

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Stephanie Garant-Jones entitled "Motivational Factors Influencing International Student-Athletes to Participate in the National Collegiate Athletic Association." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major of Sport Management.

Dr. Gi-Yong Koo, PhD., Major Professor

We have read this thesis
And recommend its acceptance:

James Bemiller, J.D., Committee Member

Rob Hardin, PhD., Committee Member

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT-ATHLETES TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master's of Science Degree
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Stephanie Garant-Jones
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DEDICATION

It is with a sincere feeling of appreciation that I dedicate this thesis to the individuals in my life who have helped me through this process. To my father, who has continuously provided support in every aspect of my life. Without his undying support and prime example of what hard-work and dedication can amount to, the completion of my degree might not have been so successful. To my sister, who teaches me that there is more to life than your immediate surroundings, and who consistently makes me want to be a better person. Finally, I would like to dedicate this project, as well as those to follow, to my mother. The outlook on life that she had, the immense willingness to continuously learn and her appreciation for the simple pleasures of life will push me through the hardest of times. She is my angel, and I hope to make her, as well as my whole family proud through all endeavors I undertake in the future.

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ABSTRACT

The research seeks to determine which motivational factors influence international student athletes in committing to an American institution in order to participate in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The study will examine which factors play an important role in college choice for these individuals. Most research indicates that the primary motivation for international student-athletes to come to American colleges is to receive an education while being on athletic scholarships (Bale, 1991, Ridinger, 1996; Stidwell, 1984). The research will serve to support previous findings and to reveal other motivational factors which influence college choice for international student-athletes.

By exploratory factor analysis the major influences which play a role in the student-athlete's decision to commit to an American university or college will be identified. Due to the controversial and opinionated nature of the topic of international student-athletes, the need for research is supported.

Questionnaires will be conducted online by both male and female international student-athletes participating in all NCAA sports at universities and colleges of three BCS Conferences. Data on motivational factors will be collected in order to identify which motives drive athletes to participate in their respective NCAA institutions. Once the questionnaires are collected, the major motivational factors will be identified and comparisons of findings will be made between male and female athletes and athletes participating in different sports. Expected results should support previous findings that student-athletes are influenced highly by academic factors, as well as by the chance to participate in highly competitive leagues (Bale, 1991; Garbert, Hale & Montalvo, 1999). Literature on international student-athletes is

limited and due to the increase in numbers and popularity of recruiting international athletes to the NCAA, it is important to examine the issues concerning the topic. Without knowing why the international student-athletes come to American colleges and universities, recruiting could become more challenging and retaining these students through matriculation of their degree could become difficult. This study will provide a significant contribution to the literature regarding influencing factors in college choice and will be vital to athletic departments at NCAA institutions in order to aid in recruiting international student-athletes.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The number of international student-athletes participating in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has become an increasing issue in today's college sports. In the early years of the 20th century, the recruitment of international student-athletes had already begun as a small number of Canadian track and field athletes were coming to American colleges. In the 1950s and 1960s, the trend began its influx as African cross-country runners filled rosters at the University of Texas El Paso (UTEP) and Washington State University (Stidwell, 1984).

Today more than ever, the increase in importance of global business has caught the attention of American colleges and universities, thus making the recruiting of international students a must for our institutions. In 2004, it was calculated that approximately 2 million students worldwide study outside of their home countries, a number which a 2004 report suggests will increase to 8 million by 2025 (Altbach, 2004). The United States is currently the largest host country to the world's international students, with the United Kingdom, Germany and France not too far behind. The motivations for students to come study at American institutions are numerous, from freeing the social and political forces of their own countries, to studying at some of the most renowned universities in the world, students have always seemed eager to come to the United States for their education. Some students do not have the chance to study at the master's and doctoral levels in their home country and, therefore, come to The United States to go forth with higher education. Some individuals might be lured by the American colleges in hope that by following their studies, they will have the opportunity to find

work in the United States, which financially could be very worthwhile for these students. (Altbach, 2004).

In The United States, international students contribute more than \$12 billion to the U.S. economy each year (Altbach, 2004). These students are attractive to universities and the current economical environment as a whole. They not only increase the credibility of a college or university filling most of the seats in master's and doctoral programs in fields such as engineering and computer science, but they also help in opening the communications amongst countries around the world for the future.

If international students are overall an integral part of the future of American universities, it is easily comprehensible that international student-athletes are also an important and positive element of the student population. Countries such as the United States and Great Britain are fighting over the world's best students, proving that diversity in universities and colleges is vital and restrictions should perhaps not be put in place where student-athlete recruitment is concerned. There are conflicting issues concerning the recruitment of international student-athletes. Some individuals involved believe that these athletes are taking the place of young American athletes, ridding them of the opportunity to develop into international-caliber competitors. On the other hand, if these student-athletes are coming to The United States with a higher level of talent in their respective sports, they may be pushing the American student-athletes to improve their own skill and, therefore, increase the overall competition level in the NCAA.

The strategy to attract international athletes has proven to be successful as many of the rosters in top athletic programs are composed mostly of international student-athletes

(Ridinger & Pastore, 2001). Literature and research concerning the recruitment of international student-athletes is limited and therefore needs to be addressed.

