

Punishing Racial and Ethnic Minority Student Athletes



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Justice Policy Journal • Volume 10, Number 2 (Fall)

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Abstract

Sports involvement for youth, generally, promotes academic progress and success; however, little is known about the relationship between interscholastic school sports and punishment. This study utilizes a nationally representative stratified sample of 11,320 tenth grade public school students and incorporates logistic modeling techniques to examine whether interscholastic sport participation

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Acknowledgments: Gratitude is extended for the helpful comments and constructive suggestions from the editor and blind reviewers throughout the development of this research manuscript. Appreciation is conveyed for the support offered by the Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice-Network (RDCJ-N). The authors also thank the editor and blind reviewers for their constructive comments in pursuits of strengthening this research study.

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moderates the relationship between race, ethnicity and school punishment. Findings indicate that participation in interscholastic sports does play a role in school punishment. Most notably, interscholastic sports participation is a protective factor for Black/African American and White American students while it is a risk factor for Latino American and Asian American students. The implications of the school punishment patterns for racial and ethnic minority student athletes in the United States school system are discussed more generally.

Introduction

Historically and currently, sports participation is still the most popular school-sponsored extracurricular activity; in particular interscholastic sports receives substantial attention, funding, and resources in the United States (US) school system (Broh, 2002; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Miller et al., 2005). This is due in part to the consistent research finding that suggests that sport participation improves the educational progress for students (Broh, 2002; Eccles & Barber, 1999). There is, however, evidence suggesting that race and ethnicity shape the relationship between interscholastic sports participation and education in two important ways. First, the pattern of interscholastic sports participation varies by race and ethnicity (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005, 2007). Second, the benefits resulting from interscholastic sports participation also varies by race and ethnicity (Erkut & Tracy, 2002; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003). The linkages between race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports, and school punishment remain unclear.

School punishment can place students on a path towards educational disengagement and failure (Kupchik & Ellis, 2008; Noguera, 2008; Skiba et al., 2002). Punished students often do not view education as a viable process or means for success (Noguera, 2008). Suspended and expelled students are more likely to dropout of high school and not pursue further education (Noguera, 2008; Skiba & Rausch, 2006). As a result of school punishment and the subsequent disengagement from school, punished students are more likely to engage in delinquency, drug use, and adult criminality (Gottfredson, 2001; Morrison & Skiba, 2001). Moreover, research demonstrates that racial and ethnic minority students are disproportionately punished at school (Arcia, 2007; Reyes, 2005; Skiba et al., 2002). What remains unclear, however, is if interscholastic sport participation mitigates school punishment for students, particularly racial and ethnic minorities.

This study extends the literature on race, ethnicity, sports, and education by examining if school punishment is moderated by students' participation in interscholastic sports. The next section of this research addresses the pertinent

benefits associated with interscholastic sports participation as well as the racial and ethnic patterns of participation. The subsequent section discusses the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minority students who are punished in US public schools system. The data utilized for this study were drawn from the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002, which is a nationally representative sample of students. Logistic regression models were estimated to evaluate the relationship between race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports participation and school punishment. Finally, the findings and their implications for the relationships between race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports, and school punishment are broadly discussed.

The Benefits of Student Sports Involvement

Hirschi's (1969) social bonds theory, particularly the concept of involvement, is often utilized as a theoretical explanation for the relationship between sports, schooling, and education. Hirschi (1969) posits that youth with strong bonds to social institutions, such as schools, are more likely to engage in socially approved behavior and less likely to engage in socially disapproved behavior. There is a symbiotic relationship between youth involvement with school activities and educational success. Involvement in school activities, such as interscholastic sports, creates bonds between the students and the school. Students who are highly involved in school activities are more likely to be emotionally attached to their teachers and school, to be committed to their education and to believe in the school rules (Hirschi, 1969). This social bond translates into positive returns for the students because schools reward students who conform to socially approved behavior like interscholastic sports (Hirschi, 1969; Jenkins, 1997; Stewart, 2003; Erkut & Tracy, 2002).

There is a broad range of positive outcomes that are associated with sports participation. Physical health, psychological well-being, and improved educational outcomes are associated with youth's participation in sports (Broh, 2002; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Miller et al., 2005). More specifically, youth sports participation broadly promotes and improves a number of educational outcomes such as achievement, retention, commitment, engagement, academic self-concept, as well as decreases the likelihood of dropping out of school (Broh, 2002; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Miller et al., 2005).

Numerous studies report that racial and ethnic minority student participation in sports improves their self-esteem, grades, test scores, and educational retention (Davalos, Chavez, & Guardiola, 1999; Erkut & Tracy, 2002; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003; Miller et al., 2005). On the other hand, there are a few studies that suggest that

participation in sports may impede racial and ethnic minority students' educational progress, especially for the students who are already academically marginalized, because sports participation distracts them from their studies (Coakley, 2004). Subsequently, the majority of research findings promote sports participation as beneficial for youth, including racial and ethnic minorities. The majority of this research, however, has primarily focused on exploring the racial binary between White American and Black/African American youth in relationship to sports participation and its benefits with only a few studies exploring this relationship for Latino American and Asian American youth.

