

Institution

Course

Professor

Date

“LeBron James is the best basketball player of all time.”

LeBron Raymone James Sr. was born on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1984 (Freedman, 1). He is sometimes referred to as “the King” due to the numerous professional achievements throughout his years as a basketball player. At the moment, he plays for the “Cleveland Cavaliers of the National Basketball Association” (NBA). As a result of his numerous achievements and awards, he has universally been proclaimed as “one of the greatest basketball players of all time.” He has managed to win three NBA championships, four awards that are termed as the “NBA Most Valuable Player”, three NBA Finals awards for MVP, two Olympic gold medals, the NBA scoring title, the award for NBA All-star Game MVP, the NBA rookie award and the award for Cavalier’s all-time top scorer. These are just a few of his topmost accomplishments that have made his growth in the NBA an all-time favorite for both investors and promoters.

His journey to fame and glory did not start overnight but took a substantial amount of effort and time to arrive at. While his time in high school at St. Vincent-St. Mary High School, he was highly regarded and even promoted in the media as being one of the best and future NBA superstar (Braig, 343). After his graduation, he was picked by his home team, the Cleveland Cavaliers as their top pick for the NBA draft. After playing for the Claviers for a period of 7years, he opted out and moved to Miami Heat where he played for approximately four years. In this period, he was able to make the Heat reach the finals all four years in a row. After this last season, he opted out of the contract with the Heat and went back to

playing for Cavaliers, where he led them to three straight finals from 2015 to 2017. During 2016, he was able to steer them to a victory in the finals where this marked the end of their 52 years of not winning any professional title.

Looking closer at his professional basketball career, there are some aspects that tend to put him at another level when compared to other established and successful basketball players and hence giving him the title of the “Greatest basketball player of all time.” To start with, he is “one of only two basketball players who has managed to average at least 25 points, six rebounds, and six assists during their career.” When it comes to the actual numbers in the case of LeBron James, they are 27.1, 7.3 and 7.0. These are numbers which have only been matched by Oscar Robertson. Secondly, when it comes to his NBA MVPs, he has managed to accumulate at least four alongside other five players in the NBA who are: “Wilt Chamberlain (4), Bill Russell (5), Michael Jordan (5) and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (6).” Even though his titles are four, he is not done yet as he is striving to achieve more in his career as time goes by. Thirdly, when it comes to his determination to reaching the finals, he has managed to reach seven straight finals. This does not necessarily mean that he has managed to win all of the seven, but it showed how determined and accomplished he has been on wanting to play at the greatest stages of them all and with a large crowd. The only athlete who has tried to do the same is James Jones but he flunked out at the very end when he did not show up for the 2014 postseason, and thus LeBron remains the only player with such an achievement in their arsenal. The above stats are just numbers and accolades, but the real greatness and action come when LeBron James gets on the court.

During his games, he has been seen as the most versatile of all players that the NBA has been able to see. He is able to guard a total of all five positions with no hesitation; “he is able to play point guard and also a power forward on the same offensive possession.” This to say the least is skills and greatness intertwined into one. Also, this shows that he has the wits

for the game in a way that very few of people within the NBA have. As such, “he has been termed as one of the smartest basketball players ever with an IQ that compares to only Magic Johnson in the modern era” (Hausman, Jerry, and Gregory, 586). Through this, he has been able to make some of the best decisions throughout every game that he has been involved in. Additionally, he has a good character which has ensured that he is responsible for his own and his teammate’s actions and welfare throughout the game. For example, he is unselfish when it comes to faults committed during the game. Therefore, he is a leader to many and one who is determined to make the right and constructive decisions regardless of how much trouble or criticism he might get for it.

Throughout the history of the NBA and its best players, we have had quite a number of intriguing people. Kobe B. was regarded as the better scorer, Shaquille O’Neal was termed as more dominant during any game, and Scottie Pippen was a much better player on defense. With all of these skills among these different players, none came close to combining “every facet of the game” into a complete mind-blowing package as LeBron did. Although the likes of Magic J. and Larry B. came close to matching them, LeBron has been a tenacious player with skills unmatched to no other. He has been able to pull up his team from difficult situations until the finals in not only one time but seven times in a row.

At this time, LeBron James has been regarded to be the best and greatest player in the history of the NBA. But even with this fact, he still faces criticism on other fronts which we are going to address and as such paint him to be what we know he is and that is, he is the GOAT- “Greatest of All Time.” According to critics, they have the existing rivalry of a comparison between the highly proclaimed and successful Michael Jordan and LeBron James (LaFeber, 170-172). To begin with, they are of the opinion that because LeBron James has faced numerous failures in the finals, they do not see any way that he can be given the title of GOAT- “Greatest of All Time.” This because they regard a person with a high streak of

success as being the greatest. To disapprove this notion, we have to borrow a leaf from all the successful people in the world who are involved in constructive innovation and creating and even participating in making the world a better place. All of these individuals have faced failures and challenges, not one but a ton and this has made them become some of the strongest and well-proclaimed people around the world. Something to note is that failures and challenges do not weaken a person, but rather they build and steer a person to a better path. This has been the case with LeBron James, his time to have a winning streak for the finals will reach, but that does not mean that he is not worthy of the title “GOAT” as he has done plenty for both his club and his country as a whole. Also, in sports, there is a notion that there is a huge difference between the words “greatest” and “best” and with this, they deter us from seeing the bigger picture and stripping the “GOAT” title from LeBron.

Additionally, being able to play at the grandest stages of them all isn't enough for us to be able to say that a basketball player is great. But what is needed is for our basketball legends to stand and be unshakable symbols of excellence and moral standing in the society. As such, the society wants a GOAT that never saw the crosshairs of defeat when the stakes were so high and due to this, people time and time again have deterred themselves from people who fail to people who have a winning streak type of record. This should not be the case. As mentioned above, failure is a part of life and also a part of excelling in a career, and a loss should not make a person not be considered as being either the best or even the greatest at what he or she does. Therefore, the logical and reasonable measurement of determining a great or even the best person in any field or career should be the accomplishments both in and out of the office (in this case, our office is the court).

In conclusion, as a society, we should move from the notion of wanting a hero who is far from our very own imperfections. There is no such thing as a superman as everyone is prone to failure and error and this aspect will not change any time soon. Even with the rise of

the robots and artificial intelligence, we still have the aspect of “Garbage in- Garbage out” (Bininda-Emonds, Olaf RP, et al., 267). Therefore, failure and facing challenges is a part of living and also a part of society. As such, LeBron James during this time in his career, he still is able to improve to the greatest extent which without past judgments and criticism, he will be able to remain to be the GOAT. Therefore, depending on other proclaimed players who have come before LeBron James, at this point we can for a fact say that their Final records are overrated and as such LeBron has the ability and time to overtake them if he works towards this as a goal. But as mentioned above, statistics and numbers are not the only things that determine if a player is the greatest but many other factors are to be put into consideration. As seen by the actions portrayed by LeBron James throughout his career, he is surely working on all fronts to become one of the greatest players of all time if he isn't according to other people at this time. In my opinion, he is one of the greatest players of all time, and he should continue with this path if he wants to remain the greatest. As they say, the greatest people fall the hardest.

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