Statement of the Problem

In the past, much research was conducted concerning college choice for non-student-athletes as well as for student athletes (Bale, 1991; Garbert, Hale, & Montalvo, 1999). The increase in numbers of international student-athletes participating in NCAA athletics supports the need for research to be directed specifically towards international student-athletes. For example, if programs with a high volume of international student-athletes start building competitive and winning programs in the years to come, perhaps more institutions will become interested in recruiting internationally. In order to do so, studies need to be conducted on the reasons why individuals from foreign countries choose to migrate to The United States to practice their sport.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the motivational factors which play a role in the decisions the athletes make in choosing to compete in their sport via the NCAA system. Most research indicates that the primary motivation for international student-athletes to come to American colleges is to receive an education while being on athletic scholarships (Bale, 1991, Ridinger, 1996; Stidwell, 1984). The research will serve to support previous findings and to reveal other motivational factors which influence college choice for international student-athletes.

Significance of the Study

Motivations behind the reasons international student-athletes attend American education institutions have been studied but have often been confined to certain regions of the

world (Bale, 1987). This study hopes to increase the knowledge of international student-athletes and the motivations leading them to leave their home countries to come play in the NCAA.

Consequently, the information gathered will help coaches, athletic administrators and NCAA committees to understand what are the international student-athletes' most influencing motivational factors. By identifying the major factors which play a role in the student-athletes decision to come to The United States, recruiting efforts could be facilitated.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research questions will include, by are not limited to, the following topics:

- 1) What was the single most important motivational factor which influenced the international student-athlete's decision to migrate from his or her country and come play in the National Collegiate Athletic Association?
- 2) Do athletic motivational factors equal in importance or surpass those of academic influences?
- 3) Do international student-athletes differ in their motives based on sport?
- 4) Do international student-athletes differ in their motives based on gender?

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will be used:

International Student: A college student studying at an American institution whose citizenship is of a country outside the United States.

Student-Athlete: A college student who participates in intercollegiate athletics.

International Student-Athlete : A college student who participates in intercollegiate athletics and whose citizenship is of a country outside the United States.

Athletic Factors: Variables related, but not limited to, coaching, training facilities, competition, athletic department success and professional exposure.

Academic Factors: Variables related, but not limited to, an institution's curriculum, major of choice, faculty, technological support and scholarship opportunities.

Influence of Others: Variables related, but not limited to, parental and peer influence, home country coaches and athletes and contact with individuals the international student-athlete knows.

Social/Environmental Motivations: Variables related, but not limited to, non-academic or non-athletic setting at the subject's chosen American institution or home country.

Delimitations

The sample research is delimited to, (a) all international student-athletes currently enrolled in institutions from three NCAA conferences and, (b) the institutions from three geographical areas in the United States. Only the subjects who were members of varsity programs at Division I universities, as defined by the NCAA, were considered. This study was further delimited by those international student-athletes whose e-mail addresses were found through the institutions online directories. Subjects 17 years of age and younger will not be considered for the study.

Limitations

Due to the study being one of few concerning international student-athletes, potential weaknesses must be considered. Although the study should provide valuable information on what influences international student-athletes to participate in an NCAA program, the following limitations should be considered;

1. It will be assumed that all subjects answer the questionnaire in an honest manner.

2. Subjects will be required to consider influencing motivations about a decision they perhaps made two or three years ago, therefore limiting a subject's ability to accurately recall precise information.
3. For some subjects, English is a second language, and therefore they may encounter problems in comprehending certain questions.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

International Student-Athletes

Bale (1991), studied recruiting tactics and migration decisions of international student-athletes. He discussed the stressors that might lead an international athlete to decide to come to the United States and participate in an NCAA athletics program. Poor training facilities, lack of quality coaches and limited training time are some of the reasons Bale found that make these young athletes decide to come to The United States for a better athletic career. The level of competition in the United States is also seen as one of the contributing factor for these high-level athletes to migrate to the United States. Finally, another motivation which Bale suggests is the interest in American culture and the attractiveness of the "American way of life." Bale also suggests that the motivation for international student-athletes differ from country to country or, at least, between European countries and Third World countries.

As part of a book he published in 1991, Bale had researched 200 swimmers and track athletes from Britain, Sweden, and the Netherlands. He found that limited sports training, poor coaching, and limited high competitive levels at home were factors that had played a role in the athletes' decision to come over to the United States (Bale, 1991). Other significant factors identified by Bale were the influence of friends which were already in the United States, the sports and academic reputation of the college and the influence of coaches.

In 1996, the research staff for the NCAA published a study on the increasing numbers of international student-athletes. Since 1996, no other comprehensive study has been performed and although the numbers were surprising back in 1996, it can be hypothesized that the numbers have increase in the past 10 years.

The following are findings from the 1996 study;

- The number of international student-athletes rose by approximately 2,000 between 1991-1992 and 1995-1996.
- The average number of international student-athletes at all NCAA member institutions rose from 8.55 per institution in 1991-1992 to 10.52 in 1995-1996.
- The sport with the highest number of international student-athletes in both years was tennis for women and soccer for men.

The estimated number of international student-athletes in 1991-1992 was 6,833 and 1, 731 of those were playing at Division I-A institutions. That overall number rose to 8,851 in 1995-1996, and 1, 850 student-athletes participated in the top division (<http://www.NCAA.org>).

The reasons why coaches would want to bring in international talent to their sports teams in the United States are numerous and reasonable. One of the main reasons why it is attractive for coaches to go overseas and recruit players is that for the most part, the international student-athletes have had some form of exposure to professional leagues and have competed at high levels of competition. Coaches believe it is more valuable to recruit a player who has an already high level of talent as well as the maturity level of the senior players. American student-athletes that are coming out of high school have little to no international experience and have not developed the maturity that the international players conceivably have. (Ridiger & Pastore, 2000).