Sports Involvement and the Role of Race and Ethnicity

Research on sports participation for distinct racial and ethnic youth is limited and inconsistent. Some research suggests that Black/African American youth are more likely to participate in sports than youth from any other racial or ethnic group (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005, 2007); however, Miller and colleagues (2005) find similar patterns of sports participation for Black/African American and White American youth. Studies have found Latino American students are less likely to participate in sports in comparison to White American students (Davalos et al., 1999; Feldman & Matjasko, 2007). Of the limited number of studies that explore sports participation among Asian American youth, they reveal that Asian American students have the lowest rates of sports participation (Darling, 2005; Faircloth & Hamm, 2005; Feldman & Matjasko, 2005). Brown and Evans (2002) report African American students play more sports than Latino and Asian American students.

There are a number of reasons for the distinctive racial and ethnic patterns of sports participation. There has been a trend within education to promote interscholastic sports participation for Black/African American youth because it is believed to be vehicle that facilitates educational progress, success, attainment and adult health, stability, and success (Dawkins, Williams, & Guilbalt, 2006; Braddock, Hua, & Dawkins, 2007; Leeds, Miller, & Stull, 2007). While Black/African American are encouraged to participate in sports as a means to improve educational outcomes, Latino American students tend to participate more in sports for the social benefits such as friendship (Faircloth & Hamm, 2005). Furthermore, Black/African American and Latino American youth are socialized to believe, often with racist undertones, that sports participation will lead to educational and economic opportunities (González, Jackson, & Regoli, 2006). Although there is a perception of "choice" when it comes to participating in a particular type of extracurricular activity, this is not necessarily true for Asian American students (Kao, 2000). Because of the social and cultural perception of Asian Americans

adolescents within schools as "being good at math and science," "quiet," and "not athletic," their self-perception and "choice" of extracurricular activity is affected, which explains their lower rate and pattern of sports participation (Kao, 2000). It is apparent that the level of interscholastic sports participation indeed varies across racial and ethnic groups; however, the question emerges if these distinctive racial and ethnic patterns of interscholastic sports participation are associated with the likelihood of school punishment.

School Punishment and the Role of Race and Ethnicity

School punishment has an adverse effect on students' educational progress, retention, and success (Noguera, 2008; Skiba & Rausch, 2006), as well as contributing to juvenile delinquency and adult criminality (Gottfredson, 2001; Morrison & Skiba, 2001). Furthermore, Kupchik and Monahan (2006) suggest that school punishment "facilitates the criminalization of poor students in order to establish and maintain a criminal class to legitimate systems of inequality in modern capitalist states" (p.628). The negative consequences of school punishment, whether intended or not, disproportionately impacts racial and ethnic minority youth.

Although anti-violence policies and school punishment are intended to create a safe environment for students, many argue that the school punishment is ineffective, problematic, and discriminatory for racial and ethnic minorities (Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Skiba et al., 2002; Verdugo, 2002). Even after controlling for student misbehavior, racial and ethnic minority students are disproportionately punished in schools (Skiba et al., 2002; Kupchik & Ellis, 2008). In one of the first studies of school punishment, a 1975 report conducted by The Children's Defense Fund, the researchers discovered that the punishment rates for Black/African American students are two to three times higher than their White American counterparts. Since that report, there has been strong empirical support clearly showing that the disproportional punishment of racial and ethnic minority youth remains the status quo today (Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002). In addition, the pattern of punishment varies across racial and ethnic groups. Some researchers have found that Latino American students are most likely to receive a form of school punishment (Arcia, 2007; Morris, 2006), while other researchers have found that Black/African American and Latino American students have similar rates of school punishment (Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Mendez & Knoff, 2003). While there is some debate over which group is most likely to experience school punishment, the research is clear on which group is least likely to experience school punishment. Asian American students are least likely to receive a form of school

discipline (Skiba et al., 2002; Morris, 2006). What remains uncertain is if the apparent racial and ethnic patterns of school punishment extend to Black/African American, Latino American, and Asian American interscholastic athletes or if interscholastic sports participation is a protective factor against school punishment for racial and ethnic minority youth.

The Current Study

The current study builds upon and extends prior research examining the relationships between interscholastic sports participation, race, ethnicity, and school punishment. Drawing upon extant research, four central questions emerge and are the focus of the current study. First, are racial and ethnic minorities overrepresented among the students who are being punished in school? Second, is interscholastic sports participation related to students' risk of being subject to school punishment? Third, if so, what are the patterns of school punishment for interscholastic athletes? Finally, does participation in interscholastic sports moderate the relationship between race, ethnicity and school-based punishment? In summary, this research examines the relationships between interscholastic sports participation, race, ethnicity and school punishment.

