized, judged, or treated differently (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016). Furthermore, they highlighted that "belonging required an environment where students could be their authentic selves" (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016, p. 933).

Authenticity is also a key theme when it comes to the second influence on belonging: relationships. Vaccaro and Newman (2016) argue that students whose identities have been minoritized desire authentic relationships that are marked by self-awareness. When it comes to the third influence on belonging, which is involvement on campus, these students felt a sense of belonging when they "could be their authentic selves and develop authentic connections in clubs and student centers" (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016, p. 935). For these students, such organizations were often ones focused on a particular social identity group; for instance, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ+) centers (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016). In addition to the three primary influences of belonging, students whose identities have been minoritized also discussed feeling safe and respected as key factors affecting their sense of belonging (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016).

### Minoritized Identities and Sense of Belonging in Higher Education

Along with the sense of belonging framework above, research focused on student development models in higher education

(Abes et al., 2019; Patton et al., 2016) has shown consistently that students whose identities have been minoritized—specifically, LGBTQ+ students, students with disabilities, international students, and students identifying as members of groups that have been racially or ethnically minoritized—have a harder time feeling as if they belong on college campuses in the United States. For many of these students, college campuses are hostile, isolating, and unwelcoming as their individual and collective identities, experiences, and needs are continuously ignored or not taken into consideration at all (Johnson et al., 2007; Ostrove & Long, 2007; Strayhorn, 2012). Therefore, many of these students struggle to develop meaningful relationships, find strong support systems, or identify resources that help to affirm and validate their own identities and experiences (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Furthermore, it is sometimes hard for these students to connect with the curriculum (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Widely documented throughout the literature is the notion that students who do not feel as if they belong in college often have extremely negative experiences (Strayhorn, 2012). These experiences include major declines in mental and physical health (Hagerty et al., 1992), inability to persist through college (Hurtado & Carter, 1997), loss of desire to perform well academically, little interest in engaging meaningfully with others, and a strong disconnection with their campus community (Strayhorn, 2011).

Students belonging to minoritized groups<sup>2</sup> face unique circumstances on college campuses, and it is important to understand how to create and sustain campus environments that foster a sense of belonging in order to support their growth, development, and success. The importance of students whose identities have been minoritized feeling a sense of belonging cannot be overstated, especially as it pertains to them understanding and embracing their own individual and layered identities in the context of campus environments that may not reflect or validate those identities and experiences. For example, sense of belonging for Latinx students and Native American students is vastly different than for students who identify as white (Hurtado & Carter, 1997), which is further complicated at predominantly white institutions where campus environments are typically hostile, exclusionary, and unwelcoming to students who identify as racially or ethnically minoritized (Gilliard, 1996; Strayhorn, 2012). LGBTQ+ students, similarly, often encounter campus environments that are heteronormative and overtly hostile to those with different sexual orientations and gender identities (Duran, 2019; Glazzard et al., 2020; Goldberg et al., 2019). For example, Duran (2019) has shown that queer students of Color often counteract heteronormative campus cultures by connecting with individuals sharing similar backgrounds and by building smaller communities of support to counteract a sense of isolation. Students with disabilities, similarly, experience feelings of isolation and environments that are often not inclusive to their physical, cognitive, sensory, behavioral, or emotional needs—and thus turn to peer support groups (Mejias et al., 2014; Wasielewski, 2016). International students must navigate making adjustments very quickly and simultaneously (i.e., dealing with homesickness, new cultural practices, policies both in a new country and institution, xenophobia, and discrimination) and are faced with dominant populations that are not supportive or understanding of their perspectives and the multiple challenges they face upon entering the United States (Mwangi, 2016; Rivas et al., 2019).

It is important to note here that no single identity exists by itself; rather, identities intersect and produce specific experiences or outcomes for students within the systems they operate in (Nuñez, 2014). In fact, Black women such as Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia

Hill Collins, and bell hooks used the term *intersectionality* (a term coined by Crenshaw) to refer to the various ways in which “intersecting structures of oppression” (Harris & Patton, 2019, p. 361) lead to specific experiences of individuals with minoritized identities (Anzaldúa, 1987; Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1991; Hooks, 1987; Morága & Anzaldúa, 1983). More than “an additive framework [informing] a micro-level-only analysis” (Harris & Patton, 2019, p. 362), the call for analyses rooted in intersectionality prompts scholars to look beyond the addition of multiple identities to get to a “social structural analysis of inequality . . . and institutional manifestations of power hierarchies and their effects on individuals and groups” (Thornton-Dill & Zambrana, 2009, p. ix). In higher education, for example, intersectionality explains the unique challenges Black women in leadership positions face on university campuses due to being exposed to systemic sexism, ageism, and racism (Chance, 2021).<sup>3</sup>

When it comes to how intersectionality impacts sense of belonging, the framework can provide nuanced explanations for the unique experiences in belonging (or lack thereof) among minoritized groups. Duran (2019), for example, studied the experiences of queer students of Color and found that belonging to them meant the validation of their multiple identities. In addition, Maramba and Museus (2011) used intersectional analyses to study the experiences of Filipino American students’ sense of belonging on college campuses. They found that Filipino American men and women experienced a lack of belonging, sense of voicelessness, and hostile classroom climates on campus, but there were important differences in how these experiences manifested along gender lines. For example, both men and women felt a sense of voicelessness on campus but only women felt a similar voicelessness in the context of their families; the fact that the Filipino American men experienced having a voice in their family environment led them to have a more proactive philosophy in developing a sense of belonging on campus (Maramba & Museus, 2011).

While intersectionality examines the comprehensive experience of minoritized individuals and the systemic oppression they face, scholars have also looked at how certain identities become more salient than others in certain circumstances. For instance, Bowleg (2013) examined Black gay and bisexual men’s experiences living in Washington, DC, and found that, while it was hard for them to separate their identities, they also acknowledged that their racial identities were often highly salient due to the intersection of heterosexism and racism. Studies have also shown that that stigma attached to sexual minoritized identities is less intense for white men compared to men whose identities have been racially or ethnically minoritized, which can make sexual identities less salient for members of racially or ethnically minoritized groups (Groves et al., 2006; Sarno et al., 2015). To provide an example from the world of sport, McDowell and Carter-Francique (2017) studied the experiences of Black women athletic directors who were often confronted with the “angry Black woman” stereotype rooted in the intersection of racism and sexism, which often led to them acting in gendered ways during meetings. Such behavior can lead to minoritized individuals not being able to live as their authentic selves, which can in turn impact their sense of belonging (Duran, 2019).

### Minoritized Populations in Sport Education

The lack of diversity found in higher education is mirrored in the sport industry and, at a more foundational level, the sport management classroom (Hancock & Hums, 2011). Reflective of the sport industry at large (see, e.g., Agyemang & DeLorme, 2010;

Bass et al., 2015; Hextrum, 2020; Howe & Rockhill, 2020; Taylor & Hardin, 2016; Wells & Kerwin, 2016), white, straight men continue to be the most overrepresented (i.e., systemically advantaged) demographic in the sport management classroom—both when it comes to students (Barnhill et al., 2018) and faculty (Jones et al., 2008; Mahony et al., 2006). At the faculty level, women in sport management faculty positions thus frequently face sexual harassment or sexism as members of sport management departments (Taylor et al., 2018). When it comes to race, additional challenges faced by sport educators from racially minoritized groups are well documented in the literature (Simon & Azzarito, 2019; Varea, 2019). For example, Simon and Azzarito (2019) examined the experiences of Women of Color physical education teachers in predominantly white schools. They found that their participants often felt a sense of isolation in their schools, which prompted them to seek out guidance from individuals with similar identities as a form of validation. Similarly, Varea (2019) provided an autoethnographic account to show that Women of Color (and, in her instance, individuals whose first language is not English) often must engage in additional labor to navigate predominantly white spaces. In addition, studies have shown that students often have biases against minoritized faculty—such as women or Latinx faculty (Sosa & Sagas, 2008). While not focused on sense of belonging specifically, these studies point to hegemonic structures privileging white, cisgender men; these structures serve as powerful barriers to the development of a sense of belonging for students whose identities have been minoritized in the sport management context.

Given that sport education curricula are often biased and reinforce rather than challenge inequitable systems (Dowling & Flintoff, 2018), it is important to examine how students from minoritized populations navigate the barriers they face. While experiences of sport management students whose identities have been minoritized remain an understudied area, some laudable inquiries calling attention to populations on the margins of the sport management classroom have been made. For example, Cunningham et al. (2005) found that women perceived a lack of opportunities to advance as well as persistent discrimination as stark barriers to their career in sport management, which made them less likely to pursue a sport management education. In addition, women face challenges when it comes to networking, entry salaries, and long work hours in an industry that is dominated by white men (Harris et al., 2015). Career advancement, indeed, can be more challenging for women in sport management, as the field “may be more akin to a leadership labyrinth in which women must navigate barriers, bias, and discrimination to achieve upward career mobility” (Hancock et al., 2018, p. 106).