In an article in a newspaper in Knoxville, Tennessee, the former University of Tennessee's Men's Tennis Coach Chris Mahoney was interviewed about the increase in international student-players coming into the NCAA in order to play tennis (Link, 2006). Coaches around the NCAA do not believe that there is a problem with bringing in international-

student athletes. Most of these athletes have had prior experience in leagues around the world, hence they come in with a lot of experience as well as maturity (Link, 2006). The article also states the example that in 2005, 38 of the top 64 men tennis players in the NCAA were international, which leads to believe that there will be an increasing problem in securing the growth of the American tennis players.

Coaches may favor the type of conditioning and coaching that the student-athletes may have received in their home countries, therefore making them aware of the talent they should expect from their athlete. University of California at Irvine Men's Tennis Coach, Steve Clark, was also interviewed and stated that he "believed international players brought maturity to their respective sports", and that "in general, most international students are more mature than your average American" (Botello, 2006 p. C4). Another reason why recruiting international student-athletes is becoming popular is in the turn-over ratio that comes with recruiting international student-athletes. American athletes are recruited through numerous visits from coaches, and much effort is exerted into trying to bring these top American athletes to one's institution. However, many of these athletes, especially the top athletes, sign and commit to another University for many different reasons. Jamie Bermel, Colorado State University's golf coach, believes that if they can recruit a top five player from another country, then it is perhaps worth more than recruiting a top 200 high-school athlete in The United States (Phifer, 2005). For small programs such as Colorado State University, recruiting international student-athletes is the reason why some of their programs are now competing amongst the best in the country. It is challenging for schools with lack of tradition, or little national success in NCAA sports to recruit American athletes. By recruiting in Europe or Australia, it is easier to promote your college and athletic programs to athletes who have heard about the NCAA to a minimal degree

and to athletes who do not know the difference between a Duke and a University of Alabama-Birmingham (Phifer, 2005).

International student-athletes are highly motivated to come to The United States in order to get an education at a higher institution (Bale, 1991). Along with achieving success athletically they are also looking towards achieving success academically (Sellers, 1992).

Ridinger and Pastore (2000), proposed a framework to identify some factors associated with international student-athletes' adjustment to American colleges and Universities. The researchers explored three sub-groups in their following study: international student-athletes, international non-student-athletes and domestic student-athletes. Although the existing limitation of limited number of participants, the researchers were able to report that international student-athletes tend to put more priority on their academics. This finding can be linked to the earlier findings of Bale, Ridinger, and Stidwell (2000) that international student-athletes were highly motivated in terms of academia.

The result from this literature is greatly important for coaches, as it is vital that they recruit student-athletes that will not only be focused on reaching athletic success, but who are also motivated by academic performance. Due to the NCAA's strongly enforced rules of eligibility concerning academic success, recruiting these athletes that seem to succeed in academics appeases coaches as they are not as worried about losing their athlete due to academic problems.

It is not always simple to recruit internationally due to some conflicts of interest. A major argument exists against bringing international players to the United States colleges. Those who come from overseas to play in the NCAA may not be welcomed by those who fill the stands. An example given about how unwelcoming some fans is given as fans from

Vanderbilt shouted “Let’s Go USA” when playing versus Baylor, a power house for international college tennis players (Glier, 2003). Much of the fuse concerns the possibility of the international players taking away scholarships from American athletes. This could potentially decrease the success of American athletes in international competition such as in the Olympic Games and decrease the competitive level of American-born athletes in professional sports.(Glier, 2003).

Another issue concerns how it is sometimes difficult to determine the true status of some of these international players as some have perhaps played in professional tournaments or in professional leagues overseas. One mentioned problem in Glier’s 2003 article is when older players come into the league and play against American freshman. This issue is addressed in many articles and literature found concerning the health of tennis in the NCAA now that the players being recruited from overseas are playing at the age of 24 and 25 against the American freshman. In 2001, the NCAA released a statement concerning the status of amateurism and the international student-athletes.

Eligibility issues often arise when recruiting overseas since many of the players have possibly received some form of prize money. This concern is growing as the number of international student-athletes is increasing and foreign countries are not aware of the regulations set by the NCAA. In the 2001 press release, Bill Saum, the NCAA’s Director of Agent, Amateurism and Gambling Activities, had made it clear that the issue needs to be addressed especially in men’s basketball where the number of international student-athletes on rosters in NCAA institutions surpasses 340. Saum believes that with the increase in popularity of basketball in Europe, the club-systems might be looking at paying their young players in order to keep them from entering the NCAA. This tactic makes it harder for the

NCAA to classify the club leagues as still being amateur leagues, which in turn makes the eligibility of a young basketball player who decides to then come to the NCAA questionable.

Three years after the Saum report, the NCAA posted a release stating the condition of the NCAA's Division I Men's and Women's swimming and diving teams. At the past summer Olympic Games, USA Swimming announced that 40 percent of the medalists had ties to an NCAA Institution (NCAA, 2004). USA Swimming is worried that the increase in international student-athletes in their sport in the NCAA is depleting scholarship opportunities for American swimmers. Chuck Wielgus (NCAA, 2004) believes that other countries are looking at the NCAA as a means to get their top athletes better facilities in which to train in, better coaches in which to work with and therefore overall increase their chances of attaining Olympic glory. In this particular press release, capping the number of international student-athletes allowed on an athletic team was seen as being a resolution to the problems. Perhaps increasing the number of scholarships awarded to American-born athletes could be seen as a solution to appease the problem. For teams such as swimming and diving, where scholarships allotted are minimal, it is not surprising that coaches turn to international student-athletes in order to build a successful program. By increasing the number of scholarships, perhaps more American swimmers and divers would have the chance to come to an NCAA institution on full scholarship.

