Racial Integration or Segregation? An Ethnographic Study Exploring College Students' Interracial Interactions in Recreational Sport

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Abstract

This study sought to examine a) whether interactions between college students who play recreational basketball are racially integrated or segregated and b) identify patterns how those interactions differ by races. Considering the current research gap in interracial interactions and relationships in the context of college recreational sport, it is imperative to examine racial segregation or integrationoccurring in an informal setting in college by extending the existing studies focusing primarily on middle school or high school. Data obtained from field observations revealed a pattern that there were few interracial interactions in recreational basketball games. Our observational data also revealed racial differences in the style of play (e.g., leadership, teamwork) and communication. This study has a significant theoretical implication as finding racialself-segregation of college students in recreational sport. Our findings also provide insights into practitioners in higher education regarding how to ameliorate campus recreational environmentfor encouraging racial integration through sport.

Keywords: college student, ethnography, interracial interaction, racial integration, recreational sport

1. Introduction

It became essential to understand students' interracial dynamicsin schoolsettings and their roles inracial integration due to the huge growth of the multi-racial population across the nation and in the U.S. education system (Schaefer, Simpkins, &Ettekal, 2018). Previous research examined various forms of interracial dynamics in schools, such as friendship, integration,and segregation (Edwards, Bocarro, Kanters, & Casper, 2011; Jones, Carlton, Bocarro, Bunds, & Edwards,2016; Joyner & Kao, 2000). Especially in middle and high schools, extracurricular activitiesplay a significant role in promoting racial integration and interracial friendship among adolescent students (Edwards et al., 2011; Moody, 2001; Schaefer, Simpkins, &Ettekal, 2018). Among extracurricular activities, playing sport is one of the most effective activities contributing to foster a racially integrated educational environment irrespective of racial or social background (Clotfelter, 2002; Knifsend& Juvonen, 2013). Students candevelop interracial friendshipthrough sport because goal-oriented and collaborative characteristics of sport often lead them to understand and accept each other (Pettigrew, 1998). Playing sport as an extracurricular activity also cultivates an ideal condition contributing to tolerance among different racial groups (Clotfelter, 2002) and helps gain social skills (Schaefer et al., 2018).

As such, the benefits of participating in sport as an extracurricular activity have been examined in the context of middle and high school settings. However, there is a still lack of study focusing on college students' interracial interactions or relationships formed through recreational sport, which represents an informal sport rather than structured sport such as intramural and collegiate sport. Racial diversity on campus has been a crucial agenda in higher education, and researchers and practitioners have been making constant effort to find a best way of encouraging racial integration and interracial relationship among college students.

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In this regard, participating in recreational sport could be one of the contributing factors positively influencing college students' racial integration but little is known about potential roles of recreational sport. To fill the abovementioned research gap, this study sought to examine a) whether interactions between college students are racially integrated or segregatedthrough recreational sport and b) how those interactions might differ by racial groups. This study used observations of recreational basketball games at the gym in a large mid-west university.The researchers of this study found that most of interactions were racially segregatedon and off the basketball court. Furthermore, we also discovered that there were racial differences in the style of play (e.g., leadership, teamwork) and communication. Our ethnographic data revealed that college students tended to come to the gym to play basketball with the same racial group of students and rarely engaged in conversations with other racial groups of students either in the same team or other team.

Given that the existing studies focused primarily on interracial relationships through extracurricular activities in middle and high schools, it is important to understand racial segregation or integrationoccurring in an informal setting in college.On a broader level, findings of this study help answer to a theoretical question of "To what extent do extracurricular activities, and especially informal activities, promote racial integration in school settings?" Thus, our findings would contribute to the body of literature on students' racial integration and segregation through sport by extending the discussion into an informal sport context in college from middle or high school extracurricular activities.

2.1 Literature Review

2.2 Interracial Relationships and Extracurricular Activities in School

Racial homophily is defined as an inherent disposition to form relationships with people who share similar characteristics regarding race (Joyner & Kao, 2000). The literature indicates that racial homophily plays an important role in interracial friendship in school structure as adolescents have a tendency to build friendships with a similar group of peers (Joyner & Kao, 2000; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001; Moody, 2001).Joyner and Kao (2000) and McPherson et al. (2001) discussed that the probability of interracial friendship is more likely to increase depending on the racial composition of schools. Consistent with Joyner and Kao (2000), Moody (2001) found a significant impact of the racial composition of schools indicating that friendship segregation is more likely to decrease as the level of racial heterogeneity become higher and friendship segregation tends to increase when the level of heterogeneity is moderate. Similarly, Quillian and Campbell (2003) discussed the importance of multiracial friendship and segregation, but also extended the discussion to the incorporation of Asian and Hispanic population rather than traditional way of racial segregation between Black and White.