Methods

Data

The dataset for this research is drawn from the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS). ELS is a longitudinal survey administered by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2004) of the United States Department of Education. ELS is "designed to monitor the transition of a national sample of young people as they progress from tenth grade through high school and on to postsecondary education and/or the world of work"(pp. 7). These data include information about the experiences and backgrounds of the students, their parents and teachers, and a description of the schools the students attended. Since many of the key variables in this analysis were only captured in the first wave of this data, this study is cross-sectional.

As with most datasets, if not all, the analytical sample is smaller than the original sample size of 15,360 students. First, this study focused on 12,030 public school students in the base year sample. Limiting the sample to students who identified as being Black/African American, Latino American, Asian American, and White American reduced the sample to 11,320 students for this analysis of interscholastic

sports participation, race, ethnicity and school punishment. Students who reported being Native American ($N=130$) and multiracial ($N=580$) were excluded from the analysis due to their small sample size. In the ELS survey design, Black/African American, Latino American, and Asian American students are over-sampled to obtain a sufficient representation for statistical analyses. Therefore, the sample weights calculated by NCES are applied during the statistical analysis to compensate for the sampling design and for non-response bias (see NCES, 2004 for further detail). Descriptive statistics for the dependent variable, as well as key explanatory measures, are reported in Table 1.

School Punishment

School punishment is measured by three items including: (1) I (the student's agreement to the statement) was put on in-school suspension (student survey), (2) I was suspended or put on probation (student survey), and (3) I was transferred to another school for disciplinary reasons (student survey). Each type of school punishment was dichotomized to indicate whether or not the student received that particular form of punishment. In addition, a school punishment index was created by counting how many of the three forms of school punishment the student reported experiencing.

Student Misbehavior

Students are asked if they have been involved in two forms of school misbehavior and is a constructed scale ($\alpha = .59$) for the number of misbehaving acts: (1) cutting or skipping classes (0=never, 1=1-2 times, 2=3-6 times, 3=7-9 times, and 4=10 or more times) and (2) getting into a physical fight at school (0=never, 1=once or twice, 2=more than twice). The range for student misbehavior is from 0 to 6, with higher values representing higher levels of misbehavior.

Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity is measured as the students' self-report regarding which racial and ethnic group they identify with. The sample included 1,790 Black/African American, 1,900 Latino/a American, 1,300 Asian American, and 6,330 White American public school students.

Interscholastic Sports Participation

As indicated by previous studies, interscholastic sports are distinct from other types of sport activities such as intramural sports because interscholastic sports offer greater structure, as well as a broader and deeper set of social networks, and are generally perceived differently by peer students, teachers, and other school administrators and staff (Broh, 2002; Eder & Parker, 1987; Finn, 1989).

Interscholastic sports index is a count ($\alpha = .93$) of the number of sports the student reported participating including (1) baseball, (2) softball, (3) basketball, (4) football, (5) soccer, (6) other team sport, and (7) individual sport.

Student Characteristics

Previous studies have established that there are several student and family characteristics that are associated with the likelihood of school punishment. Student characteristics include gender, achievement, and misbehavior while family factors are socioeconomic status, structure, involvement and location of residence (Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Morris, 2006; Reyes, 2005; Skiba et al., 2002; Skiba & Rausch, 2006; Stewart, 2003; Verdugo, 2002); thus, these control measures are utilized in this study of race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports and school punishment.

Gender is coded male or female based on the student's self report of their biological sex. Female students serve as the reference group. Student achievement is measured using the standardized measure developed by RTI and NCES. ELS included a reading and math composite score based on standardized tests developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The composite score is the average of the math and reading standardized scores, re-standardized to a national mean of 50.0 and standard deviation of 10 (see NCES, 2004 for further detail). The preconstructed measure of family socioeconomic status (SES) is a standardized (z-score) variable based on five equally weighted, standardized components: father's/guardian's education, mother's/guardian's education, family income, father's/guardian's occupational prestige, and mother's/guardian's occupational prestige (see NCES, 2004 for further detail). Family structure is a dichotomous variable denoting households in which there are two parents/guardians in the home, in comparison with single-parent homes, which serve as the reference group. The parental involvement index (each coded 0=Not involved and 1=Involved; $\alpha=.91$) is measured using eight questions that represented the parents' involvement in their children's education. Students are asked to indicate the extent to which their parents or guardians engaged in a variety of school activities, ranging from (1) checking homework, (2) helping with homework, (3) discussing school

courses, (4) discussing school activities, (5) discussing things studied in class, (6) discussing grades, (7) discussing transferring, and (8) discussing college attendance. Location of residence is measured by three categories: urban, suburban, or rural. The reference category is suburban areas.

Analytic Strategy

Since ELS dataset is designed as a cluster sample in which schools are sampled with unequal probability and then students are sampled or “nested” within these selected schools, the subsample of ELS violates the assumption of independent observations. Stata offers statistical procedures designed to compensate for the nesting of observations within aggregate units and formulated specifically for “design-based” survey analysis. This study accounted for this non-independence by using survey estimation techniques. These survey estimators effectively adjusted for clustering of observations within schools. In addition, racial and ethnic minority groups were over-sampled in ELS to obtain a sufficient representation for statistical analyses. Therefore, the sample weights calculated by NCES are applied during the statistical analysis to compensate for the sampling design and for non-response bias.