Overall, results from Bale, 1991, and Ridiger & Pastore, 2000, are important for coaches as it is vital that they recruit student-athletes that will not only be motivated by athletic success, but are also by academic performance. Eligibility issues also need to be considered concerning recruiting. Studying the overall key motivational factors which play a role in college

choice will facilitate and ameliorate the recruitment of international student-athlete to American institutions.

Student Motivation

There is a great amount of literature concerning the factors which influence students' college choice. By having the knowledge of what motivates students to choose one college over another, recruiters will be able to better attract prospective students to their institutions. Many recurring factors are found within the literature. One of the most common influencing factors is the advice and guidance peers including friends and parents. Academic reputation also plays an important part in choice of college, as well as financial assistance and location of institution. [Chapman, 1982; Discenza, Ferguson, & Wisner, 1985; Hossler, 1985; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987; Jackson & Chapman, 1984; Murphy, 1982; Nelson & Poremba, 1980; Spies, 1978]. A 1991 study by Martin and Dixon investigates the effects of demographic variables and locus of control on college choice. Using the College Choice Influence Scale (CCIS), which measures the process of college choice using five factor-derived subscales, the researchers concluded that influence of others was a major factor relating to college choice, that the choices of those who had undeclared majors differed from those who had declared majors and finally, that there was a difference of college choice among major fields of study. Results suggested that Education majors were more influenced by their peers than were the students with Business or Undeclared majors (Martin & Dixon, 1991).

Previous research has been conducted concerning the influences that help American student-athletes choose a college. Much of the results included academia, social influences and location of college as reasons why the students choose a certain NCAA institution. In 1999, a study regarding the differences in college choice factors amongst freshman student-

athletes was conducted and concluded that for Division I student-athletes, academic support services was the most important factor to the student-athletes while choosing a college (Garbert, Hale, & Montalvo, 1999). The most influencing factors may differ between Divisions, or even between races and genders, but the majority of factors were similar for all student-athletes.

One of the main factors revealed was the influence of the present head coach. For most student-athletes, the reputability of these coaches plays a vital role in choosing which NCAA program they will play for.

A 1991 study found that non-student-athletes are confronted with similar factors while choosing which college they will attend. The reputation of the college, availability of major and total cost of attending college is some of the main factors influencing college choice (Sevier, 1991). Where many of these factors are the same for student-athletes, the additional consideration of athletic factors need to be examined when studying student-athletes' choice of school. To these individuals, athletic influences or motivations might be more important than academic influences for athletes who are looking to pursue their athletic careers in college, and increase their chances of playing in professional careers. Many athletes who play a sport which has a professional league will desire classes or majors which let them have the most flexibility in an academic scheduling. Perhaps this occurrence is also happening with student-athletes who are looking for a college with the best coaching or facilities in order to practice their sport with goals of reaching the Olympics or World Championships.

Minority student-athletes, such as African-Americans have also been studied in order to find out if their motivation, as well as experience as a student-athlete differs from those of other students. Literature suggests that African-American student athletes apparently lack in

academic preparation and unrealistic postgraduate athletic expectations (Snyder, 1996). Where some international student-athletes might actually come into the country with a higher degree of academia they perhaps have the same unrealistic athletic expectations post-graduation. A 1996 study examined the motivation of Anglo and African American college athletes. The differences between the two groups were found in statements concerning the completion of one's bachelor degree, ways in which to complete final exams, and the choice of roommates. African American student athletes were least likely to complete their bachelor degree, more likely to spend more time studying for final exams, and wanted to have other student-athletes as roommates. Anglo student-athletes were more likely to complete their bachelor's degree, spend less time studying, and wanted to room with average students instead of student-athletes (Snyder, 1996). The data collected from this particular study indicated that there were significant differences between ethnic groups and their athletic and academic motivation. Knowing that these differences exist also supports the need to look at the differences in motivation of international student-athletes who compete in Division I NCAA athletics.

Summary

This research on motivational factors influencing international-student's college choice will reflect the past studies conducted by researchers who looked at student motivation. Past studies have been developed based on interactionists' approach to explain the connection between job satisfaction and firm size or job environment (Johnson, 1994). In order to theoretically explain these relationships, one framework used, Schneider's (1987) Attraction, Selection, Attrition (ASA) was successfully in arguing that employee characteristics and the job environment were nearly inseparable joint determinants of job satisfaction.

An international student-athlete can be seen as being an employee, working at his or her sport just as any other individual working for any other organization or department on campus. With this said, Schneider's ASA could have been applied as the theoretical framework in this particular study. Where differences occur is in the nature of the turn-over of student-athletes and coaches at the NCAA level, as well as in the measurements of success in sport. Job satisfaction in the work place can be measured in many different faucets, such as salary, vacation time, or overall quality of work environment. In sports, and in particular in NCAA athletics, the make-up of values and organizational goals change accordingly to those in charge and also in concurrence with winning or losing seasons. An NCAA student-athletes career can be anywhere from one to four years, making it hard for them to become a major part of the assimilation process for new-comers. These reasons are why Schneider's ASA framework cannot be fully applied in this particular study.