Additional challenges are faced by African American or Black students, who often view their race, or rather the discrimination they face based on their race, as a barrier to success in the sports industry (Stowe & Lange, 2018). Given the intersection of race and gender, Women of Color in particular have shared that they perceive persistent barriers that prevent their advancement in the sports industry, as they perceive having limited opportunities to make it to the leadership ranks of sport organizations (Stowe & Lange, 2018). These findings highlight important insights into the experience of students whose identities have been minoritized based on gender and race; however, further research is needed to better understand the experiences and sense of belonging across minoritized populations in sport management and related disciplines—including students with disabilities, LGBTQ+ students, international students, or first-generation students.

To fill this void in the literature, the purpose of this exploratory study was to examine the sense of belonging among students from minoritized groups in sport management and related academic programs (e.g., sport communication, sport sociology). Based on the literature and theoretical framework guiding the study and given the scarcity of research on sense of belonging among students whose identities have been minoritized in sport management, the following research questions (RQs) guided this inquiry:

**RQ1:** How do students in sport management (and related academic areas) with identities and backgrounds that have been minoritized experience a sense of belonging (or lack thereof) in their academic programs?

**RQ2:** What factors positively influence sense of belonging among sport management (and related academic areas) students whose identities and backgrounds have been minoritized?

**RQ3:** What factors negatively influence sense of belonging among sport management (and related academic areas) students whose identities and backgrounds have been minoritized?

## Methods

To find answers to the RQs outlined above, we utilized a mixed-method approach. We used Qualtrics, LLC, Provo, UT; Seattle, WA software to create an online HTML web-based survey. Purposive and snowball sampling (Sharma, 2017) was employed to distribute the survey to students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate sport management (and related) academic programs<sup>4</sup> as well as recent graduates of these programs. Utilizing professional contacts and discipline-specific web pages and listservs, we emailed sport management faculty explaining the purpose of the study along with a request to send an email to students and recent graduates soliciting their participation in an anonymous survey. This email invitation included information on the survey (including a statement that the study is focused on students with minoritized identities), institutional review board mandated information, and a link to the survey. Taylor and Hardin (2017) used similar methodology when attempting to secure a sample of current sport management students (and students from related fields). In addition, we shared a recruitment flyer and links to the survey on our personal social media pages (e.g., Twitter, LinkedIn).

## Participants

While 215 students started the survey, 162 completed the survey in its entirety and thus qualified for inclusion in this study. Therefore, the sample consisted of 162 students enrolled in or recently graduated from sport management (and related) academic programs who identified as members of at least one minoritized group (e.g., woman, racially/ethnically minoritized, LGBTQ+). Students who filled out the survey but did not hold at least one minoritized identity (e.g., white, man, straight, able-bodied, U.S. students) were excluded from the analysis given they did not meet the study criteria. Just over half (88; 54.3%) self-identified as women with 74 (45.7%) self-identifying as men. Although previous research has found sport management to be a major dominated by men (see Barnhill et al., 2018), the specific purpose of this study (i.e., examining the experiences of minoritized groups) likely

increased interest from women and other minoritized groups. The majority of participants (81; 50.3%) were white with 42 (26.1%) identifying as Black or African American and less than 10% identifying as biracial or more than one race (14), Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx (nine), Asian (nine), American Indian (three), Alaska Native/other Native American (one), or Arab/Middle Eastern (one). Barnhill et al. (2018) also found the majority of respondents in their study on sport management students self-identified as white.

The majority of the participants identified as heterosexual/straight (131; 80.9%), with 10 (6.2%) identifying as bisexual, less than 5% identifying as lesbian (seven), asexual (two), gay (three), pansexual (two), queer (three), questioning (two), or preferred to self-identify (e.g., demisexual) (two). Just over two thirds (111; 68.5%) identified as middle class while 40 (24.7%) identified as working class and nine (5.6%) identified as upper class.<sup>5</sup> The age range of the participants was 18 to older than 31, with most students (134; 84.8%) indicating they were younger than 25. There was representation across all academic classifications, including seven (4.3%) first-year students, 20 (12.3%) sophomores, 29 (17.9%) juniors, 40 (24.7%) seniors, two (1.2%) fifth-year seniors, 31 (19.1%) master's students, and 11 (6.8%) terminal degree students (e.g., JD, PhD). In addition, 22 (13.6%) reported being recent graduates (i.e., having graduated within the last 5 years). While the majority of the students reported being sport management/administration majors (129; 79.8%), there was representation from sport communication (13; 8%), cultural studies of sport (2; 1.2%), and other sport-focused programs (18; 11%; e.g., sport psychology). Just over 30% (52; 32.1%) reported being first-generation college students, and the majority of students identified as Christian (100; 62.1%), did not have a disability (147; 90.7%), and were citizens of the United States (142; 87.7%).

## Measures

A modified version of the Sense of Belonging to Math scale (Good et al., 2012) was utilized to measure students' sense of belonging in the sport management (or related) academic programs. The Sense of Belonging to Math scale is comprised of 28 items that measure an individual's sense of belonging to a specific intellectual domain (i.e., math) across five subscales including: membership, acceptance, affect, trust, and desire to fade, and is measured across an 8-point Likert scale. Modifications were made to create questions specific to sport management (and related) academic programs. Sample questions from each subscale include the following: (a) "I feel that I belong to the sport (management/administration, communication, sociology) community" for the *membership subscale*; (b) "I feel accepted" for the *acceptance subscale*; (c) "I feel at ease" for the *affect subscale*; and (d) "I trust my instructors to be committed to helping me learn" for the *trust subscale*; and "I enjoy being an active participant" for the *desire to fade subscale*. For the purpose of this study, a 6-point Likert scale was utilized to decrease confusion between categories (e.g., somewhat disagree and slightly disagree). Research has shown that utilizing Likert scales with fewer response options (i.e., 5 or 6 vs. 7 or more) is optimal for data quality when utilizing agree to disagree Likert scale (Revilla et al., 2014). Good et al. (2012) found the scale to be both valid and reliable. Cronbach's alpha scores for the current sample were: .91 (membership), .92 (acceptance), .90 (affect), .67 (trust), and .80 (desire to fade), respectively.

We added a qualitative component to this study for two primary reasons. First, we acknowledge the limitations that come with

approaches to the study of sense of belonging that do not center intersectionality in methodology and approach.<sup>6</sup> A key limitation of this present study was that the quantitative component required us to separate identity categories—an endeavor that is not in line with intersectional approaches to studying populations with minoritized identities. Second, gathering qualitative data allowed us to identify specific indicators for the development of a sense of belonging (or lack thereof) as experienced by participants with identities that have been minoritized. As such, the qualitative component allowed us to better understand participants' holistic perceptions of their experience across multiple identity categories.

For the qualitative component of the study, two open-ended questions were included for participants to provide more insights into their sense of belonging in the sport management (or related) academic program they were enrolled in. The open-ended questions were as follows: (a) As a member of your identity group(s), please tell us about a time when you felt like you belonged in the sport (management/administration, communication, sociology, etc.) community or where you felt like you made the right career/major choice, and (b) if applicable, based on your experience as a member of your identity group(s), tell us about a time when you felt like you did not belong in the major or when you doubted your career/major choice. Finally, demographic variables were collected, including gender identity, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, academic classification, major, religion, disability status, and country of citizenship. While 162 respondents completed the quantitative survey, not all of those respondents chose to provide responses to the open-ended questions. Out of the 162 respondents, 129 provided comments on the first open-ended question, and 105 provided comments on the second open-ended question.

## Analysis

For our quantitative analysis, a series of *t* tests and analysis of variances were conducted to examine differences on the Sense of Belonging scale with regard to participant demographics. *T* tests were conducted to examine differences on the Sense of Belonging subscales based on participants' gender identity and race/ethnicity. Analysis of variances were conducted to examine differences on the Sense of Belonging subscales based on participants' socioeconomic status, academic classification (e.g., first year, master's student, recent graduate), sexual orientation, religion, disability status, and country of citizenship. This approach was taken to examine student perceptions from a holistic sociocultural perspective (i.e., including a plethora of general demographics). In addition, a series of multiple linear regressions were conducted to predict levels of the Sense of Belonging scale across the subscales based on participant demographics. Specifically, the following demographic variables were used as independent variables: gender, race/ethnicity,<sup>7</sup> sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and academic classification. Race/ethnicity and sexual orientation were dummy coded as 0 (white) and 1 (racially/ethnically minoritized) and 0 (heterosexual/straight) and 1 (sexual minoritized). This was done for two reasons: to utilize the selected analysis and the large number of participants who indicated their race/ethnicity was white and their sexual orientation as heterosexual/straight, creating problematic unequal groups. Socioeconomic class was classified as 1 = upper class, 2 = middle class, and 3 = working class. The subscales of the Sense of Belonging scale (i.e., Membership, Acceptance, Affect, Trust, and Fade) were used as dependent variables in the analysis.

When it came to analyzing the qualitative data generated by the two open-ended questions, we utilized open and axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to identify higher-order themes that provided additional insights into sense of belonging (or lack thereof) of students whose identities have been minoritized. First, two of the researchers<sup>8</sup> open-coded the same subset of the sample independently, which included assigning codes to the raw data (Patton, 2002). The researchers then met to compare the open codes of the subset and discussed any discrepancies in codes assigned. Once agreement was reached, the researchers split the remaining sample and independently assigned open codes. After open coding the sample, the researchers turned to axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to group open codes into categories, which they then combined into the higher-order themes identified in the results section.