The analyses proceeded in several steps. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for Black/African American, Latino American, Asian American, and White American students separately – as well as for the total student sample. ANOVA and post-hoc Bonferroni tests were run to determine whether there were racial and ethnic differences in the group means for the dependent and control variables. Of course, the association between school misbehavior and punishment are closely related. It is first important to assess the connections between race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports involvement, and student engagement in misbehavior while at school. Thus, Table 2 displays the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression results of the relationships between student misbehavior, race, ethnicity, and interscholastic sports participation while controlling for pertinent characteristics. Table 3 displays the ordinal logistic regression results of the relationships between race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports participation, and school punishment while controlling for pertinent student and family characteristics. School punishment is regressed on race and ethnicity in the baseline model 1. Control variables such as student and family characteristics are added into the analysis in model 2. In the next model, interscholastic sports participation is introduced to the analysis. Finally, the interactions between race, ethnicity, and interscholastic sports participation are analyzed. In order to better understand the school punishment, Table 4 presents the binary logistic regression analysis for each form of school punishment.

Results

Descriptive statistics for Black/African American, Latino American, Asian American, and White American subsamples are reported in Table I. The percentage of students who receive a form of school discipline and the type of discipline received differ by racial and ethnic groups, which is supported by ANOVA and post-hoc Bonferroni tests. Black/African American students report the highest mean for overall school discipline, as well for each type of school discipline, followed by Latino American, White American, and Asian American students, respectively. There is only one exception to the school discipline trend; Latino American students have the highest rate of being transferred to another school for disciplinary problems.

In addition, interscholastic sports participation varies racial and ethnic groups. Latino American and Asian American students, respectively, report decreased interscholastic participation in comparison to White American students. On the other hand, there is no statistical difference between Black/African American and White American youth in relationship to their interscholastic sports participation. Finally, there are clear racial and ethnic differences in relation to individual characteristics. The mean standardized score of educational achievement is 43.98 for Black/African American students and 44.34 for Latino American students, which is below the average score of 50 for this nationally representative sample of tenth grade students. On the other hand, the mean standardized score of achievement for Asian American and White American students are 51.88 and 52.08, respectively, which is above the average score for this nationally representative sample of tenth grade students. Black/African American and Latino American students, respectively, are misbehaving more than White American students. The mean family SES is twenty-six percent lower for Black/African American students, and is forty-seven percent lower for Latino American students, than the average SES for the entire nationally representative sample. Black/African American and Latino American students, respectively, are less likely to be in two-parent homes in comparison to White American students, while Asian American and White American students have similar family structures. Parents of racial and ethnic minority students, on average, have lower parental involvement scores than parents of White American students. There is an overrepresentation of Black/African American, Latino, and Asian American students in urban locales.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for Black/African American, Latino American, Asian American and White American Public School students

	Range	Black/ African American Mean (SD)	Latino American Mean (SD)	Asian American Mean (SD)	White American Mean (SD)	Total Mean (SD)
School Punishment						
In-school suspension	0 – 1	.23 (.42)*	.17 (.37)*	.06 (.23)*	.10 (.31)	.13 (.34)
Suspension or probation	0 – 1	.15 (.35)*	.10 (.30)*	.05 (.21)	.07 (.25)	.08 (.28)
Transferred	0 – 1	.02 (.14)*	.03 (.17)*	.01 (.10)	.01 (.08)	.01 (.11)
Interscholastic Sports Involvement	0 – 8	.94 (1.38)	.80 (1.33)*	.67 (1.21)*	1.01 (1.28)	.92 (1.30)
Student Characteristics						
Male	0 – 1	.50 (.50)	.49 (.50)	.49 (.50)	.49 (.50)	.49 (.50)
Achievement	21.50 – 79.94	43.98 (8.19)*	44.34 (9.33)*	51.88 (10.30)	52.08 (9.28)	49.48 (9.96)
Misbehavior	0 – 6	.78 (1.19)*	.95 (1.35)*	.61 (1.08)	.57 (1.08)	.67 (1.15)
Family Characteristics						
Family SES	-2.11 – 1.98	-.26 (.64)*	-.47 (.66)*	-.06 (.85)*	.08 (.67)	-.08 (.72)
Family Structure	0 – 1	.52 (.50)*	.74 (.44)*	.83 (.38)	.81 (.40)	.75 (.43)
Parental Involvement	0 – 18	7.35 (5.55)*	6.89 (5.15)*	7.45 (4.76)*	8.61 (4.76)	7.99 (5.01)
Locale						
Urban	0 – 1	.45 (.50)*	.44 (.50)*	.43 (.50)*	.14 (.35)	.28 (.45)
Suburban	0 – 1	.41 (.49)*	.46 (.50)*	.51 (.50)	.54 (.50)	.50 (.50)
Rural	0 – 1	.14 (.34)*	.10 (.30)*	.06 (.24)*	.32 (.47)	.22 (.42)
N		1,790	1,900	1,300	6,330	11,320

* $p \leq .05$

Race, Ethnicity, Interscholastic Sports Participation, and Student Misbehavior

Table 2 reports the OLS regression analysis that examines the relationships between race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports participation, and student misbehavior. Model 1 of Table 2 displays the results of the baseline model exploring the effect of race and ethnicity on student misbehavior while controlling for student and familial characteristics. Black/African American and Asian American students are less likely to engage in school misbehavior than their White American counterparts. There is no statistical difference in student misbehavior between Latino American and White American students.