Supplementary frameworks concerning recruiting or job satisfaction could have been used, but for this particular study, the findings of Bale, 1991, Martin & Dixon, 1991, Ridiger & Pastor, 2000 and Syndey ,1996 have helped the researcher build a framework which will group the motivational factors under four sub-groups which in turn will help better understand the reasons why international student-athletes migrate to The United States. In the past, student-athletes were highly motivated by academic reasons and athletic opportunities (Bale, 1991 & Syndey, 1996). As an influx of international student-athletes enter the NCAA programs, their motivations need to be studied now more then ever. Influencing factors might have changed in the recent years and recruiting tactics may need to be revisited, thus, supporting the need for this study. This research seeks to pin-point those factors which will help the recruiting process

in the future and contribute to a better understanding of the motivation of international student-athlete in the NCAA.

Proposed Conceptual Framework for International Student athletes' College Choice

Based on the following studies, the research has proposed a conceptual framework, encompassing four motivational factors influencing international students' choice to come to the NCAA. Social/ environmental factors, academic factors, athletic factors, and peer influence factors will be investigated (Table 1.0 - Motivational Factors).

From the findings of the authors in Table 1.0 we will be able to indicate which of the four sub-groups international student-athletes are more inclined to be influenced by. For example, if an international student-athlete is influenced highly by coaches, level of competition, team members, facilities, etc, he or she is strongly influenced by athletic motivations. If a student rates weather, social climate, geographical location or activities around campus, then he or she is highly motivated by social and environmental influences. Listed in Figure 1.0 are a few of the items which influence the international student-athletes college choice as well as the motivational factors under which they fall (Figure 1.0 – Influencing Factors).

Table 1.0- Motivational Factors

Author(s) / Year	Title	Motivational Factor Findings
Bale, J.(1991).	The brawn drain: Foreign student athletes in American universities.	<i>Education</i> <i>Athletic Scholarship</i> <i>Increased Competition</i> <i>Cultural Experience</i> <i>Climatic Factors</i>
Martin, N.K., & Dixon, P.N., (1991).	Factors influencing students' college choice	<i>Attitudes toward institution</i> <i>Life-planning influences</i> <i>Influence of others</i> <i>Independence-recreational reasons</i> <i>Family tradition</i>
Ridinger, L.L., & Pastore, D.L. (2000).	A proposed framework to identify factors associated with international student-athlete adjustment to college.	<i>Academic adjustment</i> <i>Athletic Adjustment</i> <i>Social Adjustment</i> <i>Personal-Emotional Adjustment</i> <i>Institutional Adjustment.</i>
Sydney, P.L.(1996).	Comparative levels of expressed academic motivation among Anglo and African American University student-athletes.	<i>Academic – Academic Pressure</i> <i>Athletic – Professional Opportunity</i> <i>Social – Roommate choice</i>