## Results

### Quantitative Results

Significant differences on the acceptance subscale were found between students identifying as men and those identifying as women,  $t(160) = 3.47$ ;  $p < .001$ , with men ( $M = 4.75$ ,  $SD = 0.89$ ) scoring significantly higher than women ( $M = 4.24$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ). We also found significant differences on the affect subscale,  $t(158) = 2.79$ ;  $p = .006$ , with students identifying as men ( $M = 4.40$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ) scoring significantly higher than students identifying as women ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ). Due to the large number of participants who indicated their race/ethnicity was white, the race/ethnicity variable was recoded into white and racially/ethnically minoritized. Significant differences were found on the trust subscale,  $t(157) = 2.12$ ;  $p = .047$ , with white students ( $M = 4.44$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ) scoring significantly higher than those students who identified as members of racially/ethnically minoritized groups ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ ). However, no significant results were found based on race/ethnicity when running a multiple linear regression. This suggests the result may not entirely be attributable to the independent variable.

Significant differences were found based on socioeconomic status on the acceptance subscale,  $F(3, 159) = 3.02$ ,  $p = .026$ . Follow-up post hoc tests found significant differences between students who identified as middle class ( $M = 4.62$ ,  $SD = 0.93$ ) and working class ( $M = 4.09$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ). There were no significant differences based on sexual orientation, religion, disability status, or country of citizenship. However, the participant sample size for each of these identity groups was fairly small, which may partially explain the lack of statistical significance.

Five multiple linear regressions were conducted to predict scores on each Sense of Belonging scale subscale for gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and academic classification. The overall regression for the membership

subscale was nonsignificant ( $p = .194$ ). The overall regression for the acceptance subscale was significant,  $F(5, 152) = 5.49$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .142$ , illustrating these variables significantly predicted scores on the acceptance subscale. When examining individual variables, only gender ( $\beta = -0.255$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and socioeconomic status ( $\beta = -0.179$ ,  $p = .024$ ) were significant, which illustrates that women will score 0.255 lower on the acceptance subscale than men, and as socioeconomic status increases by 1 (from upper to middle and middle to working class), scores on the acceptance subscale will decrease by 0.179. The overall regression for the affect subscale was significant,  $F(5, 150) = 4.44$ ;  $p = .001$ ;  $R^2 = .129$ , illustrating these variables significantly predicted scores on the affect subscale. When examining individual variables, gender ( $\beta = -0.191$ ,  $p = .020$ ), academic classification ( $\beta = -0.189$ ,  $p = .022$ ), and socioeconomic status ( $\beta = -0.219$ ,  $p = .01$ ) were significant. These results illustrate that women will score 0.191 lower on the affect subscale than men, and as students' progress through their academic program, their affect score will decrease by 0.189, and as socioeconomic status increases by 1 (from upper to middle and middle to working class), scores on the affect subscale will decrease by 0.219. Additional analysis revealed the academic classification results were largely impacted by the low scores on the subscale from recent graduates and terminal degree students. The overall regression for the trust subscale was significant,  $F(5, 150) = 3.19$ ;  $p = .009$ ;  $R^2 = .096$ , illustrating these variables significantly predicted scores on the trust subscale. When examining individual variables, only academic classification was significant,  $\beta = -0.219$ ;  $p = .009$ , illustrating that as students progress through their academic program, their affect score will decrease by 0.219. Additional analysis revealed the academic classification results were largely impacted by the low scores on the subscale from recent graduates and terminal degree students. The overall regression for the Fade subscale was nonsignificant ( $p = .801$ ). See Tables 1–5 for full multiple linear regressions results.

### Qualitative Findings

Table 6 provides an overview of the results to our RQs, both of which focused on what factors affect the sense of belonging of students whose identities have been minoritized in sport management and related academic programs. Our data revealed five higher-order themes that positively or negatively impacted these students' sense of belonging in their academic program: (a) representation, (b) community, (c) support, (d) accomplishments, and (e) academic and professional experience. Table 6 shows how each of the higher order themes capture either a positive outcome (sense of belonging) or negative outcome (lack of belonging) as well as how the open codes identified were grouped into axial codes that later became the higher-order themes outlined below. Throughout our presentation of the qualitative findings, we provide participants' demographic information to add more context to the data; we chose to include

**Table 1** Regression Analysis Summary for Membership Subscale

Variable	B	95% confidence interval	$\beta$	t	p	F	df	p	R <sup>2</sup>
Overall model						1.50	5, 151	.194	.047
Gender	-0.152	[-0.487, 0.197]	-0.076	-0.891	.375				
Race/ethnicity	-0.016	[-0.435, 0.216]	-0.008	-0.093	.926				
Sexual orientation	-0.024	[-0.483, 0.379]	-0.009	0.110	.912				
Socioeconomic status	-0.408	[-0.638, -0.011]	-0.209	-2.514	.013				
Academic classification	-0.001	[-0.078, 0.064]	-0.002	0.022	.983				

**Table 2 Regression Analysis Summary for Acceptance Subscale**

Variable	B	95% confidence interval	$\beta$	t	p	F	df	p	R <sup>2</sup>
Overall model						5.49	5, 152	<.001	.142
Gender	-0.491	[-0.795, -0.187]	-0.255	-3.190	.002				
Race/ethnicity	-0.166	[-0.467, 0.135]	-0.086	-1.087	.279				
Sexual orientation	0.056	[-0.327, 0.440]	0.023	0.289	.773				
Socioeconomic status	-0.335	[-0.625, -0.045]	-0.179	-2.281	.024				
Academic classification	-0.050	[-0.114, 0.014]	-0.124	-1.521	.125				

**Table 3 Regression Analysis Summary for Affect Subscale**

Variable	B	95% confidence interval	$\beta$	t	p	F	df	p	R <sup>2</sup>
Overall model						4.44	5, 150	.001	.129
Gender	-0.379	[-0.698, -0.060]	-0.191	-2.350	.020				
Race/ethnicity	0.129	[-0.187, 0.445]	0.065	0.808	.420				
Sexual orientation	0.172	[-0.228, 0.572]	0.068	0.851	.396				
Socioeconomic status	-0.424	[-0.727, -0.120]	-0.219	-2.753	.007				
Academic classification	-0.079	[-0.146, -0.012]	-0.189	-2.317	.022				

**Table 4 Regression Analysis Summary for Trust Subscale**

Variable	B	95% confidence interval	$\beta$	t	p	F	df	p	R <sup>2</sup>
Overall model						3.19	5, 150	.009	.096
Gender	-0.147	[-0.463, 0.169]	-0.076	-0.918	.360				
Race/ethnicity	-0.192	[-0.506, 0.123]	-0.099	-1.205	.230				
Sexual orientation	0.183	[-0.214, 0.580]	0.074	0.910	.364				
Socioeconomic status	-0.171	[-0.472, 0.130]	-0.019	-1.125	.262				
Academic classification	-0.088	[-0.154, -0.022]	0.219	-2.639	.009				

**Table 5 Regression Analysis Summary for Fade Subscale**

Variable	B	95% confidence interval	$\beta$	t	p	F	df	p	R <sup>2</sup>
Overall model						.466	5, 151	.801	.015
Gender	-0.027	[-0.349, 0.295]	-0.014	-0.164	.870				
Race/ethnicity	-0.818	[-0.501, 0.138]	-0.096	-1.121	.264				
Sexual orientation	0.149	[-0.256, 0.554]	0.061	0.728	.468				
Socioeconomic status	0.120	[-0.187, 0.427]	0.065	0.774	.440				
Academic classification	0.007	[-0.060, 0.075]	0.018	0.208	.836				

participants' self-reported gender identities, racial identities, and class standing, as well as any other minoritized identities they held (if applicable).

The first higher-order theme we found in the data ( $n = 36$ ) was that of *representation*. Students from minoritized groups stated how they felt as though they belonged when they could see themselves in the people they were surrounded by in their respective academic context—including peers, faculty, and industry professionals. For example, one respondent shared that they felt like they belonged when they spoke with “professors whom I

identify with” (white, woman, terminal degree student), while another respondent explained that they belonged when they “started to see women getting more jobs in the sports industry, especially Women of Color” (biracial, woman, sophomore). Conversely, students from minoritized groups felt like they did not belong when they perceived there to be a lack of representation of the identities they held among peers, faculty, and industry professionals. For the latter, one participant said poignantly that “I felt invisible” (Black, woman, bisexual, first-generation senior). Another respondent reflected on an internship experience where