Interscholastic sports participation is introduced into the analysis, which is presented in Model 2 of Table 2. The analysis indicates that there is no statistical relationship between interscholastic sports and student misbehavior while at school. Moreover, the association between race, ethnicity, and misbehavior remains unchanged.

The interactions between race, ethnicity, and interscholastic sports participation are explored in Model 3 of Table 2. The analysis suggests that there is no statistical relationship between interscholastic sports and student misbehavior while at school, regardless of race and ethnicity.

As for the control variables, male students are more likely to engage in student misbehavior than females. As student achievement increases, the probability of student misbehavior decreases. Students who are in two parent/guardian families, and students whose parents are more involved in their education, are less likely to engage in student misbehavior. Students from urban locales are more likely, while students from rural locales are less likely, to engage in misbehavior while at school. These aforementioned relationships between the control variables and student misbehavior are consistent across the models.

Table 2 Multiple Regression Coefficients and Standard Errors for School Misbehavior on Selected Predictors

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Race, Ethnicity, and Interscholastic Sports						
Black/African American Interscholastic Sports	-.10	**	.04	-.11	**	.04
Latino American Interscholastic Sports	.08		.04	.08		.04
Asian American Interscholastic Sports	-.08	*	.04	-.08	*	.04
Interscholastic Sports				.01		.01
Student Characteristics						
Male	.15	***	.03	.15	***	.03
Achievement	-.02	***	.01	-.02	***	.01
Family Characteristics						
Family SES	.02		.02	.02		.02
Family Structure	-.08	**	.03	-.08	**	.03
Parental Involvement	-.02	***	.01	-.02	***	.01
Locale						
Urban	.19	***	.03	.19	***	.03
Rural	-.14	***	.03	-.14	***	.03
Intercept	1.96	***	.10	1.95	***	.10
F	58.74			53.42		42.23
R ²	.07			.07		.07

*** $p \leq .001$, ** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$

The omitted categories are White American and male students, single parent families, and suburban locale.

Race, Ethnicity, Interscholastic Sports Participation, and School Punishment

Table 3 presents the ordinal logistic regression analysis of overall measure of school punishment with White American students as the reference group. As presented in Model 1 of Table 3, it is apparent that race and ethnicity, in of itself, is associated with the likelihood of school punishment. Black/African American and Latino American students are more likely, while Asian American students are less

likely, to be punished in comparison to White American students. Once the control measures are considered in the next model, however, the risk of school punishment changes slightly for racial and ethnic minority students.

Model 2 of Table 3 presents the results of the ordinal logistic regression analysis exploring the relationship between race, ethnicity and school punishment while controlling for other relevant variables. The overall pattern between race, ethnicity and school punishment is quite similar to Model 1. Black/African American students are more likely, while Asian American students are less likely, to be punished at school in comparison to White American students. The main difference is for Latino American students; the likelihood of school punishment for Latino American students is not significantly different from White American students.

In Model 3 of Table 3, interscholastic sports involvement is added to the analysis. The results reveal that participation in interscholastic sports does indeed mitigate the likelihood of school punishment for student athletes. The relationship between race, ethnicity and school punishment remains unchanged from model 2, where Black/African American have a higher risk and Asian American students have a lower risk of school punishment than White American students.

In Model 4 of Table 3, the analysis explores the interactions between race, ethnicity, and interscholastic sports participation. The findings suggest that interscholastic sports participation does not moderate the relationship between race, ethnicity and school punishment for Black/African American or Asian American students. The pattern of school punishment remains unchanged for both groups from the previous analysis regardless of whether they participate in interscholastic sports. For Latino American students, interscholastic sports participation does moderate the relationship between their ethnicity and the likelihood of school punishment. Latino American students who do not participate in interscholastic sports are at lower risk of school punishment whereas Latino American student athletes are no more likely to be subjected to school punishment than their White American classmates. As for the general relationship between race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports participation, school punishment, Black/African American, Asian American, and White American interscholastic athletes are insulated from school punishment. On the hand, Latino American athletes do not benefit from interscholastic sports participation and are at increased risk of being punished at school.

Categories of School Punishment

Table 4 presents the binary logistic regression analysis for each type of school punishment. Looking at the model for in-school suspension, Black/African American students are more likely to receive in school suspension whereas Asian American students are less likely to receive an in-school suspension than White American students; Latino American students are not statistically different from their White American classmates in terms of their risk of in-school suspension. Students who participate in interscholastic sports are less likely to receive an in-school suspension than non-athletes. For Latino American and Asian American student athletes, their participation in interscholastic sports is associated with an increased risk of in-school suspension. For White American and Black/African American student athletes, their participation in interscholastic sports insulates them from in-school suspension.