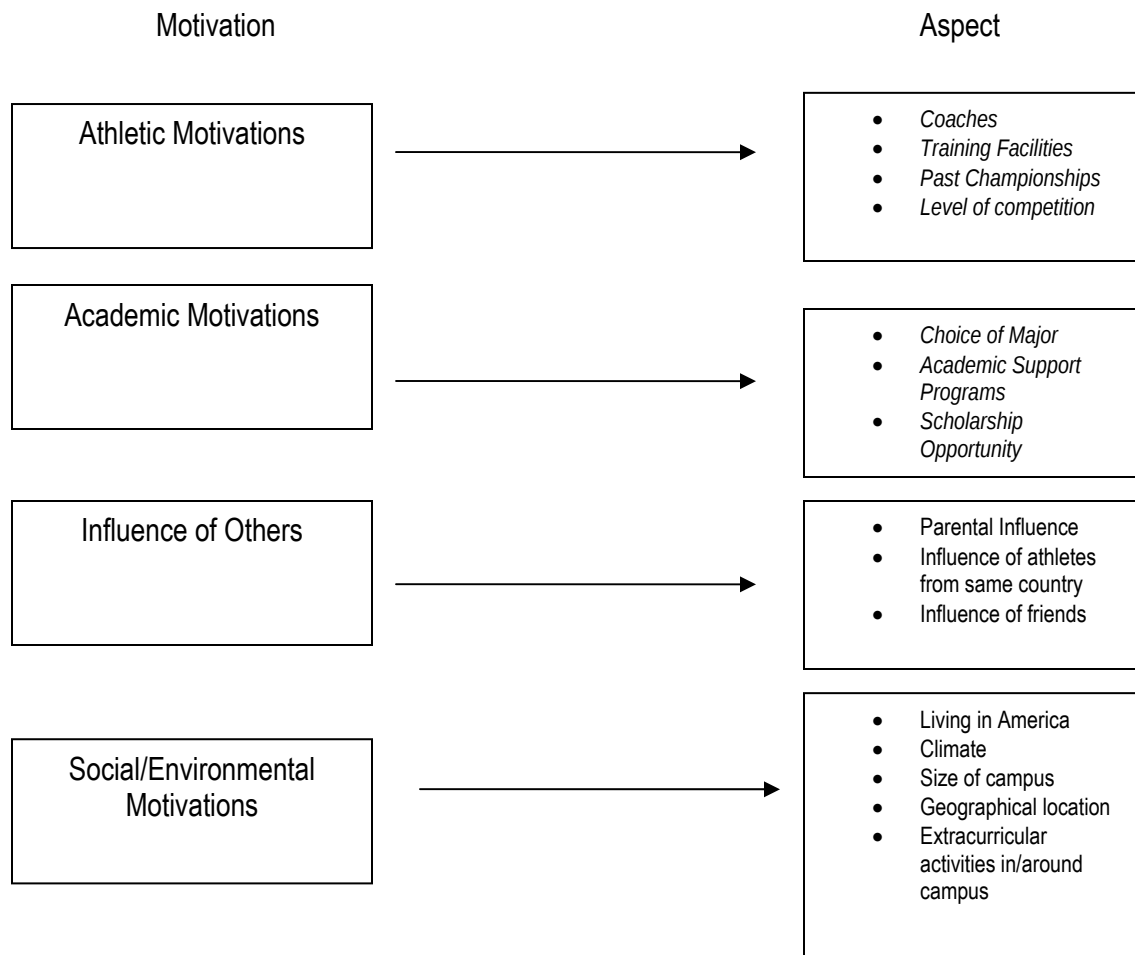


Figure 1.0 - Influencing Factors

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The proposed research design is quantitative in nature, using numerical measurement in evaluation of the subject's motivation factors which influenced their decision in coming to an American institution. The research is cross-sectional and will attempt to identify which motivational factors influence international student-athletes to participate in an NCAA program. Data will be collected via a questionnaire build using mrInterview. The questionnaires will be distributed by e-mail to the study's sample population.

Sample Selection

International student-athletes participating at institutions from three major BCS conferences will be used as subjects. The conferences used were the Pac-10, Big-10 and ACC. The reason why these conferences were chosen were to have the opportunity to sample international student-athletes at three geographical areas of the United States, as well as in hopes of collecting data from students participating in a variety of different sports. International student-athletes were identified on rosters of athletic teams of the particular institutions chosen for the study. E-mail addresses of the sample population were found through online university directories.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire developed consists of two parts. Part I will include the demographical question that follow; age, gender, home country, year in school, scholarship received and sport in which the subject participates in. Results of this section will be used to construct a general profile of the international student-athletes in institutions of the three BCS

conferences surveyed. The demographics will enable to compare groups drawn from the data in Part II of the questionnaire.

Part II of the questionnaire consists of a list of items that may or may not have contributed to the international student-athletes decision in migrating to The United States in order to participate in the NCAA. Each item will be classified under four sub-groups; academic, athletic, social/environmental and peer influence. A pilot test was conducted to check for reliability of the questionnaire and for validity, the researcher used confirmatory factor analysis. The items used in the questionnaire were compiled using previous studies on college choice and on student-athlete motivation. A 7-point Likert scale ranging from “Not important at all” to “Extremely important,” will be used. The questionnaire built includes items from a previous survey by James R. Berry, Jr., at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1999. Along with items from Berry’s (1999) questionnaire, the researcher added several items in order to attempt to get a wider range of motivation items on the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedures

An e-mail containing a statement of purpose of the study, along with a confirmation of confidentiality and the hyperlink to the questionnaire will be sent to the e-mail address of the international student-athletes. To collect the data, subjects will simply answer the questionnaire and answers will be sent directly to the researcher’s home site on the survey questionnaire builder, mrInterview.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data will be transcribed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics will be reported for the demographic part of the survey. In reporting the results for the influencing motivational factors, means will be calculated and ranked from most important to least important. Means will also be

calculated based on sport the international student-athletes participate in, as well as gender.

Means comparing the four different main factors, i.e., academic, athletic, social/environmental, and influence of others, will let the researcher categorize which factors influence the individuals more.

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

The purpose of the study was to identify the motivational factors which influence college choice of international student-athletes. The data presented will ultimately be used in recruiting international student-athletes as well as aid in retaining the student-athletes at the institution. Knowing what factors influence the student-athletes, school administrators as well as coaches will be more successful in recruiting effectively.

Initially, 874 international student-athletes were identified in the three BCS conferences use for the study. However, only 397 email addresses were made public, hence 387 international student-athletes were sent the questionnaire. 212 international student-athletes completed the questionnaire for a response rate of 53.4 percent.

The questionnaire was completed by 135 women and 77 men. Women predominantly completed the questionnaire and comprised 63.7 percent of the sample (Table 2.0). The international student-athletes were comprised of 22.2 percent freshmen, 26.9 percent sophomores, 24.5 percent juniors, and 26.4 percent seniors (Table 2.1). Nearly all participants were participating in the NCAA while receiving some form of athletic scholarship. Only 7.5 percent of the international student-athletes did not receive any athletic scholarship (Table 2.2). Seventeen different sports were recognized in the study. The top 4 sports in which men and women participated in were tennis with 43 participants, swimming and diving with 33 participants, track and field with 28 participants, and golf with 22 participants. These four sports comprised 59.5 percent of the different sports in which the international student-athletes participate in (Table 2.3). The respondents came from 49 different countries, with 29.7 percent

Table 2 0 - Gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	77	36.3
	Female	135	63.7
	Total	212	100.0

Table 2 1-Eligibility

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Freshman	47	22.2
	Sophomore	57	26.9
	Junior	52	24.5
	Senior	56	26.4
	Total	212	100.0

Table 2 2 - Scholarship

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Scholarship	196	92.4
	No Scholarship	16	7.5
	Total	212	100.0