**Table 6 Qualitative Analysis: Overview of Higher-Order Themes/Axial Codes, Open Codes, and Examples From Data**

<b>Axial code/ theme</b>	<b>Sense of belonging (positive outcome)</b>	<b>Lack of belonging (negative outcome)</b>
	<b>Importance of representation</b>	<b>Lack of representation</b>
Representation	<p>Open code: Representation among peers “Once I saw girls in my major classes I felt like I belonged.”</p> <p>Open code: Representation among faculty “I felt like I belonged when I took a Sport &amp; Religion class with a professor that looked like me.”</p> <p>Open code: Representation among industry professionals “[I belonged] when I started to see women getting more jobs in the sports industry, especially Women of Color.”</p>	<p>Open code: Lack of representation among peers “I hardly felt like I belong. In the sports field, I rarely saw another Hispanic female in my program.”</p> <p>Open code: Lack of representation among industry professionals “Every day I second guess myself in this career choice because I never see Black women like me . . . you rarely ever see Black people in this career in general.”</p>
	<b>Sense of community</b>	<b>Lack of community</b>
Community	<p>Open code: Rapport with stakeholders “The conversations had with professors within the program and the students in the program have all been inclusive and welcoming.”</p> <p>Open code: Acceptance “I think being gay, that at this point in time no one really cares so we are all accepted in the sport management community.”</p> <p>Open code: Allyship “I felt connected . . . when I met faculty at other institutions interested in promoting social justice through sport. Particularly, I was encouraged by connections with LGBTQ+ graduate faculty and strong, vocally supportive allies.”</p>	<p>Open code: Lack of rapport with stakeholders “When in classrooms and everyone else knows each other from other classes but I don’t know many of the people.”</p> <p>Open code: Lack of acceptance “It sucks when men automatically are accepted when I have more experience and skill in the field. I sometimes wonder just what I have to do to be as accepted as [the] guys [who have] far less qualifications than I have.”</p> <p>Open code: Experiencing discrimination “It’s almost always men who make these comments, usually sexualizing female athletes or disrespecting the opinions of their female classmates like me. It makes me feel like I don’t belong in sports and that some men don’t want women to ever belong.”</p>
	<b>Perceptions of support</b>	<b>Lack of support</b>
Support	<p>Open code: Investment in students “My professors have always made learning a priority. They accept me and have supported me.”</p> <p>Open code: Mentoring “While applying [for internships], multiple . . . supervisors assisted me in the interview process by completing mock interviews . . . I felt incredibly respected as an individual and developing professional since these people were so open and helpful to get a dream internship.”</p>	<p>Open code: Lack of support “I struggled through my program and instead of the faculty supporting me, I felt they turned their back on me and left me to fend for myself.”</p>
	<b>Feelings of validation</b>	<b>Feelings of inadequacy</b>
Accomplishments	<p>Open code: External rewards “I felt like I belonged when I performed well in my classes.”</p> <p>Open code: Affirmation “The chair of our department sat me down one day and explained I was one of a select few individuals who he truly believed in to thrive in the field of sport management. This made me feel like I belonged here.”</p> <p>Open code: Confidence “At my school, I am one of two women in the Sport Management major. However, I am consistently the one who participates the most in class and achieves the highest grades. It makes me feel confident that I know what I am talking about when other students, specifically men, want to be my partner in projects because they know I know what I am talking about.”</p>	<p>Open code: Alienation “As the only Black woman in a leadership course, I would feel alienated talking amongst white men.”</p> <p>Open code: Belittlement “Just the other week I ran into a male from college who happens to have similar career goals and make extremely rude comments about his ability to do better than me and hinting that I don’t know as much as him.”</p> <p>Open code: Fear of failure “Sometimes, when professors or industry experts talk about broadcasters, I fear that I will have a hard time getting a job because I am a woman and I have not played professionally.”</p>

(continued)



Table 6 (continued)

Axial code/ theme	Sense of belonging (positive outcome)	Lack of belonging (negative outcome)
	Positive program experience	Negative program experience
Academic and professional experience	<p>Open code: Positive classroom experience “I have had great instructors in my master’s program who make an effort to give people the opportunity to tell them how they identify and how they would like to be referred to in class and in private. They facilitate great conversations and encourage other students to learn outside their comfort.”</p> <p>Open code: Industry connections “I feel like I belong in this community when I speak with alumni from my program that are currently very successful in positions that I would like to pursue after graduation.”</p> <p>Open code: Culturally relevant curriculum “During a <i>Sports in Society</i> lecture, we chatted about what it means to be someone in sports that deviates from the typical male, white, heterosexual person. That class was a comfortable space to open up about who I am and what I would mean for sports moving forward and the changes I could bring.”</p>	<p>Open code: Lack of understanding of class material “When I don’t know what is being talked about.”</p> <p>Open code: Negative work experience “I had a prominent coach . . . bombard with me questions about how I felt about women’s reproductive rights while in the media relations office. I was pressured to be converted to his viewpoint, and he recited biblical scripture to me trying to tell me how I was wrong. I feel like that extremely inappropriate conversation would never have transpired if I was a male. I did not bring up the subject matter in the slightest—he felt the need to assert his dominance over the matter.”</p> <p>Open code: No cultural relevance in curriculum “LGBTQ+ topics (and other minority topics) are rarely talked about in courses or when brought up they are usually glanced over by several professors.”</p>

she was “one of the few minorities in operations . . . we were barely acknowledged” (Black, woman, first-generation senior). The idea of a lack of representation making respondents feel like they were invisible came through in multiple responses. One respondent identifying as an Asian American woman (recent graduate), for example, shared that she rarely felt like she belonged in the sport management classroom because “Asians are often invisible in sport.” This was also mirrored by another participant identifying as a woman who shared they did not feel as though they belonged “when my class was full of men” (white, senior).

The second higher-order theme that respondents spoke to ( $n = 30$ ) was that of *community*, often showing how a strong sense of community led to a sense of belonging (positive outcome), or how the lack of a sense of community led to a lack of sense of belonging (negative outcomes). When it came to perceptions of a strong sense of community, respondents talked about rapport with stakeholders (e.g., “The conversations I had with professors within the program and the students in the program have all been inclusive and welcoming,” white, man, working class junior), acceptance felt within their sport academic context (e.g., “My community allowed me to grow professionally and personally without fear of judgment,” white, woman, lesbian, first-generation recent graduate), and examples of allyship (e.g., “I was encouraged by . . . strong, vocally supportive allies”; white, man, gay, first-generation terminal degree student). On the other hand, respondents felt a lack of sense of belonging when they lacked community in their sport academic program, which was evidenced by a lack of rapport with stakeholders such as peers and faculty (e.g., “No one talked to each other unless you knew someone,” white, man, gay, first-generation sophomore), a lack of acceptance in the sport management community (e.g., “I sometimes wonder just what I have to do to be as accepted as [the] guys [who have] far less qualifications than I have,” white, woman, terminal degree student), or the frequent experiencing of discrimination during their time in the program (e.g., “There have been several times where I have overheard racist

remarks,” biracial, woman, working class, first-generation recent graduate).

When it came to the third higher-order theme ( $n = 17$ ), *support*, responses showed how supportive environments led to stronger sense of belonging, while less supportive environments often led to a lack of sense of belonging. For example, participants viewed professors’ or supervisors’ investment in themselves as students as a sign of support, and they frequently pointed out that “the professors . . . are always helping us” (white, woman, first-generation fifth-year senior). A participant shared one such example when saying that when applying for an internship, they “assisted me in the interview process by completing mock interviews or putting in a good word on my behalf . . . I felt incredibly respected as an individual . . . since these people were so open and helpful to get a dream internship” (biracial, woman, working-class, first-generation recent graduate). A second form of support that was highlighted was that of mentoring, as the following quote shows: “My advisor is always willing to meet with me to discuss internship opportunities. He tries to help me in every way possible and said that he will help me look for an internship this summer” (white, man, Jewish senior). A lack of support, then, led to a lower sense of belonging, as the quote used in the title of this paper perhaps best illustrates: “I struggled through my program and instead of the faculty supporting me, I felt like they turned their back on me and left me to fend for myself” (Black, woman, Hispanic/Latinx, working-class, first-generation recent graduate).

The fourth higher-order theme we identified ( $n = 53$ ) was focused on *accomplishments*, with feelings of validation strengthening the sense of belonging (positive outcome) and feelings of inadequacy jeopardizing it (negative outcome). For the former, one of the ways in which respondents experienced feelings of validation was through external rewards such as grades, positive feedback on class work, leadership in student organizations, or job/internship offers. A second way in which respondents felt validated was through affirmation from others, as this quote from one of the

respondents best exemplifies: “[My department head] made me realize how much potential I have, and she told me how much she trusted me and my capabilities within the program” (white, man, working-class, first-generation sophomore). A final subtheme capturing feelings of validation was that of confidence that participants felt due to their accomplishments. For instance, respondents said that they felt confident when peers sought to work with them due to their strong performance in a class (Table 6), when they persevered during challenging times, or when they delivered excellent work at an internship or other work experience.

Lack of accomplishments, on the other hand, led to feelings of inadequacy, which at times made participants experience alienation. A student identifying as a woman, for example, shared that she often had her accomplishments questioned. She stated that she felt alienated after encountering a student identifying as a man who was “hinting that I don’t know as much as him” (white, woman, master’s student). Participants often shared similar examples of belittlement that made them feel inadequate and like they do not belong in sport academic programs. One such example was described by an international participant who stated that “my professor constantly dismissed my contributions and did not acknowledge my examples as they often came from my European experience and were not U.S. based” (white, woman, international, first-generation terminal degree student). A final subtheme capturing feelings of inadequacy was that of fear of failure (e.g., “My qualifying paper was rejected [two times]. At that point, I thought I was incapable of completing my degree.” Black, woman, lesbian, first-generation terminal degree student).

