In what ways do gender and race stereotypes affect adolescents in sports?

Based on our findings from the children at Junior High School 194, the method in which we asked these questions were based on Casper’s 7-factor constraints for sports participation. In addition, gender also plays an essential role among these adolescents for deciding which sport to participate in. Men have more leniency for playing or even watching a sport. Their parents restricted them from participating due to their belief that “physical abilities do not guarantee success as much as intelligence,” as one of the students stated. The children who were Black enjoyed playing football and basketball and believed that they can achieve future success within the sport. As we further identified the reason why they believe so, we realized that their academic grades were not as high as the other students. White children who were interviewed did not possess as much restriction as the opposing racially categorized students. However, they did not see themselves becoming successful in sports such as basketball because of racial stereotypes like “…I’m not as fast as the black kids”. In the words of one of the students. The girls, on the other hand, felt restricted from any sports that were perceived as “manly”, such as football. From the surveys, we confirmed expectation on race and gender play a role in what sports teenagers decide to be part of. However, it didn’t directly affect them as much as we thought it would. All of the people we interviewed were aware of the stereotypes that surround them in sports communities, such as being “aggressive” enough to play “manly” sports. Therefore, the information given implies that the environment in which they are nurtured possesses a large influence in what sports they decide to play. The environment consists of role models, parents, peers, and the resources that are available for them. The results of this experiment should widen the perspective of our society. Since society as a whole traps races and genders within certain cages all under one prison, the prison itself represents sport participation and other systems that constrain certain races and genders. These individuals who are categorized, even children, are within those cages and are not able to be free because of certain factors, such as individuality/psychology, lack of knowledge, lack of interest, lack of partners, facilities/services, and accessibility/financial. These factors depend on the environment in which these adolescents are placed in at birth and the categories that are decided genetically: race and gender. Overall, athletes who are part of the NCAA feel indifferent towards the stereotypes found in their sport. They are aware of the racial comments said, but instead of affecting them in a negative way they use this as an inspiration to do better and prove those comments wrong. Others choose to brush the comments off because, as almost all of them stated, everyone is seen as equal on the team, white or black or any race. They are coming together for a purpose, to play and win through teamwork. As one of the survey participants stated, “one of the common stereotypes among the basketball community would be that the only reason black people like to play the sport is because it requires shooting, stealing, and running, which is unfair to say the least because all ethnic groups commit crime and if you probably only hear about the same ethnic group committing a crime, then there’s the media to blame: because you only hear and see what they want you to.”

**Research Question and Methods**

In what ways do gender and race stereotypes affect adolescents in sports?

- In surveying the children from Junior High School 194, the method in which we asked these questions were based on Casper’s 7-factor model. However, one factor is removed and therefore our method is called the 6-factor model (individual/psychological, lack of knowledge, lack of interest, lack of partners, facilities/services, and accessibility/financial). The sample space was of 10 students from the ages of 11-13 years old, categorized into the four races of Hispanic/Latino, Black, White, and Asian.

- Based on background information we found, our method for collecting data was to interview college freshman of different race and gender and to survey middle school children to compare the results. In choosing which people to interview, we looked for a diverse group in gender, race, sexual orientation, and background. All of our interviewees were part of a team and between 15-19 years old. The interview was done on direct questions to inform us on sport team members views on racial parts in sports. Some questions we asked in our interview were:
  - What do you believe you represent? How do you perceive your gender, racial, and athletic identity?
  - Do you think your race and where you come from get in between what others think of you sports related?
  - Do you think your race and where you come from get in between what others think of you sports related?
  - What stereotypes do you believe to exist within sports and why? How does this affect you, and if it doesn’t, why not?