Table 2 3 - Sport

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Tennis	43	20.3
	Football	3	1.4
	Soccer	13	6.1
	S&D	33	15.6
	Track & Field	28	13.2
	Basketball	9	4.2
	Rowing	27	12.7
	Golf	22	10.4
	Sailing	2	.9
	Gymnastics	2	.9
	Hockey	3	1.4
	Lacrosse	2	.9
	Field Hockey	14	6.6
	Fencing	1	.5
	Volleyball	8	3.8
	Softball	1	.5
	Water polo	1	.5
	Total	212	100.0

coming from Canada. Other countries which were represented in higher numbers were Australia, Germany and The Netherlands (Table 2.4)

Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted in order to assess which factors influence the international student-athletes decisions in participating in the NCAA. It was anticipated that the 28 items would fall under four factor categories. The result of the exploratory factor analysis factor indicated that 7 factors were in fact influencing international student-athletes (Table 3.0 – Factor Analysis). The seven factors were labeled as services, athletic, influence, environment, reputation, independence, and possible scholarship. In this study, possibility of scholarship was the factor which influenced the international student-athletes the most, having a mean of 6.14. Influence was the least important factor and held a mean of 2.53 (Table 3.1 – Motivational Factors).

A MANOVA was used in order to look at the effects of gender on the 7 different motivational factors. First, the multivariate null hypothesis of equality of the means over male and female for the 7 motivational factors were rejected at the .05 level: Wilk's $\Lambda = .018$, $p = .002$. As seen in Table 3.2, univariate F-tests provide information on the differences of the factor, Possible Scholarship. Women perceived the possibility of receiving a scholarship as a more important motivational factor.

Differences

When looking at the influencing motivational factors between the top four sports overall, no significant difference was found. Possibility of a scholarship was still the most influencing factor amongst women and men who participated in tennis, swimming and diving,

Table 2. 4 - Home Country

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Argentina	3	1.4
	Australia	14	6.6
	Belarus	1	.5
	Bermuda	2	.9
	Bolivia	1	.5
	Bosnia	1	.5
	Brazil	2	.9
	Canada	63	29.7
	Chile	1	.5
	Colombia	1	.5
	Croatia	6	2.8
	Czech Republic	2	.9
	England	6	2.8
	Finland	1	.5
	France	7	3.3
	Germany	9	4.2
	Greece	2	1
	Hungary	5	2.4
	Indonesia	1	.5
	Ireland	3	1.4
	Israel	4	1.9
	Italy	4	1.9
	Jamaica	4	1.9
	Japan	5	2.4
	Kenya	2	.9
	Kuwait	1	.5
	Lithuania	3	1.4
	Luxembourg	1	.5
	Malaysia	1	.5
	Mexico	2	.9
	Netherlands	13	6.2
	New Zealand	1	.5
	Nigeria	1	.5
	Poland	3	1.4
	Portugal	1	.5

Table 2.4, continued.

	Frequency	Percent
Romania	1	.5
Russia	1	.5
Scotland	1	.5
Serbia	3	1.4
Singapore	1	.5
Slovakia	2	.9
Slovenia	2	.9
South Africa	6	2.9
Spain	4	1.9
Sweden	7	3.3
Switzerland	2	.9
Trinidad and Tobago	2	.9
Turkey	2	.9
Uganda	1	.5
Total	212	100.0

Table 3 0-Factor Analysis

	Factor Loadings						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Factor 1- Services</i>							
Closeness of athletic facilities to campus	.793						
Athletic therapy resources / Personal trainers	.754						
Information technology operations	.716						
Academic advising opportunity	.700						
Workout facilities	.689						
Library resources	.634						
Program of study	.598						
Campus dining	.533						
<i>Factor 2 – Athletic</i>							
Competition level		.773					
Athletic facilities		.605					
NCAA college conference		.588					
Reputation of United States coaches		.577					
Exposure to professional leagues		.531					
Sport season schedule		.523					
Chance to play year round		.511					
<i>Factor 3 - Influence</i>							

Table 3.0 continued

	Factor Loadings						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Siblings experiences at United States college			.813				
Your parents past success in athletics in the United States			.748				
Home country's coach college experience			.646				
<i>Factor 4 – Environmental</i>							
Location of United States College				.857			
Size of city				.791			
Weather/climate of city				.695			
<i>Factor 5 - Reputation</i>							
Academic reputation of college					.664		
Reputation of athletic department of college					.617		
Academic support for student-athletes					.601		
Current team members					.519		
<i>Factor 6 - Independence</i>							
Possibility to leave parental influence at home						.852	
Chance to gain independence from home						.835	
<i>Factor 7 - Scholarship</i>							
Possibility of scholarship							.747

Table 3 1 – Motivational Factors

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Possible Scholarship	212	6.4906	1.23722
Reputation	212	5.5472	1.05540
Services	212	5.0047	1.18561
Athletic	212	4.8235	1.15524
Environmental	212	4.4245	1.31065
Independence	212	4.0472	1.77800
Influence	212	2.6226	1.47192

Table 3 2 - Effects on Gender

Motivational Factor	N	M	SD	F	p
Services	Male (77)	4.831	.135	2.611	.108
	Female(135)	5.104	.102		
Athletic	Male(77)	4.811	.132	.015	.904
	Female(135)	4.831	.100		
Influence	Male(77)	2.537	.168	.410	.523
	Female(135)	2.672	.127		
Environmental	Male(77)	4.325	.149	.701	.403
	Female(135)	4.481	.113		
Reputation	Male(77)	5.383	.120	2.949	.087
	Female(135)	5.641	.090		
Independence	Male(77)	3.909	.203	.728	.394
	Female(135)	4.126	.153		
Possible scholarship	Male(77)	6.143	.138	9.956	.002
	Female(135)	6.689	.104		