The model exploring suspension suggests that Black/African American students are more likely to be suspended than White American students; Latino American and Asian American students are no more likely to be suspended than White American students. Interscholastic sports participation has no effect on the likelihood of being suspended from school.

Finally, race, ethnicity, and interscholastic sports do not statistically significant effect on the likelihood of being transferred as a disciplinary measure but the interaction between race, ethnicity and interscholastic sports is statistically significant. Black/African American, Latino American, and Asian American student athletes are at greater risk of being transferred than their non-athlete classmates as well as White American student athletes.

Table 3 Ordinal Logistic Regression Coefficients, (Standard Errors), and Odds Ratio for School Punishment on Selected Predictors

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		
	b (SE)	OR	b (SE)	OR	b (SE)	OR	b (SE)	OR	
Race, Ethnicity, and Interscholastic Sports									
Black/African American Interscholastic Sports	0.99 (.06)	***	2.70	0.54 (.08)	***	1.72	0.55 (.08)	***	1.65 1.07
Latino American Interscholastic Sports	0.55 (.07)	***	1.73	-0.12 (.08)		0.89	-0.12 (.08)		0.80 1.15
Asian American Interscholastic Sports	-0.56 (.11)	***	.57	-0.71 (.12)	***	0.49	-0.72 (.12)	***	0.45 1.15
Interscholastic Sports							-0.05 (.02)	*	0.90
Student Characteristics									
Misbehavior			0.70 (.02)	***	2.02	0.70 (.02)	***	2.02	2.02
Male			0.47 (.06)	***	1.61	0.49 (.06)	***	1.63	1.63
Achievement			-0.05 (.01)	***	0.95	-0.05 (.01)	***	0.94	0.95
Family Characteristics									
Family SES			-0.19 (.05)	***	0.83	-0.18 (.05)	***	0.83	0.83
Family Structure			-0.19 (.06)	***	0.82	-0.19 (.06)	***	0.83	0.83
Parental Involvement			-0.02 (.01)	***	0.98	-0.02 (.01)	***	0.98	0.98
Locale									
Urban			-0.19 (.07)	**	0.83	-0.20 (.07)	**	0.82	0.82
Rural			0.02 (.07)		1.02	0.03 (.07)		1.03	1.03
Log Likelihood	-6323.19		-5282.43		-5280.29		-5277.17		

*** $p \leq .001$, ** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$

The omitted categories are White American and male students, single parent/guardian families, and suburban locale.

Table 4 Logistic Regression Coefficients, (Standard Errors), and Odds Ratio for Category of School Punishment on Selected Predictors

	In School Suspension		Suspension		Transfer		OR
	b (SE)	OR	b (SE)	OR	b (SE)	OR	
Race, ethnicity, and Interscholastic Sports							
Black/African American	0.40 (.11)	***	1.49	0.51 (.13)	***	1.67	0.43 (.34)
Interscholastic Sports	0.10 (.07)		1.10	-0.02 (.09)		0.98	0.26 (.20)
Latino American	-0.16 (.12)		0.85	-0.18 (.14)		0.83	0.48 (.31)
Interscholastic Sports	0.12 (.07)	*	1.13	0.02 (.09)		1.02	0.38 (.17)
Asian American	-0.99 (.18)	***	0.37	-0.27 (.20)		0.83	-0.02 (.47)
Interscholastic Sports	0.25 (.12)	*	1.28	-0.11 (.16)		0.89	0.56 (.22)
Interscholastic Sports	-0.09 (.04)	**	0.91	-0.05 (.05)		0.95	-0.09 (.14)
Student Characteristics							
Misbehavior	0.60 (.03)	***	1.81	0.66 (.03)	***	1.93	0.52 (.05)
Male	0.46 (.07)	***	1.58	0.39 (.09)	***	1.48	0.31 (.21)
Achievement	-0.05 (.01)	***	0.95	-0.05 (.01)	***	0.95	-0.10 (.01)
Family Characteristics							
Family SES	-0.29 (.06)	***	0.75	-0.12 (.07)		0.89	0.20 (.16)
Family Structure	-0.18 (.08)	*	0.84	-0.21 (.09)	*	0.81	-0.16 (.23)
Parental Involvement	-0.02 (.01)	**	0.98	-0.01 (.01)		0.98	-0.04 (.02)
Locale							
Urban	-0.19 (.09)	*	0.83	-0.34 (.10)	***	0.71	-0.07 (.23)
Rural	0.10 (.09)		1.11	-0.04 (.11)		0.96	0.36 (.27)
Log Likelihood	-3499.46		-2538.40		-597.24		

*** $p \leq .001$, ** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$

The omitted categories are White American and male students, single parent families, and suburban locale.