In terms of promoting interracial friendships in school, scholars argue that participating in extracurricular activities provides adolescent students with an opportunity to engage in interracial interactions, contact, and racial integration that are conducive to reduce racial segregation in school settings (Clotfelter, 2002; Edwards et al., 2011; Knifsend& Juvonen, 2013; Moody, 2001; Schaefer, Simpkins, &Ettekal, 2018). According to Moody (2001), extracurricular activity in school with mixed races provides students with a substantial opportunity to experience dyadic interracial communication, which contributes to decrease a level of racial friendship segregation.Participating in extracurricular activities may play an important role in racial integration as they could provide an easier way for students to expose themselves to interracial integration and friendship (Moody, 2001). Clotfelter (2002) also found that high school students developed interracial friendships through extracurricular activities rather than activities within classrooms. Consistently, Schaefer et al. (2018) found that while participating in extracurricular activities did not contribute to immediate racial integrations, it did produce more benefits derived from racial integration.

2.3 Leisure Activity, Sport Participation, and Racial Integration

Leisure literature suggests that leisure activities could provide a good place for interracial integration or interaction for adults (Floyd & Shinew, 1999; Philipp, 1999), children (Philipp, 1999), college students (Jones, Liu, & Bell, 2017; Lee & Scott, 2013), and adolescents (Barnett & Weber, 2008). For example, Philipp (1999) examined how middle-class African American and European Americans perceived that they were welcomed in various leisure activities and discovered that both African American and European Americans rated that playing basketball was the most welcomed leisure activity among 20 different leisure activities. Floyd and Shinew (1999) also claimed that White and Black American adults perceived basketball as one of the top preferable leisure activities among 25 leisure activities.

Black adults with high interracial contact were more likely to prefer to play basketball as their leisure activities than Black adults with low interracial contact (Floyd &Shinew, 1999).The findings of these studies indicate that playing basketball is not perceived as an activity that one racial group predominantly participates in, thus, have a potential to promote interracial interactions and relationships.

Scholars also argued that playing recreational or structured sport (e.g., intercollegiate sport, intramural sport) may contribute to college students' racial integration in college campus contexts (Jones, Liu, & Bell, 2017; Lee & Scott, 2013). Jones et al. (2017) uncovered that in a structured and organized sport setting, more cross-racial interactions with inclusive team environment was developed for students. Jones and scholars additionally found that coaches played an important role in promoting racial-inclusive environments within the teams (Jones et al., 2017), which would be a primary difference from recreational sport in an informal setting. On the other hand, Lee and Scott (2013) identified that participating in various sports in a recreational setting in collegeprovides an opportunity for a racial integration and a great venue for interracial interaction such as soccer and basketball. Consistent with Lee and Scott (2013), Barnett and Weber (2008) also emphasized the importance and the benefits of playing a team sport including a refinement of social skills and an opportunity for interracial interaction.Moody (2001) specifically mentioned that not all extracurricular contribute to racial integration but some sports such as basketball could be more ideal because it requires more team efforts than other individualistic sports.

2.4 Research Gap and Purpose of Study

As reviewed above, previous studies highlighted the prominent social phenomenon of racial integration and segregation as well as the great opportunity of interracial interaction in various settings such as extracurricular activity, leisure activity, structured sport, and recreational sport (Jones et al., 2017; Lee & Scott, 2013; Schaefer et al., 2018). While there have been consistent scholarly efforts, the extant studies attempted to examine interracial interactions or behavioral patterns primarily in formal school settings in either middle schools or high schools. It is still unclear how racial integration or segregation occurs in an informal setting through participating in recreational sport in college. Hence, it is imperative to examine what extent extracurricular activities, especially informal activities, promote college students' racial integration in school settings. Moreover, while research discussed the hypothetical role that basketball might play in helping to promote integration across races (Floyd &Shinew, 1999; Lee & Scott, 2013), there is no evidence of what occurs when diverse groups of students play the random games together.In this regard, it would be worthwhile examining recreational basketball games in college since basketball game could provide more opportunities for interracial interactions and building relationships due to the process how the teams are randomly formed (Floyd &Shinew, 1999; Lee & Scott, 2013).