A fifth and final higher-order theme we found in the data ( $n=40$ ) was related to respondents’ *academic and professional experience*, where a positive program experience strengthened the sense of belonging (positive outcome), and a negative program experience weakened such belonging in the sport academic space. Respondents describing a positive program experience often shared positive and welcoming classroom experiences, as captured by the following respondent: “I was able to contribute to class discussions with a valued and unique point of view” (white, woman, recent graduate with a disability). A second subtheme highlighted by respondents was focused on how meaningful industry connections and industry engagement led to a positive program experience. Such engagement took different forms, with some respondents sharing how they successfully connected with alumni and professionals in the industry while others talked about attending networking events, engaging with guest speakers, or joining a sports business club on campus. Respondents also shared how they felt like they belonged when their curriculum was culturally relevant, or when “we talk about social issues in class,” as one respondent shared (white, woman, bisexual master’s student). A different respondent mentioned how they enjoyed the classes so much that they “developed a passion for the career path” (Black, man, senior).

In turn, respondents shared that they lacked a sense of belonging when they had a negative program experience, which was marked by a lack of understanding of class material, a curriculum that was not culturally relevant to them, or a negative work experience. First, the inability to understand material made respondents feel like they did not belong (e.g., “When I don’t know what is being talked about,” Black, man, first-generation junior). Second, respondents pointed to a lack of culturally relevant curricula as a factor jeopardizing sense of belonging. They emphasized that sport curricula tend to be very ethnocentric, as the following quote captures aptly (white, woman, atheist, international master’s student):

In some classes, the conversation is a lot about the American sports which I know little about. Hearing everyone being so up to date about all the athletes . . . sometimes makes me think that I am not cut out for the sports world. For me, it’s not about the [actual] sports though, it’s more the culture and what sport can do as an industry.

Finally, respondents recalled instances of negative work experiences as part of on-campus jobs, internships, or volunteer opportunities in the sports industry. One such respondent (biracial, woman, recent graduate), for example, said that they were told hosting a “Latinx Night” would be “off brand.” They added, “Another instance, I asked why this sports team doesn’t do much to include LGBTQ+ for theme nights and was told the owner didn’t believe in that. As an ally, that was a major red flag and led to me doubting my career choice.”

## Discussion and Implications for Belonging in Sport Management

The goal of this study was to provide an understanding to what extent students from minoritized groups feel like they belong in the sport management classroom. Based on the findings, this work extends the literature with several main theoretical and practical contributions. Our first RQ prompted us to examine in what ways respondents’ identities impact their sense of belonging. Our quantitative results showed significant differences on the acceptance (“I feel accepted.”), affect (“I feel at ease.”), and trust (“I trust my instructors to be committed to helping me learn.”) subscales for minoritized populations based on gender, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic background, which indicates that students holding such minoritized identities may develop less of a sense of belonging than peers who hold privileged gender, racial/ethnic, and socioeconomic minoritized identities in sport management and related academic programs. Specifically, results showed significant differences among students who identified as minoritized based on their gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, and socioeconomic class. As such, the quantitative results indicated that students’ identities affect their levels of sense of belonging.

This study adds a lack of sense of belonging in educational settings as a potential barrier to the literature looking at challenges faced by women (Burton, 2015; Burton et al., 2009; Shaw & Frisby, 2006) as well as by people whose racial identities have been minoritized (Howe & Rockhill, 2020) in sport management. A group that has remained understudied in sport management is students with lower socioeconomic status (Walker et al., 2021). Our findings indicate that students who self-identified as belonging to lower socioeconomic classes may lack a sense of belonging in sport academic programs compared to their peers holding privileged socioeconomic identities (i.e., middle class), a finding that needs attention from faculty, students, and administrators committed to creating inclusive environments and removing barriers to diversity and inclusion based on socioeconomic status. Faculty should consider creating specific support programs for students with lower socioeconomic status that support these students’ success in sport management and related programs. For example, the creation of specific scholarship programs or travel funds for students with lower socioeconomic status can help remove barriers to entry into the sports industry. Attention to understudied interlocking systems of oppression, such as those rooted in socioeconomic status, is also warranted given that recent research indicates that sport management students may be familiar with concepts

related to race, ethnicity, and gender but have less awareness of other dimensions of diversity such as disability, sexual orientation, or age (Sauder et al., 2021).

It is important to note here that we did not specifically assess how salient each of the identities were for our respondents at the moment the survey was taken. To be included in the study, each respondent had to identify as having at least one minoritized identity. As a result, respondents may identify as LGBTQ+ and/or as being a citizen of a country other than the United States, for example, but those identities *may* be less salient than other ones that are more visible (e.g., race or gender)—particularly in the 2020 cultural climate that centered conversations on race in national discourse. We also note that sexual orientation, religion, and disability are sometimes less visible identities, making it easier to cover such aspects of one's identity if needed (for instance, if an instructor is openly homophobic). Of course, there is a degree of privilege inherent in the ability to cover an aspect of one's identity; for instance, people in need of mobility aids (e.g., a wheelchair) or people whose faith allows the wearing of faith-specific clothing (e.g., Muslim women) have very visible identities and sometimes do not have the option to cover that part of their identity to avoid harm and discrimination. Whereas there is some research that points to changing sport climates for LGBTQ+ individuals (Anderson & McCormack, 2018; Cunningham & Nite, 2020) and individuals with disabilities (McConkey et al., 2019; Papaioannou et al., 2014) specifically, we follow the call of Storr et al. (2021) to be careful not to be too optimistic in interpreting such results as indicative of changing sociocultural climates in sport.

In order to get more insights into common experiences of students whose identities have been minoritized, we asked respondents two open-ended questions seeking to identify factors that either positively or negatively impacted their sense of belonging in sport management and related programs. We found that representation, sense of community, support, sense of accomplishment, and a positive academic and professional experience strengthened sense of belonging, while a lack thereof weakened it. In his Model of Educational Sense of Belonging, Strayhorn (2012) posited that for students to feel like they belong they must feel like they matter. Multiple of the higher-order themes emerging from the qualitative data identified *how* students whose identities have been minoritized feel like they matter, including through representation, feeling a sense of community, and perceptions of support. The importance of representation in sport management education, in particular, adds urgency to sport management scholars' calls to diversify all levels of sport (Agyemang & DeLorme, 2010; Borland & Bruening, 2010; Burton, 2015; Harris et al. 2015; Smith & Hattery, 2011; Stowe & Lange, 2018), including the sport management classroom.

Strayhorn's (2012) model also highlights that sense of belonging is fluid and context-dependent, a finding that is reinforced by the experiences of our respondents who frequently shared specific moments or circumstances that made them feel like they did or did not belong in the context of a classroom, work experience, or extracurricular activity (Table 6). Sport management faculty can foster the sense of belonging of students whose identities have been minoritized by connecting them with alumni in the industry who share similar identities, intentionally reaffirming that these students belong in sport management, and strategically supporting the creation of a sense of community among these students (e.g., via the creation of identity-based support and/or networking groups).

Vaccaro and Newman (2016) looked at sense of belonging for privileged students and students whose identities have been minoritized specifically and identified three primary influences on belonging: (a) the campus environment, (b) relationships, and (c) involvement on campus. They argued environments lacking diversity resulted in low sense of belonging (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016), a finding that is consistent with our results as respondents often shared how not seeing individuals with their identities made them feel like they did not belong (e.g., "I never see Black women like me"). The respondents' experiences—particularly as they relate to the program experience (Theme 5)—also underline the need for creating environments that allow students from minoritized groups to be their authentic selves and form authentic relationships as important tenets of belonging (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016). Vaccaro and Newman (2016) pointed to campus involvement as a third component of belonging, highlighting how students whose identities have been minoritized were often involved in identity-specific groups to develop a sense of belonging. This study provides evidence that such belonging can go beyond identity-specific involvement on campus to include sport-specific campus involvement (e.g., in sport management organizations) as well as industry-specific involvement (e.g., a positive internship experience). As a result, faculty should pay close attention to the composition of their sport management student organizations' leadership boards, as well as the organizations' membership in general, to ensure students from minoritized populations feel well represented in such organizations.

We want to close this section by speaking directly to the (likely) readers of this study—the faculty and scholars teaching sport management students and those in related programs. Our findings indicate clearly the importance of creating an inclusive environment within the sport management program generally and the classroom specifically to make students from minoritized groups feel like they belong in this field—especially given the institution of sport has persistently contributed to the marginalization of groups that have been minoritized (Adair et al., 2010). In line with literature on program experiences of minoritized populations in higher education in general (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002; Gilliard, 1996; Mwangi, 2016), the respondents frequently shared examples of being tokenized, facing discrimination and microaggressions from peers and faculty, seeing no cultural relevance in the curriculum, feeling alienated, being belittled, or feeling unaccepted in the classroom. Part of the responsibilities of removing such barriers to belonging falls on the faculty teaching and producing knowledge in the sport management classroom.