Student Characteristics and School Punishment

As expected, student and familial characteristics are associated with the risk of school punishment. Male students are more likely to experience a school punishment in comparison to their female counterparts. As a student's educational achievement increases, the likelihood of being punished at school decreases. As a student's participation in misbehavior in school increases, the risk of being punished at school increases. As a student's family socioeconomic status increases, the likelihood of being punished decreases. Students in two parent families have decreased odds of being punished at school compared to students in single parent families. As parental involvement in school increases, the student's risk of school punishment decreases. Generally, these relationships are consistent across all punishment models.

Race, Ethnicity, Interscholastic Sports, and School Punishment

In sum, there are important results related to race, ethnicity, interscholastic sports participation, student misbehavior, and school punishment that need to be highlighted and emphasized. The patterns of interscholastic sports participation, student misbehavior and school punishment indeed vary by race and ethnicity. Latino American and Asian American students have lower rates of interscholastic sport participation than Black/African American and White American students. Additionally, Black/African American and White American youth have similar rates of interscholastic sports participation.

Initially, it appeared that Black/African American and Latino American students were more likely to report engaging in misbehavior than White American students; however, the multivariate analysis suggests that Black/African American and Asian American students are less likely to engage in such behavior than White American students. In addition, interscholastic sports participation had no effect on student misbehavior, regardless of the student's race and ethnicity. Originally, it seemed that Black/African American and Latino American students are more likely, while Asian American students are less likely, to be punished at school in comparison to White American students; however, the multivariate analysis highlighted a more complex relationship between race, ethnicity, and school punishment. Black/African American are more likely while Asian American students are less likely to be punished at school than their White American classmates whereas the likelihood of being subjected to school punishment for Latino American students varies by interscholastic sports participation.

Latino American students who do not participate in interscholastic sports are less likely to be punished than White American students. While interscholastic sports participation is a protective factor for most students, interscholastic sports participation is not a protective factor for Latino American student athletes; it has an almost non-existent effect on school punishment. Looking at specific forms of school punishment, Black/African American students are more likely to be suspended and to receive an in-school suspension compared to White American students whereas Asian American students are less likely to receive an in-school suspension. Looking at the interaction between race, ethnicity, and interscholastic sports participation, White American and Black/African American student athletes are less likely, while Asian American student athletes are more likely, to receive an in-school suspension. Interscholastic sports participation for White American students has no effect on likelihood of receiving a disciplinary transfer while interscholastic sports participation for racial and ethnic minority students is a risk factor for such transfers.

Discussion and Conclusion

Race and ethnicity is still related to a student's likelihood of school punishment independent of their misbehavior, interscholastic sports participation, and other relevant factors. Black/African American students are more likely to be punished than their White American classmates whereas Asian American students are less likely to be punished. Since this association between race, ethnicity and school punishment exist even after the model controlled for student misbehavior, it begs the critical question of why does this relationship exist.

One possibility is that cultural stereotypes influence how teachers and school administrators perceive students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, which in turn creates the racial and ethnic disparities in school punishment. For example, Asian American students may be benefitting from the cultural stereotype, which portrays Asian Americans as the model minority (Kao, 200; Chou & Feagin, 2010). As a model minority, Asian Americans are expected to be exceptional students with high educational achievement and aspirations and to subscribe to middle class values such as self-reliance and hard work, all of which will lead to success beyond the classroom. Teachers and school administrator who accept this image of Asian Americans as model minorities may be less likely to punish Asian American students because the teachers and administrators are more likely to discount misbehavior that violates their perceptions of Asian Americans as model minorities

and they do not want to damage their Asian American students' chances of academic success and attainment.

On the other hand, the cultural stereotype of Blacks/African Americans as violent and prone to criminal behavior may increase Black/African American students' risk of being punished independent of their school misbehavior (Rios, 2011; Russell, 2002). To the extent teachers and school administrators accept this stereotype of Blacks/African Americans, they are reifying this stereotype by punishing Black/African American students disproportionately and subjecting them to the negative consequences associated with school punishment (Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Morrison & Skiba, 2001; Noguera, 2008; Verdugo, 2002). It is critical that researchers and especially school officials consider how school punishment is meted out since school punishment is associated with such detrimental outcomes for students and our research suggests that it is applied in a racially and ethnically discriminatory manner. Therefore, it is imperative that future research explores the extent to which teachers subscribe to racial and ethnic stereotypes and whether these stereotypes impact the teachers' interaction with racial and ethnic minority students, especially in terms of school punishment. Otherwise, schools will continue to recreate existing social inequalities via their school punishment policies.