Based on abovementioned research gaps in the literature, this study aimed to examine a) whether interactions between college students who play recreational basketball are racially integrated or segregated and b) how those interactions might differ by racial groups. Conducting an ethnographic study deemed ideal to fulfill these purposes. Most studies primarily examined interracial relationships using quantitative methods or interviews, but they were not optimal to capture interactions and behaviors occurring spontaneously in recreational sport. In addition, in this study, recreational sport was defined as "sport activity that people voluntarily participate during their leisure time for intrinsic rewards such as refreshment of body and mind, fun, and fitness" (Lee & Scott, 2013, p. 268). Thus, the research site of this study represents the context of recreational sport as informal compared to organized sport which is more formal and focused on extrinsic rewards such as money and fame. Lee and Scott (2013) examined perceptions of interracial contact during recreational sport activities and found some potentials to encourage interracial assimilation and interactions during the sport yet not optimal. Interviews explore how they perceive, but when it comes to a sensitive agenda such as race in this study, complete honesty is not guaranteed from participants. Field observations sufficed the existing gap and provided a unique insight into the ways interracial interactions occurred during the recreational sport.

3.1 Method

Two primary research questions were formed to guide this study: a) Are interactions between college students who play recreational basketball are racially integrated or segregated? b) How do those interactions differ by racial groups? The researchers conducted an ethnographic study to answer two research questions.

Conducting observations at a field site deemed most appropriate to answer two research questions because being present at the field site and involving in basketball games allowed the primary researcher to precisely understand what was happening between different racial groups of students, which would have not been captured by other data collection techniques such as survey or interview.

3.2 Research Site

The field site wasthe student recreational center in a large mid-western university, specifically at the main basketball court.There were two basketball courts in one separate space at the center, but the researcherchose to focuson the main court, which was closer to the main entrance of the center, because students played more frequently on the main court. The center itself was not quite new, but it was not too old either so that students would feel comfortable and satisfied to play in the center. The conditions of the facility were also descent enough to attract students as there were bright lights on the very high ceilings of the center, which made sound echo and louder just like in professional basketball arenas. There was no bench to sit while waiting for next games, however, a little space next to the right side of the main court was spacious enough for people sitting and waiting for other games to play, which was a relatively better condition than the other recreational center that had no space for people to wait or watch. The researchers also chose the field site due to the main focus of the study on college students because the recreational center in the university was more reliable place to examine college students' interaction than private fitness centers outside campus. Although it was possible that few non-college students usedthe center such as faculties and staffs, most people using the center were college students who enrolled in the school.The primary researcher had free access to the field site as all students had access to the center and the basketball courts as long as they brought a student ID.

3.3 Participants

In terms of participants, the primary researcher had no control over which people the primary researcher got to observe because the primary researcher observed random people who play pick-up basketball games in the center. To briefly describe the participants of this study, there were always a greater number of Black students playing basketball games at the main court, and Whites and Asians followed respectively. The primary researcher hardly saw Hispanic students played at the main court, which aligned with the larger demographic composition of the school as a whole. The primary researcher also did not see any woman played a basketball game in the gym during observations.The primary researcher only saw one woman shooting around the rim once, not participating in a full-court game.This was potentially beneficial for our research purposes, as holding gender constant allowed us to clearly understand the role of race in these kinds of leisure activities and interactions.