Indeed, creating an inclusive environment that fosters diversity in the classroom requires intentional actions and conscious pedagogical decisions by faculty. First, faculty must continuously reflect on how their biases are reflected in practices, policies, and approaches to sport education that either promote or challenge unjust and inequitable environments. Second, because students from minoritized groups often felt they were not respected or were not validated, faculty should provide ample opportunities for both formal (e.g., assignment feedback) and informal (e.g., affirmative responses to classroom contributions) positive feedback to students—particularly those from minoritized groups. Third, researchers have shown how valuable culturally responsive pedagogy can be in creating positive academic experiences for minoritized groups (Gooden & O'Doherty, 2015; Lachney et al., 2021; Weinstein et al., 2004). As a result, faculty must be intentional in creating a diverse curriculum that is culturally relevant—not just in courses that focus on social issues. Fourth and finally, because students

from minoritized groups highlighted how important mentoring and rapport with stakeholders is to their sense of belonging, faculty should create specific opportunities for students to connect with mentors holding similar identities in their field or program.

## Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Research

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of students who identify as members of minoritized groups in sport management (and related academic programs focused on sport), specifically when it comes to their sense of belonging. Sense of belonging has been studied extensively in higher education given it is crucial to student success in college (Strayhorn, 2011, 2012); yet, it has rarely been examined in the context of sport management, a discipline that continues to be marked by a lack of diversity both in the classroom (Barnhill et al., 2018; Jones et al., 2008; Mahony et al., 2006) and in industry leadership (Agyemang & DeLorme, 2010; Anderson, 1993). Drawing from both quantitative and qualitative methods and informed by Strayhorn's (2012) Model of Educational Sense of Belonging and Vaccaro and Newman's (2016) Model of Belonging for Privileged and Minoritized Students, we sought to provide the first empirical assessment of sense of belonging among students from minoritized groups in the sport management classroom. Given sport spaces often isolate members of minoritized groups (Burden et al., 2005; Simon & Azzarito, 2019; Varea, 2019), identifying barriers to developing a sense of belonging in the sport management classroom is crucial in making the sport classroom—and, by extension, the sport industry—more diverse and inclusive.

In addition, the sample gathered in this study is unique in that all participants held at least one minoritized identity. By securing this sample, we were hopeful to let the voices of those from minoritized groups be heard as compared with previous research that historically has included, or focused on, men, white, heterosexual, and/or able-bodied students (e.g., Vianden & Gregg, 2017) and has, thus, provided a limited and incomplete account on students' experiences in the discipline. Despite these efforts, our sample still lacked sufficient diversity as it relates to sexual orientation, religion, disability status, and country of citizenship. As such, future research should be purposeful in the recruitment of students who belong to these minoritized groups. While our study provides rich insight into common themes for belonging (or lack thereof) across identity groups, we realize that our research is exploratory in nature, and further inquiries are needed to identify unique challenges to belonging for specific identity groups (e.g., queer students)—particularly from a more nuanced intersectional lens (e.g., Black, queer students). In this context, inquiries should look into the role identity salience plays in the development of a sense of belonging. Also, we did not collect data on participants' institution, a setting that may impact their sense of belonging. For example, a Black student may not be underrepresented in the classroom at a Historically Black College or University, which could impact their experiences and sense of belonging within the classroom and at the overall institution. As such, future research should attempt to gather this type of information from participants.

Though the current project provides a number of both theoretical and practical implications, the project is not without limitations. First, the method of data collection utilized (i.e., snowball sampling) does not guarantee that a representative sample was collected. Relatedly, although we attempted to reach a large number of faculty and hoped that by sending personalized emails

to many that they would forward our survey to students, we do not know whether faculty actually forwarded the emails. In addition, the survey contained questions regarding sensitive and potentially uncomfortable information (e.g., sense of belonging). Although participants were assured their responses would remain anonymous, it is possible this discomfort caused participants to end their participation prematurely (e.g., before they finished the survey in its entirety). We also focused on sport academic programs in the United States, and while there certainly may be some parallels to sport programs in other (Western) countries, our results provide limited insights into the experiences and sense of belonging of students in other cultural settings. Finally, because sense of belonging is dependent on context, our findings only provide an initial assessment of what factors may impact sense of belonging in an academic context. However, a commitment to creating inclusive cultures of belonging within sport management and related academic programs must take into account the various other educational contexts students find themselves in when pursuing a degree (e.g., dorm life)—so that no sport management student with a minoritized identity feels like, as pointed out by the respondent we draw our title from, “they turned their back on me and left me to fend for myself.”

## Notes

1. We use the terms *minoritized*, *minoritized group*, or *students whose identities have been minoritized* to refer to social identity groups (or members of such groups) that have historically been oppressed, excluded, underrepresented, and/or marginalized. The term *minoritization* was first introduced by Benitez (2010) and further developed by Stewart (2013). Harper (2013) uses the term *minoritized* to describe “the social construction of underrepresentation and subordination in US social institutions, including colleges and universities. Persons . . . are rendered minorities in particular situations and institutional environments that sustain the overrepresentation of whiteness” (p. 207). In contrast to privileged social identity groups, minoritized groups are not viewed as the norm (Vaccaro & Newman, 2016) and often struggle to gain “access to power, resources and opportunities” (Goodman, 2011, p. 18).
2. While these historically minoritized groups of students are presented as a collective in this study, we acknowledge that each group encompasses nuanced subgroups that face different circumstances and have very unique needs. We also recognize that many within these minoritized groups have intersecting and layered identities (e.g., a student who identifies as LGBTQ+, Black, and disabled). For the purpose of this study, we were interested in challenges faced by multiple minoritized groups, as evidenced by common experiences related to (a lack of) sense of belonging broadly across minoritized groups.
3. While we want to acknowledge the crucial contributions intersectionality theory has made to the study of minoritized identities, the present study does not use intersectionality as a primary theoretical framework given we were interested in common experiences among minoritized groups. For an excellent critique of intersectional analyses compared with analyses employing an intersectionality framework, please see Harris and Patton (2019).
4. While the majority of our sample comes from sport management programs, we also included related academic programs that prepare students for careers in the sports industry—such as sport leadership, sport communication, and sport sociology programs. Programs focused on athletic training or sports performance, however, were not included in the sample.
5. When asking about socioeconomic class, we relied on respondents' subjective perception of their social class as working class, middle class, or

upper class. As Diemer et al. (2013) remind us, such assessments are “not necessarily about determining the accuracy of one’s actual economic position but instead reflect one’s perceived social standing in a community or group in a given sociohistorical context” (p. 105).

6. We want to acknowledge that nonintersectional inquiries into belonging provide limited insight into sense of belonging among students who have been minoritized. However, given the scarcity of research on sense of belonging among students across identity groups in sport management specifically, we saw value in undertaking an exploratory study that can provide initial insights into belonging among groups that have been minoritized. Using the findings documented in this study as a starting point, future research should provide more nuanced, intersectional inquiries into sense of belonging to “heighten our awareness of . . . students’ interlocking identities and distinctive social realities, enabling us to recognize, examine, and sufficiently address the nuances among them” (Wright-Mair et al., 2022, p. 46).

7. We recognize that *race* and *ethnicity* are two distinct categories with separate socially constructed meanings. In the survey, we asked about both race and ethnicity in the same question, with participants having the option to select all identities that apply to them (e.g., “Black” and “Latino/Latina/Latinx”). Given we included both concepts in the same question, for analysis purposes we decided to group them together and will refer to this subgroup of the sample as “racially and ethnically minoritized.”

8. Positionality statement: The two researchers who coded the qualitative data were the first author and fourth author of this manuscript. The first author identifies as an able-bodied, queer, white cisgender man who grew up outside of the United States and received his graduate education as an international student in the United States. His research focuses on identifying and eliminating barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion (and, more broadly, social justice) in sport. The fourth author identifies as a cisgender, gay, and white man who has a disability. He grew up in the United States, and his background is in sport management and communication studies. He holds a master’s degree in sport management and was a graduate assistant to the research team during the time of the study. Both coders were motivated to conduct the study because they each held multiple minoritized identities in the context of sport management.

