

When and Where They Enter: Employing Shaw and Frisby's (2006) Fourth Frame in Researching African –American Women's Sporting Experiences

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**Poster
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Bianca Knight. Gabby Douglas. Sanya Richardson-Ross. Nzingha Prescod. The recent exposure and success of African-American female athletes in the Olympics continues the storylines of African-American females overcoming racial and gender barriers to achieve athletic success. The publicized feats of African-American women in sports like fencing, swimming, and gymnastics where African-Americans are underrepresented has been leveraged to promote the health, educational, and social benefits of sport participation. Yet, the media attention to these victories has overshadowed the decreasing sport participation rates of African- American girls and women. Though new opportunities in the past 30 years have markedly increased girls' participation in sport, boys still participate in sports at disproportionately higher rates than girls, with a rate of 40% attributed to African- American girls (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The success of these professional athletes is often leveraged to promote physical activity for African-American girls but many times at the expense of acknowledging the structural and cultural factors that funnel these girls into very specific sports and deny them the full benefits available through sport participation. As sport continues to be a source of achievement and a social intervention tool, more data is needed on what are the conditions necessary and sufficient to fostering beneficial sport experiences for African-American females (cf. Coalter, 2007).

While studies have approached this issue from a more etic standpoint, these data have offered little into why this population's rates are decreasing or how to increase these rates and subsequently, the benefits from participation (Pate et al., 2000). Despite sport being a pivotal force in redressing disparities for this community, the focus on White males and maintaining patriarchal dominance in sport has led to the discrimination and exclusion of different ethnic groups and women in the administration, and consequently, their participation in sport (Scranton, 2001; Troutman & Durfur, 2007). Previous authors cite a lack of data specific to women and girls in sport, the need for more participant input in the evaluation of these programs, and the need for more culturally appropriate measures as the next step in creating a better understanding of African-American female sport participation (cf. Carter, 2010, Betancourt & Lopez, 1993; Schiele, 2000; Troutman & Durfur, 2007). The increasing disparities in education, health, and wealth in this population warrants the need for more research in determining the factors that affect recruitment and retention rates of sport participation for this population if the increasing trend of sport based interventions in this community continues.

While more contemporary interest in the experiences of ethnic minorities and women have been generated, these efforts have been conducted divergently, with a focus paid to a particular group (e.g., race or gender) and not symbiotically where the discrimination from all the groups can be utilized to attack the overall ideology driving their collective marginalization (Carter, 2010; Collins, 1998; Gilroy, 2004). This silo effect is most detrimental to those who fit into multiple demographics which are underrepresented (e.g., women of color, women with disabilities). What is now emerging in the research is African-American females suffer from disparities that cannot fully be understood by just combining the disparities faced by African-Americans and those faced by women (Carter, 2010; Collins, 2005; Sellers et al., 1997). African-American females face an intersectionality of race, gender, and ultimately class that affects them at a greater rate in sport participation and administration than other demographics (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008, cf. Crenshaw, 1989). This force has also worked to deny their voice in the data collection and analysis of their sport experiences as research methods and theories developed in other populations are imposed on their experience as opposed to being created from their insight. Theories and constructs tailored to capture the experiences of these women are needed for producing more explanatory research for African-American female sport participation.

Employing Shaw and Frisby(2006)'s fourth frame, this poster will address fallacies in the research on African-American sport participation and provide theories to increase our knowledge of how and why African-American

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females engage in sport. In line with critical social science goals, Shaw and Frisby(2006) suggest the employment of a fourth frame to redress the taken for granted notions in sport that limit the representation of this population in the theoretical development and administration in our field. Their use of the post structural feminist theory is ideal as it avoids the binaries of gender to allow for exploration of multiple traits and identities, including race and class, in understanding how to redress hegemonic ideologies that preclude equitable treatment of women. The fourth frame has three phases - which allow for the investigation of current sport practices, identification of effective practices and employment theoretical frameworks to explore more equitable practice- Critique, Narrative Revision, and Experimentation. This presentation will employ this framework in examining the literature on African-American female sport participation and expand on it by incorporating critical race theory and Black Feminist Thought (Collins, 2000) in its analysis.

Critique, the first phase, is the process of identifying practices in sport that are oppressive and hinder the full participation for African-American women. To do this, Ely and Meyerson (2000)'s typology will be employed to reveal the shortcomings in implementing sport programs for African-American females. A survey of the literature on sport programs in which African-American girls and women were analyzed. These articles were selected using an online database spanning journals from different disciplines including sport management, education, African-American studies, and health promotion. Implications from the literature will be discussed as they relate to three shortcomings in promoting quality sport participation of African-American females: fixing the person, valuing the difference, and providing more opportunities.

The second phase, Narrative, promotes changing one's understanding of their own and other's experiences by recognizing the oppressive gendered lens that limit our sport experiences and creating alternative images of what these experiences are and consequently how to shape them. Heeding the call for more critical research methods to uncover different understandings of participants sport experiences (Amis & Silk, 2005; Chalip, 2006, Frisby, 2005, Singer, 2005), this poster will highlight how various theories from Sport Management, Sociology, Education, History, Health Promotion, and African-American Studies can create an interdisciplinary lens which can help researchers overcome the aforementioned shortcomings and provide more parsimonious understandings of African-American female sport participation. Works from authors including Bruening, Armstrong, and Pastore, (2005); Carter(2010); and Scranton (2001) will be highlighted as examples of how a more critical and interdisciplinary lens can provide more explanatory data in understanding African-American female sport participation.

The third phase, Experiment, allows for creation and implementation of new data focused on a long term commitment to the value of providing quality sport experiences for African-American woman rather than to specific implementation strategies. The focus on this value creates an organic structure that provides more opportunities for critique, revision, and retrial of these programs' implementation strategies and theoretical framework underpinning them. The literature on African-American female sport participation has benefited from the use of more critical social theories and can continue to benefit from the opportunity these theories offer in exploring different perspectives in this population's sport experiences. The significance of this research is its ability to help develop more culturally relevant concepts and methods in researching African-American female sport participation and consequently, provide more explanatory data that can be refined into more parsimonious theories about how and why African-American women participate in sport.