3.4 Researcher's Role

The primary researcher performed two different roles during his observations. As an insider playing basketball games at the court, he could engage in interactions himself and hear conversations from other people as well. The primary researcher tried to remember about all the communications and behavioral patterns during the games and wrote them down right after the games sitting in the courtside using my cellphone. On the other hand, as an outsider, the primary researcher's main role was to rather look at specific behaviors or situations happening at the games and took memos with detailed description, which was not easily achieved when he played the games. As an insider, the primary researcher selectively interacted with his teammates and barely talked to opponents. The primary researcher was usually not the one who initiated the conversations, but once the conversations started, he deliberately continued conversations. There was not much of verbal communication during the games because of the fast-moving nature of the game, but he was able to engage in some conversations before, after, and between the games. As an outsider, the primary researcher did not have many chances to engage in conversations as he primarily focused on observing other people's interactions and behaviors. The only time the primary researcher engaged in conversations would be when heasked to play with other people or when other people asked him to join the games. Since the research field site was at the gym, he chose to take notes with his cellphone because it would have seemed odd if he had used a pencil and paper. As nobody in the field site perceived him as odd, his observations would have not affected anyone's behaviors.

3.5 Data Collection

In order to collect data, the primary researcher visited the field site average twice a week and spent two and half hours per visit for six weeks. The primary researcher visited the field site mostly nighttime of weekdays after 8pm

because after several visits, he realized that more students would play in that specific period of time, so it was fairly safe to visit that time to make sure there were enough people playing at the court to observe.

As mentioned above, he used a cellphone to collect data while sitting in the sideline of the court because it was most efficient way to take notes in the field site as writing in a notebook or paper would have looked strange in this specific environment. His jottings included his individual interactions on and off the games, teammates' interactions within the team and with any other people on and off the court, and any behavioral patterns that were distinctive to a racial group. When the primary researcher played the games as an insider role, he also took notes right after the games regarding what happened during the games in order to obtain as much as details. After leaving the field site, the collected data was transmitted to the primarily researcher's personal electronic device by sending those notes to his email account.

3.6 Data Analysis

From the field observations, the primary researcher identified a few themes and patterns of students' behaviors depending on their races. The primary researcher was able to identify common themes by focusing on more specific behaviors after a few observations. At an initial stage of the field observations, the primary researcher attempted to contain as much information and details as possible. On the other hand, as the primary researcher noticed several recurring patterns, he started to focus on certain behavioral patterns. The primary researcher was also able to figure out the most efficient way of collecting data, which helped him identify the common themes rather more efficiently. The primary researcher gathered more information about interactions when he played the games and rather focused on overall patterns and racial differences in playing and leadership styles while he was sitting on the sideline. The primary researcher did an open coding on his field notes to analyze the data and aimed to identifyor develop common themes in the descriptions or conversations in the field site. Once several themes were identified, coding schemes were developed to keep track of the themes and to ensure the collected data fell into the right category at the later phase of the data collection. Creating the coding schemes and revisiting the collected data were helpful to check for accuracy of the data analysis and discoveringfew disconfirming evidences.

3.7 Limitation

One of the potential limitations of the method used in this study could be the multiple roles the primary researcher was taking in the field site. There were pros and cons of being an insider or an outsider because an insider role could provide a better access and a detailed description about students' conversations. On the other hand, an outsider role could be more efficient to identify emerging patterns, get a better sense of what is going on in general, and take more accurate notes. However, one of the drawbacks of being an outsider was that it was hard to hear what was said during the games. In turn, playing the games would have allowedthe primary researcher to hear about students' conversations clearer, but there was a risk to lose some of the details after the games. It would have been ideal to take these both roles simultaneously, but it was not possible to do so practically. Despite this limitation, findings and conclusions are reliable and trustworthy because the primary researcher was aware of this limitation and thus, made the best efforts to minimize the potential loss of the data and managed to balance both roles.

4.1 Results

Findings of this study showed that interactions between college students who played recreational basketball were racially segregated in most cases. First, Black and White students tended to come with the same racial group of people to the recreational center to play a pick-up basketball game.Black and White students showed the same behavioral pattern that they tended to racially self-segregate when forming teams.Second, Black students tended to sit on the courtside with only the same racial group of students.

Last, there were rare interracial interactions during the basketball games, but more interactions occurred with students with the same race. All the aforementioned behavioral patterns connect to the first main finding which indicates that interactions between college students are racially segregated on and off the basketball games.

First of all, Black and White students were most likely to come to the court with the same racial group to play a basketball game. For example, once all 10 players composed of Black students and they certainly knew each other

based on the word choice of the language, the tones of the language, and the frequency of conversations during the game.

In the second game, new five Black men came in to play with Jackson's team. So, all 10 Black men were playing. It seemed that they all knew each other because they called each other's name since for many calls and they were freely talking about what was a rightdecision including out of bound, foul, counting scores, and traveling. It seemed that conversation was alive only when the play was stopped.