## References

- Abes, E.A., Jones, S.R., & Stewart, D.-L. (2019). *Rethinking college student development theory using critical frameworks*. Stylus Publishing.
- Adair, D., Taylor, T., & Darcy, S. (2010). Managing ethnocultural and ‘racial’ diversity in sport: Obstacles and opportunities. *Sport Management Review, 13*(4), 307–312. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2010.06.002>
- Agyemang, K., & DeLorme, J. (2010). Examining the dearth of black head coaches at the NCAA football bowl subdivision level: A critical race theory and social dominance theory analysis. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics, 3*, 35–52.
- Anderson, D. (1993). Cultural diversity on campus: A look at intercollegiate football coaches. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues, 17*(1), 61–66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019372359301700108>
- Anderson, E., & McCormack, M. (2018). Inclusive masculinity theory: Overview, reflection and refinement. *Journal of Gender Studies, 27*(5), 547–561. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2016.1245605>
- Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands/la frontera; The new mestiza*. Lute Press.
- Barber, P.H., Hayes, T.B., Johnson, T.L., & Márquez-Magaña, L. (2021). Systemic racism in higher education. *Science, 369*(6510), 1440–1441. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.abd7140>
- Barnhill, C.R., Czekanski, W.A., & Pfleegor, A.G. (2018). Getting to know our students: A snapshot of sport management students’ demographics and career expectations in the United States. *Sport Management Education Journal, 12*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2015-0030>
- Bass, J., Hardin, R., & Taylor, E.A. (2015). The glass closet: Perceptions of homosexuality in intercollegiate sport. *Journal of Applied Sport Management, 7*(4), 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.18666/JASM-2015-V7-I4-5298>
- Benitez, M. (2010). Resituating culture centers within a social justice framework: Is there room for examining whiteness? In L.D. Patton (Ed.), *Culture centers in higher education: Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice* (pp. 119–135). Stylus Publishing.
- Borland, J.F., & Bruening, J.E. (2010). Navigating barriers: A qualitative examination of the under-representation of black females as head coaches in collegiate basketball. *Sport Management Review, 13*(4), 407–420. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2010.05.002>
- Bowleg, L. (2013). “Once you’ve blended the cake, you can’t take the parts back to the main ingredients”: Black gay and bisexual men’s descriptions and experiences of intersectionality. *Sex Roles, 68*, 754–767. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-012-0152-4>
- Brooks, D.D., Harrison, L., Jr., Norris, M., & Norwood, D. (2013). Why we should care about diversity in kinesiology. *Kinesiology Review, 2*, 145–155. <https://doi.org/10.1123/krij.2.3.145>
- Burden, J.W., Harrison, L., & Hodge, S.R. (2005). Perceptions of African American faculty in kinesiology-based programs at predominantly White American institutions of higher education. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 76*(2), 224–237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.2005.10599283>
- Burton, L.J. (2015). The underrepresentation of women in sport leadership: A review of research. *Sport Management Review, 18*, 155–165. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2014.02.004>
- Burton, L.J., Barr, C., Fink, J.S., & Bruening, J.E. (2009). “Think athletic director, think masculine?": Examination of the gender typing of managerial subroles within athletic administration positions. *Sex Roles, 61*, 416–426. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-009-9632-6>
- Chance, N.L. (2021). Resilient leadership: A phenomenological exploration into how black women in higher education leadership navigate cultural adversity. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 62*(1), 44–78. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00221678211003000>
- Collins, P.H. (1990). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. Routledge.
- Crenshaw, K.W. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics and violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*(6), 1241–1299. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>
- Cunningham, G.B., & Nite, C. (2020). LGBT diversity and inclusion, community characteristics, and success. *Journal of Sport Management, 34*, 533–541. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2019-0338>
- Cunningham, G.B., Sagas, M., Dixon, M., Kent, A., & Turner, B.A. (2005). Anticipated career satisfaction, affective occupational commitment, and intentions to enter the sport management profession. *Journal of Sport Management, 19*, 43–57. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.19.1.43>
- DeLuca, J., Mudrick, M., Hayes Sauder, M., & Taylor, E.A. (2022). Understanding student perceptions of diversity and inclusion. *Sport Management Education Journal, 16*(1), 30–41. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2020-0023>
- Diemer, M.A., Mistry, R.S., Wadsworth, M.E., López, I., & Reimers, F. (2013). Best practices in conceptualizing and measuring social class in psychological research. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy, 13*(1), 77–113. <https://doi.org/10.1111/asap.2013.13.issue-1>

- Dowling, F., & Flintoff, A. (2018). A whitewashed curriculum? The construction of race in contemporary PE curriculum policy. *Sport, Education and Society*, 23(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2015.1122584>
- Duran, A. (2019). A photovoice phenomenological study exploring campus belonging for queer students of Color. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 56(2), 153–167. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2018.1490308>
- Erosheva, E.A., Grant, S., Chen, M., Lindner, M.D., Nakamura, R.K., & Lee, C.J. (2020). NIH peer review: Criterion scores completely account for racial disparities in overall impact scores. *Science Advances*, 6(23), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aaz4868>
- Fries-Britt, S.L., & Turner, B. (2002). Uneven stories: Successful Black collegians at a Black and a White campus. *Review of Higher Education*, 25(3), 315–330. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2002.0012>
- Gilliard, M.D. (1996). Racial climate and institutional support factors affecting success in predominantly white institutions: An examination of African-American and white student experiences. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 57(4), 1515A.
- Glazzard, J., Jindal-Snape, D., & Stones, S. (2020). Transitions into, and through, higher education: The lived experiences of students who identify as LGBTQ+. *Frontiers in Education*, 5(81), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2020.00081>
- Goldberg, A.E., Beemyn, G., & Smith, J.Z. (2019). What is needed, what is valued: Trans students' perspectives on trans-inclusive policies and practices in higher education. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 29(1), 27–67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2018.1480376>
- Good, C., Rattan, A., & Dweck, C.S. (2012). Why do women opt out? Sense of belonging and women's representation in mathematics. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102(4), 700–717. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026659>
- Gooden, M.A., & O'Doherty, A. (2015). Do you see what I see? Fostering aspiring leaders' racial awareness. *Urban Education*, 50(2), 225–255. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085914534273>
- Goodman, D.J. (2011). *Promoting diversity and social justice: Education people from privileged groups* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Grov, C., Bimbi, D.S., Nanin, J.E., & Parsons, J.T. (2006). Race, ethnicity, gender, and generational factors associated with the coming-out process among gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals. *Journal of Sex Research*, 43(2), 115–121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224490609552306>
- Hagerty, B.M., Lynch-Sauer, J., Patusky, K.L., Bouwsema, M., & Collier, P. (1992). Sense of belonging: A vital mental health concept. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, 6(3), 172–177. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9417\(92\)90028-H](https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9417(92)90028-H)
- Hancock, M.G., Darvin, L., & Walker, N.A. (2018). Beyond the glass ceiling: Sport management students' perceptions of the leadership labyrinth. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12(2), 100–109. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2017-0039>
- Hancock, M.G., & Hums, M.A. (2011). *If you build it, will they come?* Paper presented at the Proceedings of the North American Society for Sport Management Twenty-Sixth Annual Conference.
- Harper, S.R. (2013). Am I my brother's teacher? Black undergraduates, racial socialization, and peer pedagogies in predominantly white postsecondary contexts. *Review of Research in Education*, 37, 183–211. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X12471300>
- Harris, J.H., & Patton, L.D. (2019). Un/doing intersectionality through higher education research. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 90(3), 347–372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2018.1536936>
- Harris, K.F., Grappendorf, H., Aicher, T.J., & Veraldo, C.M. (2015). "Discrimination? Low pay? Long hours? I am still excited." Female sport management students' perceptions of barriers toward a future career in sport. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 35, 12–21.
- Hayes Sauder, M., DeLuca, J.R., Mudrick, M., Taylor, E. (2021). Conceptualization of diversity and inclusion: Tensions and contradictions in the sport management classroom. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 29, Article 100325. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2021.100325>
- Hextrum, K. (2020). Segregation, innocence, and protection: The institutional conditions that maintain whiteness in college sports. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 13(4), 384–395. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000140>
- Hooks, B. (1987). *Ain't I a woman: Black women and feminism*. Pluto Press.
- Howe, J.E., & Rockhill, C.A. (2020). "Feelings that others won't necessarily have": Experiences of black athletic administrators navigating the collegiate athletic setting. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 13, 170–188.
- Hurtado, S., & Carter, D.F. (1997). *Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging*. Sociology of Education.
- Johnson, D.R., Soldner, M., Leonard, J.B., Alvarez, P., Inkelas, K.K., Rowan-Kenyon, H.T., & Longerbeam, S.D. (2007). Examining sense of belonging among first-year undergraduates from different racial/ethnic groups. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48(5), 525–542. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2007.0054>
- Johnson, R., Strayhorn, T., & Parler, B. (2020). "I just want to be a regular kid:" A qualitative study of sense of belonging among high school youth in foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 111, Article 104832. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.104832>
- Jones, D.F., Brooks, D.D., & Mak, J.Y. (2008). Examining sport management programs in the United States. *Sport Management Review*, 11, 77–91. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523\(08\)70104-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(08)70104-9)
- Lachney, M., Yadav, A., Drazin, M., Allen, M.C., & Babbitt, W. (2021). Culturally responsive debugging: A method to support cultural experts' early engagement with code. *TechTrends*, 65(5), 771–784. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-021-00618-4>
- Long, J., & Hylton, K. (2002). Shades of white: An examination of whiteness in sport. *Leisure Studies*, 21(2), 87–103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614360210152575>
- Mahony, D.F., Mondello, M., Hums, M.A., & Judd, M. (2006). Recruiting and retaining sport management faculty: Factors affecting job choice. *Journal of Sport Management*, 20, 414–430.
- Maramba, D.C., & Museus, S.D. (2011). The utility of using mixed-methods and intersectionality approaches in conducting research on Filipino American students' experiences with the campus climate and on sense of belonging. In K.A. Griffin & S.D. Museus (Eds.), *Using mixed-methods approaches to study intersectionality in higher education* (pp. 93–101). Wiley.
- Maslow, A.H. (1962). *Toward a psychology of being*. D. Van Nostrand Company.
- McConkey, R., Peng, C., Merritt, M., & Shellard, A. (2019). The meaning of social inclusion to players with and without intellectual disability in Unified Sports teams. *Inclusion*, 7(4), 234–243. <https://doi.org/10.1352/2326-6988-7.4.234>
- McDowell, J., & Carter-Francique, A. (2017). An intersectional analysis of the workplace experiences of African American female athletic directors. *Sex Roles*, 77, 393–408. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0730-y>
- Mejias, N.J., Gill, C.J., & Shpigelman, C.N. (2014). Influence of a support group for young women with disabilities on sense of belonging.

- Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 61(2), 208–220. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035462>
- Miller, C., & Stassun, K. (2014). A test that fails. *Nature*, 510, 303–304. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nj7504-303a>
- Morága, C., & Anzáldua, G. (1983). *This bridge called my back: Writings by radical Women of Color*. Kitchen Table, Women of Color Press.
- Museus, S.D., & Quaye, S.J. (2009). Toward an intercultural perspective of racial and ethnic minority college student persistence. *The Review of Higher Education*, 33(1), 67–94. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.0.0107>
- Museus, S.D., Yi, V., & Saelua, N. (2017). The impact of culturally engaging campus environments on sense of belonging. *The Review of Higher Education*, 40(2), 187–215. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2017.0001>
- Mwangi, C.A.G. (2016). Exploring sense of belonging among black international students at an HBCU. *Journal of International Students*, 6(4), 1015–1037. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v6i4>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). Graph representing college enrollment rates of 18- to 24-year-olds, by race/ethnicity: 2000, 2010, and 2018. [https://www.nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_cpb.asp](https://www.nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cpb.asp)
- Núñez, A.M. (2014). Employing multilevel intersectionality in educational research: Latino identities, contexts, and college access. *Educational Researcher*, 43(2), 85–92. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X14522320>
- Ong, M., Wright, C., Espinosa, L., & Orfield, G. (2011). Inside the double bind: A synthesis of empirical research on undergraduate and graduate Women of Color in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. *Harvard Educational Review*, 81(2), 172–209. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.81.2.t022245n7x4752v2>
- Ostrove, J.M., & Long, S.M. (2007). Social class and belonging: Implications for college adjustment. *Review of Higher Education*, 30, 363–389. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2007.0028>
- Papaioannou, C., Evaggelinou, C., & Block, M. (2014). The effect of a disability camp program on attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in a summer sport and leisure activity camp. *International Journal of Special Education*, 29(1), 121–129.
- Parks, J.B., & Robertson, M.A. (2002). The gender gap in student attitudes toward sexist/nonsexist language: Implications for sport management education. *Journal of Sport Management*, 16(3), 190–208. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jism.16.3.190>
- Patton, L.D., Renn, K.A., Guido, F.M., & Quaye, S.J. (2016). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice*. Jossey-Bass.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Price, P.V., & Wohlford, J.K. (2005). Equity in educational attainment: Racial, ethnic, and gender inequality in the 50 states. In G. Orfield, P. Marin, & C.L. Horn (Eds.), *Higher education and the color line: College access, racial equity, and social change* (pp. 59–81). Harvard Education Press.
- Revilla, M.A., Saris, W.E., & Krosnick, J.A. (2014). Choosing the number of categories in agree-disagree scales. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 43(1), 74–97. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124113509605>
- Rivas, J., Hale, K., & Burke, M.G. (2019). Seeking a sense of belonging: Social and cultural integration of international students with American college students. *Journal of International Students*, 9(2), 682–704. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v9i2>
- Rosenberg, M., & McCullough, B.C. (1981). Mattering: Inferred significance and mental health among adolescents. *Research in Community and Mental Health*, 2, 163–182.
- Sarno, E.L., Mohr, J.J., Jackson, S.D., & Fassinger, R.E. (2015). When identities collide: Conflicts in allegiances among LGB People of Color. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 21(4), 550–559. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000026>
- Sauder, M.H., DeLuca, J.R., Mudrick, M., & Taylor, E. (2021). Conceptualization of diversity and inclusion: Tensions and contradictions in the sport management classroom. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 29, Article 100325. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2021.100325>
- Sharma, G. (2017). Pros and cons of different sampling techniques. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3, 749–752.
- Shaw, S., & Frisby, W. (2006). Can gender equity be more equitable? Promoting an alternative frame for sport management research, education, and practice. *Journal of Sport Management*, 20(4), 483–509. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jism.20.4.483>
- Simon, M., & Azzarito, L. (2019). ‘Singled out because of skin color . . .’: Exploring ethnic minority female teachers’ embodiment in physical education. *Sport, Education and Society*, 24(2), 105–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2017.1326893>
- Smith, E., & Hattery, A. (2011). Race relations theories: Implications for sport management. *Journal of Sport Management*, 25(2), 107–117. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jism.25.2.107>
- Sosa, J., & Sagas, M. (2008). Assessing student preconceptions of sport management faculty: Where do women and Latinos stand? *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 7(3), 266–280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1538192708317671>
- Stewart, D.L. (2013). Racially minoritized students at US four-year institutions. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 82(2), 184–197. <https://doi.org/10.7709/jnegroeducation.82.2.0184>
- Storr, R., Jeanes, R., Rossi, T., & Hunter, L. (2021, online first). Are we there yet? (Illusions of) inclusion in sport for LGBT+ communities in Australia. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 57(1), 92–111. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10126902211014037>
- Stowe, R.W., & Lange, E. (2018). Students’ perception of the role of race, ethnicity, and gender on opportunities in sport management. *The International Journal of Sport and Society*, 9(4), 31–43.
- Strauss, A.M., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research*. Sage Publications.
- Strayhorn, T.L. (2008). Fittin’ in: Do diverse interactions with peers affect sense of belonging for Black men at predominantly White institutions? *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 45(4), 501–527. <https://doi.org/10.2202/1949-6605.2009>
- Strayhorn, T.L. (2011). Sense of belonging and African-American student success in STEM: Comparative insights between men and women. In H.T. Frierson & W.F. Tate (Eds.), *Beyond stock stories and folktales: African Americans’ paths to STEM fields* (pp. 213–226). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Strayhorn, T.L. (2012). *College students’ sense of belonging: A key to educational success for all students*. Routledge.
- Suro, R., & Fry, R. (2005). Leaving the newcomers behind. In R.H. Hersch & J. Merrow (Eds.), *Declining by degrees: Higher education at risk* (pp. 169–183). Palgrave/Macmillan.
- Taylor, E.A., & Hardin, R. (2016). Female NCAA Division I athletic directors: Experiences and challenges. *Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal*, 24(1), 14–25. <https://doi.org/10.1123/wspaj.2014-0038>
- Taylor, E.A., & Hardin, R. (2017). A gap in the sport management curriculum: An analysis of sexual harassment and sexual assault education in the United States. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 20, 65–75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2017.04.004>
- Taylor, E.A., Smith, A.B., Welch, N.M., & Hardin, R. (2018). “You should be flattered!”: Female sport management faculty experiences of sexual harassment and sexism. *Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal*, 26(1), 43–53. <https://doi.org/10.1123/wspaj.2017-0038>

- Thornton-Dill, B., & Zambrana, R.E. (2009). Critical thinking about inequality: An emerging lens. In B. Thornton Dill & R.E. Zambrana (Eds.), *Emerging intersections: Race, class, and gender in theory, policy, and practice* (pp. 1–21). Rutgers University Press.
- Vaccaro, A., & Newman, B.M. (2016). Development of a sense of belonging for privileged and minoritized students: An emergent model. *Journal of College Student Development, 57*(8), 925–942. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2016.0091>
- Varea, V. (2019). On being a non-white academic in physical education and sport pedagogy. *Sport, Education and Society, 24*(4), 325–337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2017.1385451>
- Vianden, J., & Gregg, E.A. (2017). What’s my responsibility? Undergraduate heterosexual white men in sport management discuss increasing diversity in sport. *Sport Management Education Journal, 11*(2), 88–101. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2015-0023>
- Walker, N.A., Agyemang, K.J., Washington, M., Hindman, L.C., & MacCharles, J. (2021). Getting an internship in the sport industry: The institutionalization of privilege. *Sport Management Education Journal, 15*(1), 20–33. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2019-0061>
- Waller, S.N., Costen, W.M., & Wozencroft, A.J. (2011). If we admit them, will they stay? *SCHOLE: A Journal of Leisure Studies and Recreation Education, 26*(1), 30–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1937156X.2011.11949670>
- Wasielowski, L.M. (2016). Academic performance of students with disabilities in higher education: Insights from a study of one Catholic college. *Journal of Catholic Education, 20*(1), 136–151.
- Weinstein, C.S., Tomlinson-Clarke, S., & Curran, M. (2004). Toward a conception of culturally responsive classroom management. *Journal of Teacher Education, 55*(1), 25–38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487103259812>
- Wells, J.E., & Kerwin, S. (2016). Intentions to be an athletic director: Racial and gender perspectives. *Journal of Career Development, 44*(2), 127–143. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845316635821>
- Wright-Mair, R., Peters, C., & McAllaster, G.A. (2022). “. . . Building the plane while it’s in the air”: Examining institutional response to COVID-19 and impacts on graduate students. *Journal of Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs, 6*(1), 40–56.
- Zambrana, R.E., & Macdonald, V. (2009). Staggered inequalities in access to higher education by gender, race, and ethnicity. In B. Thornton Dill & R.E. Zambrana (Eds.), *Emerging intersections: Race, class, and gender in theory, policy, and practice* (pp. 73–100). Rutgers University Press.