Hirschi (1969) predicted that students who were involved in school activities such as interscholastic sports would be less likely to engage in misbehavior due to the fact that involvement in conforming activities strengthen the student's social bond to conforming others and society. Therefore, students who participate in sports are less likely to engage in misbehavior and as a result are less likely to experience school punishment. Our results suggest that participation in interscholastic sports reduces the risk of school punishment independent of school misbehavior and other relevant factors. So, while Hirschi's Social Control theory suggested that student misbehavior was the intervening factor between interscholastic sports participation and school punishment, our findings suggest there is link between interscholastic sports participation and school punishment. Student athletes may be benefitting from their privileged position within the school's social hierarchy. Teachers and school administrators may be less willing to punish a student athlete for his/her misbehavior for a variety of reasons. For example, student athletes may not participate in a school-sponsored sporting event during their suspensions. Obviously, being transferred to another school as a disciplinary measure means the school loses the athletic services of the student. Finally, teachers and school administrators may be concerned that being subjected to school punishment may have consequences for the student athlete's ability to

attend college and/or receive an athletic scholarship to college. Future research needs to consider the connection between participation in interscholastic sports and a reduced risk of school punishment.

Finally, our research suggests that when race and ethnicity interact with interscholastic sports participation, student athletes who are racial and ethnic minorities are at greater risk of school punishment than their White American counterparts. This is problematic since interscholastic sports participation is encouraged among racial and ethnic minority students as a means to educational success and attainment (Dawkins et al., 2006; Braddock et al., 2007; Leeds et al., 2007). While sports participation may be a vehicle for other positive educational outcomes (Davalos, et al., 1999; Erkut & Tracy, 2002; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003; Miller, et al., 2005), it does not appear to ameliorate the racial and ethnic disparity in school punishment; our research suggests that for racial and ethnic minority students, participation in sports either has no effect on the likelihood of school punishment or it is a risk factor for school punishment. This is particularly true for being transferred where racial and ethnic minority student athletes are at greater risk than either White American student athletes or other racial and ethnic minority students to be transferred to another school as punishment. This counterintuitive finding for racial and ethnic minority athletes may be due to the increasing importance of education in today's global economy and the perceived threat posed by racial and ethnic minorities to White Americans (Welch & Payne, 2010). Therefore, school punishment of racial and ethnic minority student athletes may be an attempt to reduce the educational benefits typically accrued from interscholastic sports participation for these students. This argument is supported by research that has found that White Americans believe education is a zero-sum game and therefore, increasing racial and ethnic minority populations are a threat to the White Americans share of the educational rewards (Bankston & Caldas, 2002; Renzulli & Evans, 2005). Future research needs to consider racial threat hypothesis in the context of educational outcomes and whether school-based punishment is being utilized to maintain the status quo in educational outcomes.

Limitations and Future Research

As with all research studies, there are limitations that warrant highlighting and provide directions for future research. First, this study's analyses did not focus on the role of gender and socioeconomic class. It is clear that there are gender and socioeconomic status distinctions in the likelihood of school punishment (Morris, 2006; Noguera, 2008; Rios, 2011) as well as the degree of involvement in high school sports (Braddock et al., 2007; Miller et al., 2005). Thus, future research

should explore the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status in the relationship between sports and school punishment. Second, there are also distinctions between school experiences between athletes who engage in team or individual sports. Research suggests that interscholastic team sports, especially for males, can contribute to deviant behavior (Kreager, 2007). Therefore, future research should investigate if the relationships between race, ethnicity, sports and school punishment are moderated by the distinct forms of athletic (i.e., team or individual) sports participation.

Third, this study did not focus on exploring the potential role of school context in the relationships between race, ethnicity, sports, and school punishment. Additionally, the school's social milieu and location play a role in how racial and ethnic minorities are treated (Ogbu, 2003; Tyson, 2011; Welch & Payne, 2010). The school's demographic and geographic (i.e., urban, suburban, or rural) context matter in the treatment, education, and socialization of racial and ethnic minorities. Racial and ethnic minorities are treated differently, and punished at distinct rates, in predominately minority versus predominately White American schools as well as distinctions between urban and suburban schools (Ogbu, 2003; Tyson, 2011; Payne & Welch, 2010).

Fourth, because the growing number of racial and ethnic minorities within the US is a direct result of immigration, future research should consider the role of immigration in relation to school punishment. Although there is a growing research literature that clearly indicates that immigrants and their children are less likely to engage in deviant and criminal behavior, the number of immigrants and their children who have had contact with criminal justice system is increasing (Chavez, 2008; Martínez & Valenzuela, 2006). Despite the limitations associated with this study, our findings provide evidence to support the need for continuing research that explores the factors that moderate the disproportionate punishment of racial and ethnic minorities in the US school system.

Conclusion

Our research set out to explore whether interscholastic sports participation ameliorated the racial and ethnic disparities associated with school punishment. We found that racial and ethnic disparities in school punishment still exist. In particular, Black/African American students are disproportionately punished by schools, independent of their misbehavior. Participation in interscholastic sports has been suggested as a means to reduce the educational disparities experienced by racial and ethnic minority students. We found that interscholastic sports

participation has no effect on student misbehavior and ameliorates the likelihood of school punishment for all students, independent of student misbehavior. Unfortunately, our study suggests that interscholastic sports participation does not ameliorate the racial and ethnic disparities in school punishment. School officials trying to mitigate the negative consequences of school punishment for racial and ethnic students will need to consider alternative strategies.

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