The pattern of monoracial team formation appeared in almost every field observation that Black students always gathered and hung out only themselves at the same space of the courtside and even a fewer cases, the same pattern occurred to White students. This example of pattern supports the argument that Black and White students are most likely to come to the court with the same racial group to play a basketball game.

Secondly, Black students tended to sit on the courtside with only the same racial group of students. For example, Black students gathered in the corner of the main basketball court while waiting for the next game to play. The following excerpt showed only one-way interaction among Black students with an obvious sign that they all knew each other.

Each five white and Black students were playing on the court and the rest of the guys in the courtside were all Black. There was no Asian or Hispanic except for me. Whenever other Black guys coming to the court, guys on the sideline were greeting in a variety of ways such as high fives, hugging, chest bumping, and fist bumping. No moreWhite guy was coming to the court after I sat down, but approximately eight more Black guys were coming to the court and joined the group of Black students later on.

This pattern includes the cases when a Black student came alone walking into the court but eventually mingled with the same racial group of students.This example of pattern supports the argument that Black students tend to sit on the courtside and hang out with only the same racial group of students.

Lastly, there was rarely interracial interaction during the basketball games. For example, although there were many occasions that the improvised team composed of students with multiple races, they did not actively interact or communicated during the games. When in the other team, there was less chance of interracial interaction occurring between Black and White students. There were three Black students and two White students in the same team, but no interracial interaction occurred and there was only interaction between two Black students, who seemed to know each other based on the details of the conversation.

The C team includes 3 Blacks and 2 Whites, and Antonio is joining this C team. Overall, the C team is aggressive and physical in every play both offense and defense. It seems they don't have any leader as everyone is evenly possessing, passing, and shooting the ball.There is a Black player, Ken seems to play a point guard position though. Ken is carrying the ball to the half court as a normal point guard does, but after that, he is not the only one sticking to the ball and evenly distribute to teammates.

No one is really communicating during the game with teammates, but Ken is talking or saying to Wiggins sometimes. For example, Ken says "That's a bad shot man", after Wiggins missed a long-range shot. He also says "You ok? Got to make sure no and one", after fouling Wiggins. They seem to know each other and may play before together. They are whispering sometimes when the game stops. They are standing close with putting their hands on their knees.

From the observations as an insider and an outsider, the primary researcher has rarely seen interracial interaction either they were at the same team or the other team, but have seen that most of interactions occurred with students of the same race as it was described in this example. Thus, this is a good example to support the third point that there was rarely interracial interaction during the basketball games, but more interactions occurred with students with the same race.

In terms of the second research question, finding of the study revealed some of racial differences in leadership styles, playing styles, and communication styles. First of all, each student of races showed different leadership styles during the games. Secondly, playing styles of Black students were more aggressive than students with other races.

Regarding the different leadership styles by races, Black, White, and Asian leader showed different styles of leadership during the games. For example, Black students tend to lead a team by possessing the ball more times, focusing on scoring rather than passing, and calling for the pass often.

In a B team, King was leading the team. In the beginning of the game, he shot almost every possession and actually made a lot of them. After scoring, his body language expressed high confidence in his play such as stepping back like professional players, froze his motion after shooting, and staring at the opponents and nodding. Later in the game, he did a put-back and screamed for three seconds to celebrate. He did not tell his teammates how to play or give directions, but he often called for the pass and always ended up finishing the offence by himself when receiving the pass.

There is another example showing Black students' leadership characteristics such as primarily focusing on scoring without passing and aggressive playing style. In this case, Shumpert was not very active at the beginning of the game, but suddenly stepped up to lead the team. It might be because he was aware that Buen became exhausted or he needed some time to warm up to play aggressively.

Buen's Black teammate, Shumpert was quiet and not involved in scoring much at the beginning but started to gear up after 5 minutes. He scored 4 times in a row. He suddenly dribbled a lot in the half court and possessed long time without passing. Other teammates seemed to be ok with it including Buen, who looked tired at the point. Shumpert showed a lot of aggression especially in offense by attacking the rim often and did not mind about physical contact and got fouled. Even his verbal expression was added to his aggressive play style such as screaming every time when he missed a shot. He was also just screaming after scoring when making a tough and contested shot.

