

numbers illustrate how gender greatly impacted the possibility for women to be involved and engaged in athleticism due to the lack of funds provided for them. With the enactment of Title IX, American colleges' athletics budgets would be distributed proportionally, thus creating more opportunities for women in sports, which is evident through the increase of women participating in college athletics during the law's early establishment.⁴ Between 1970 and 1990, there was a drastic increase in female participation in high education level sports, as only sixteen thousand women in America were involved in college athletics during the early 70s whereas by the late 80s, more than one hundred and sixty thousand women were involved.⁵ Even by the end of the 70s, the number of women who competed in college sports had doubled, which demonstrated the immediate impact

The vast differences between white and Black college athletes once Title IX was enacted are stark and appalling. There was a dramatic increase in participation opportunities that amounted to 955% for Black women.⁸ From 1971 to 2000 Black women rose from only 2,137 to 22,541 athletes in college sports.⁹ However, in comparing this statistic to the one previously stated, that by the late 80s, more than 160,000 women were involved in college athletics, it illustrates the underrepresentation of Black women in higher education sports and that they were not given as many opportunities as their white counterparts.¹⁰ Not only were Black women underrepresented in athletics directly after the implementation of Title IX, but also in the amount of scholarships awarded to female athletes when compared to their proportion in the student body of a school.¹¹ Scholarships were, and continue to be, essential for students to fund their educational journey in the United States, therefore this underrepresentation of Black women who were awarded scholarships demonstrates a significant lack of educational opportunities for African American women, especially those who suffer from low socio-economic conditions. Between 1981 and 1998, the only sports in which Black women were deemed to be overrepresented when compared with their presence in the student body of a school were track, basketball, badminton, and bowling.¹² However, indoor and outdoor track had the highest overall participation numbers in college sports, meaning there were still thousands of white participants whereas the total athletes in badminton and bowling programs represented less than 1% of

female athletes nationally, with only 170 participants.¹³ Hence, although Black women were overrepresented in these sports, these programs amounted to either the highest or lowest number of participants, which demonstrates that Black women were grouped into specific sports that generally did not offer many spots and traditionally were viewed as low in cost. These statistics illustrate the impact of race on women's engagement in sports directly after Title IX was enacted, as being an African American woman was linked to underrepresentation in college athletics. Consequently, this did not allow Black women to flourish in all programs of college athletics. This was due to the lack of scholarships awarded to them and unequal opportunities to engage in sports as well as additional barriers Black women faced, such as their socio-economic conditions, were not considered. Instead, as previously demonstrated, these women were grouped into specific athletic programs, which calls into question the effect of Title IX on concentrating African Americans into distinct regions of sport.

African American women were underrepresented in the twenty other sports offered between 1981 to 1998 when compared to their population in the student body, with Black women being moderately underrepresented in six sports and severely underrepresented in fourteen.¹⁴ This statistic demonstrates how Title IX increased the number of women's sports that were offered in higher education, but these sports were catered toward white middle-class women who could afford to participate, making these new sports largely inaccessible to Black athletes.¹⁵ Due to this, in addition to racial stereotyping, clustering had become a result. Black women were limited to only specific college sport programs. For example, in 1996, it was noted

In the 1998-1999 academic school year, around twenty-five years after Title IX's passing, data was collected to see how twelve African American females felt about their experiences as college athletes.²⁰ In the interviews, pseudonyms were provided for each woman's name, so that these women could share their thoughts without fearing the backlash they might experience for sharing their stories.²¹

to showcase African American women's achievements when she stated in her interview, "how many times do I turn on NBC and see track?"²⁵ Through this quote, Gabby illustrates how the media impacts Black women's engagement in sports as it actively ignores African American

got to do to keep the football team the way we want it, we'll add more women."²⁶ Through this

their participation in college athletes. The inability of white teammates and coaches to remember Black women's names demonstrated their lack of acceptance regarding African American women in collegiate athletics, as they did not recognize Black women in this space. Therefore, this experience of disrespect would affect Black women's engagement in college sports as they would not feel welcomed within the environment of their own program, and thus feel silenced

violence.³² This commonly made Black college women develop mental health issues and trauma symptoms, such as anxiety, sleeping issues, and depression.³³ As a result, this study does not only demonstrate the ongoing issue of sexual harassment against African American college women, but also that racial discrimination in conjunction with sexual harassment uniquely impacts anxiety and mental health for Black women, making victimization experiences even more severe due to the intersectional nature of race and gender.³⁴ Such experiences are evident through the interviews this paper has already examined of Black women who were college athletes during the 1998-1999 academic year. For example, in Gabby's interview, she notes, "There have been times that we've been asked to half of the girls walking on campus were. The strength coach came over and said it was disturbing the guys and I should put on a shirt."³⁵ Another woman named Lolita also stated in her interview, "A lot of the women athletes, primarily the African American women athletes, are basically associated with sex. You look good and you have a great body and you drive men because we come in there to work, and we get stared at."³⁶ These quotes illustrate how they experienced sexual harassment under Title IX, as they were merely viewed as sexual objects due to their race. Instances such as this illustrate how race impacted women's engagement in sports as the negative sexual stereotypes African American women experienced caused them to be sexualized more than their white counterparts, and thus, they received poorer treatment in athletics. This difference in treatment then had the impact of

interfering with their success, not only in sports, but in academics as well due to the effects harassment could have on one's mental health. Consequently, through their experiences of increased sexual harassment, which Title IX failed to deter, African American women's engagement in sports was hindered as the physical and mental toll of this harassment interfered with their ability to focus solely on their sport, thus resulting in a feeling of being silenced within athletics.

Title IX was intended to enact change for all women, but failed to do so. The effect of race's impact on engagement in sports is evident through the analysis of what occurred directly after Title IX's implementation. Black women were continuously underrepresented in college athletics, not given as many scholarship opportunities, and clustered into specific sports due to Title IX not recognizing the socio-economic barriers and racial stereotypes that affected African American women. Additionally, race impacted women's engagement in athletics as the media, athletic administrations, coaches, and student athletes made African American women feel silenced within collegiate programs. Therefore, Title IX's approach to equal opportunities in sports did not consider the discrimination that occurs due to the intersection of race and gender, thus demonstrating why Black women struggled within college athletics, and continue to in the present day. For African American women to truly have an equal opportunity to participate in American collegiate athletics as white women, Title IX must acknowledge race in its policies.

Bibliography