There was another example indicating different leadership styles by races during thebasketball games.This excerpt shows that the characteristics of leadership by an Asian student include the focus on passing rather than shooting, giving directions to teammates, and cheering and encouraging teammates. Chen, a Chinese student who often plays a pick-up basketball game at the field site, gives a great example of Asian leadership style during the basketball game.

Chen possessed the ball time to time as playing a point guard and considering he is quite short, looked about 170cm. His dribbling skill is pretty good as well. He often talked to his teammate after they scored on the way back to their court to defense. He passed out to his teammates evenly and always looked for someone who is open. He did not shoot much. However, his playing style was changed in the halfway of the game.

He started carrying the ball from the beginning of the offense every possession. He gave directions to teammates when having the ball with his left hand. He still did not finish at the rim many times but looking for the other shooters, teammates, and better spot to shoot. He was also leading the defense. He once lightly pushed his teammate to mark the opponent. When he is back to his court late, he indicated that asking for switching defender for that moment by pointing out the player that he is supposed to defend. He always tried to high five after scoring even though he did not initiate that offense.

This example supports the argument that there is a different leadership style by races during the basketball games because Chen's case is certainly opposite of King's case in regard to ball possession, scoring, passing, and giving directions. Therefore, this pattern of Asian leadership style also contributes to the main argument that each student of races shows different leadership styles during the games.

Lastly, there is an example of White students' different leadership style during the basketball game. For example, when I played with four White students, who knew each other well, Eric was a leader of my team. He was very kind and interactive with all other players in the team and often encouraged me to play better during the game.
A White man, Eric, came to me and asked if I wanted to play, and I said yes sure. My teammates were all friends and came to play but one person short. My team included me and four other White men. Eric certainlyled my team and other teammates also followed his lead. He encouraged me to play better in various ways. For example, I made a shot and fell down with being fouled. I grabbed my right wrist and frowned, then he asked me twice that I was ok. He also said that was a really nice shot and should have been "and one". In another case, I got his long outlet pass, which was really accurate and nicely done. But I missed the shot.

He said, "It was a nice catch man, should have seen you earlier". Once I passed forward to him running to the open court. It was a little low and slow that makes it hard to catch, but he eventually got it and scored. When he came back to our courtside, we high-fived and I said "My bad. It was so weak". Andrew said "No, it was good. Thanks". At the end of the game, I became so exhausted and moved slowly. Eric asked me three times if I was ok. I answered ok.

While there were variations across individuals, the general patterns suggested that different racial groups had different styles of play. This case apparently showed his unique leadership style compared to Chen and King, who represent Chinese leader and Black leader respectively. This leadership style may be overlapped or under the category of playing style. However, playing style focused more on how they played the game in general and what common characteristics of the play appeared. On the other hand, leadership style was about how they led a team differently not only based on their playing style but also using other strategies such as giving directions or advice to teammates and expressing the support.

Regarding different playing style in general, Black students consistently showed unique playing style that they tend to play more aggressive, shoot many shots, and possess the ball long time. For example, Wiggins played in a very selfish way in every possession in offense, but he was actually really good at scoring, so every other teammate seemed to agree with his dominant playing style.

Wiggins is very athletic and trying to do everything by himself as possessing the ball 90% of times, shooting 4 out of 5 times, and calling for the pass often when he wants even he is not open. But interestingly, everyone else in the team follow his lead and give the ball to him most times. None of teammates is showing any signs of discomfort or disagreement by facial expression, gestures, or actions. His playing style and leadership style is more close to selfish but he is also good at scoring so dominating the game from the beginning to the end. He is not talking much to either his teammates or opponents.

This was one of many other examples showing that Black students tended to play more aggressive and selfish with focusing primarily on scoring without passing to teammates. The unique playing style and leadership style of Black students also reflects the first main point of racial segregation in interactions to some extent because their leadership style and playing style mainly included the characteristic of no-interaction between teammates and other players.

5.1 Discussion and Implications

The literature highlights the prevalent phenomenon in the U.S. society that there is a still multiracial or interracial segregation within highly formalized school environments (Clotfelter, 2002; Jones et al., 2016; Quillian& Campbell, 2003; Schafer et al., 2018). Participating in extracurricular activities or recreational sport has been suggested as one of the effective methods to enhance interracial contact, friendship, and integration among students (Edwards et al., 2011; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Moody, 2001). However, it is still unknown how racial integration, cooperation, or segregation occurs when different racial groups of students come together to participate in sport, especially in informal ways rather than formal ways.

Given the lack of study using a qualitative lens to examine interracial segregation issue in recreational sport in college, this ethnography study sought to examine whether interactions between college students are racially integrated or segregated through recreational sport and how those interactions might differ by racial groups. Through observations in the field site on pick-up basketball games, the researchers found that interactions were racially segregated and detached between college students who played basketball games at the recreational center in a university. College students tended to come to the recreational center play basketball with the same racial group of students, sit to wait for next games to play with only the same racial group, and rarely engaged in conversations with other racial group of students either in the same team or other team. Moreover, we found Black, White, and Asian college students showed differences in leadership and playing styles during the basketball games. Findings revealed that the leadership style of Black college students can be described as more aggressive, scoring-driven playing style, more ball possession, and no interaction with teammates. Lastly, there was nearly no interracial interaction between Black college students and students with other races.

All these different forms of racial segregation offer unique insights into the field of study on racial integration and segregation in various sport settings as the study extended the existing knowledge primarily on racial integration and segregation in middle school or high school to the context of informal and recreational sport in college.

As indicated at the very beginning, even though there are a number of studies focused on race and friendship, integration, and segregation in a school setting, there is a still limited understanding of college students' interracial interactions or behaviors in a recreational sport, which represents an informal setting compared to an organized extracurricular activities offered by schools or regional institutions. Especially, previous research indicated that extracurricular activities like basketball are often theorized to be important spaces for racial integration and cooperation (Barnett & Weber, 2008; Floyd &Shinew, 1999; Lee & Scott, 2013).While there is a potential that participating in recreational basketball could promote interracial interactions and positive experience across different racial groups (Floyd &Shinew, 1999), our findings revealed several evidences indicating that there was a racial segregation rather than integration between college students who played recreational basketball. Based on our findings, we argue that because of these tendencies toward self-segregation and racially distinct play, it is difficult for informal extracurricular activities like recreational basketball to serve as the kind of opportunity for racial integration and cross-racial cooperation that prior research has hypothesized them to be.It is also worthwhile noting that our findingsare not unexpected considering that college students used to be an actor in the phenomenon of racial segregation in high school (Clotfelter, 2002; Nasir & Hand, 2008), so there is a more chance that college students continue to maintain their entrenched patterns of the behavior.

In addition, another finding of this study regarding college students' different leadership styles by races has a significant implication as previous studies identified coaches' leadership styles as a critical element influencing team dynamics, especially interracial interactions (Newell, 2007; Sullivan & Kent, 2003). Informal extracurricular activities when there are not external structures or coaches in place to formally integrate the teams and force students to share a style of play, appear to have limited usefulness for racial integration. This is because students tend to self-segregate by race when forming teams and students within those race-segregated groups tend to use different styles of play that make it harder for them to integrate. Whereas this finding may not have a significant theoretical implication in the context of recreational sport in college, this could be more useful to consider in the context of youth sport or extracurricular activities in middle school or high school when the main purpose of playing a team sport is to learn cooperation, leadership skills, and competitiveness.

It is also important to understand racial segregation or integration occurring in an informal setting in college extending the existing studies primarily on middle school and high school such as extracurricular activities. This study has significant contributions to the body of knowledge on racial integration and segregation by extending to a new context. Previous studies focused on middle school and high school basketball players' patterns of behaviors on and off the basketball games (Nasir, 2000; Nasir & Hand, 2008), but these studies focused exclusively on Black basketball players without including players with other races or comparing with other racial groups. In addition, while the existing studies examined interracial friendship and segregation (Moody, 2001; Quillian& Campbell, 2003) in a more formal environment within the schools, findings of this study showed that how interracial interaction would appear in an informal environment such as a recreational basketball game how racial segregation exist in different ways.

Furthermore, findings of this study provided more knowledge about general patterns of college students in terms of racial differences in a basketball game by bridging the gap between high school and college, thus, we could grasp a better understanding about how the similar phenomenon continues to occur, appears in a different form, or discontinue to a certain degree.

6.1 References

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