Notes. Multivariate test is significant (Wilk's Lambda = .018, F [7,204] = 9.96, $p = .002^*$); $*p < .05$

track and field, and golf (Table 3.3). Furthermore, there were no significant differences between the men and women who practice these 4 sports. This is consistent with the findings for overall international student-athletes participating in the 17 sports in this study. When comparing international student-athletes on scholarships, and those receiving no financial aid, the only different factor was, naturally, the possibility of scholarship. (Table 4.0 – Scholarship)

Table 3 3 – Effects on Different Sports

Motivational Factor	Sport	M	SD	F	<i>p</i>
Services	Tennis	4.837	.178	1.845	.132
	S&D	5.291	.204		
	Track & Field	5.114	.221		
	Golf	4.864	.249		
Athletic	Tennis	5.040	.174	.760	.555
	S&D	4.961	.199		
	Track & Field	4.653	.216		
	Golf	5.481	.243		
Influence	Tennis	2.705	.221	.836	.508
	S&D	2.545	.252		
	Track & Field	2.702	.274		
	Golf	2.727	.309		
Environmental	Tennis	4.651	.200	.432	.785
	S&D	4.495	.229		
	Track & Field	4.548	.248		
	Golf	4.758	.280		
Reputation	Tennis	5.709	.158	.469	.758
	S&D	5.614	.181		
	Track & Field	5.616	.196		
	Golf	5.489	.221		
Independence	Tennis	4.233	.278	.172	.952
	S&D	4.045	.318		
	Track & Field	3.768	.345		
	Golf	3.636	.389		
Possible scholarship	Tennis	6.465	.190	.617	.652
	S&D	6.364	.217		
	Track & Field	6.321	.236		
	Golf	6.818	.266		

Notes. Multivariate test is significant (Wilk's Lambda = .017, F [7,116] = 9.69, *p* = .002*); **p* < .05

Table 4 1 - Differences in Scholarship

Factor	Scholarship	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Services	Scholarship	196	5.0480	1.13207
	No scholarship	16	4.4750	1.66993
Athletic	Scholarship	196	4.8805	1.11752
	No scholarship	16	4.1250	1.40541
Influence	Scholarship	196	2.6327	1.49376
	No scholarship	16	2.5000	1.20493
Environmental	Scholarship	196	4.4439	1.31471
	No scholarship	16	4.1875	1.27639
Reputation	Scholarship	196	5.6186	.96789
	No scholarship	16	4.6719	1.61431
Independence	Scholarship	196	4.0128	1.77839
	No scholarship	16	4.4688	1.77453
Possible scholarship	Scholarship	196	6.7143	.77128
	No scholarship	16	3.7500	2.26569

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION

Summary

The purpose of the study was to identify the motivational factors which influence college choice of international student-athletes. The data presented will ultimately be used in recruiting international student-athletes as well as aid in retaining the student-athletes at the institution. Knowing what factors influence the student-athletes, school administrators as well as coaches will be more successful in recruiting effectively.

Initially, 874 international student-athletes were identified in the three BCS conferences use for the study. However, only 397 e-mail addresses were made public, hence 397 international student-athletes were sent the questionnaire. 212 surveys were usable, showing a response rate of 54%. The sample included student-athletes who were on full scholarship, partial scholarship, and those who were not under any form of scholarship. 77 male student-athletes and 135 women student-athletes answered the questionnaire, and all subjects were between the ages of 18 and 25 years old. 49 different countries were represented, and 17 different sports were represented. When examining the determining influencing factors in the student-athletes choice to come practice their sport in the NCAA, the possibility of a scholarship was the most influencing factor. The reputation of the university or college, services to the athletes, as well as athletic factors also influenced the student-athletes highly. The environmental factors, independence, and peer and parental influences were rated least important, of all factors influencing the student-athletes. There were no significant differences between the factors amongst sports, and the only factor that differed between genders was the possibility of a scholarship.

Conclusions

Past research has mainly been conducted on the motivational factors influencing of non-student-athletes as well as for American student-athletes (Bale, 1991; Garbert, Hale, & Montalyo, 1999). This research dealt specifically with international student-athletes at the motivational factors which influence this specific demographical group of NCAA student-athletes. Additionally, the limited research on international student-athletes has been confined to student-athletes from certain regions of the world (Bale 1987).

While the study supported previous studies which demonstrated that international student-athletes were highly motivated academically (Bale, 1991), the research also provided information on other motivational factors which contributed to the student-athletes' decisions to migrate to The United States to practice their sport.

The research repeated certain previous findings on influencing factors (Bale, 1991). Although academic reasons were major influencing factors, the possibility of a scholarship was the main influencing factor found in this research. Services for the student-athletes were also ranked highly amongst the main influencing factors, as well as athletic factors. Past research has rarely touched upon an institution's reputation, both academically and athletically, as one of the influencing factors for international student-athletes to choose an NCAA institution. This research showed that the reputation of a college played an important role in the student-athletes' decision to come to the United States. Although international student-athletes might not be up to par with the reputation of all universities and colleges in the United States, there are still some bigger athletic programs which stand out, and are known for developing stronger, bigger, and faster athletes due to the services that university provides to their athletes. The female athletes rated reputation slightly higher in degree of importance in motivational factors.

This can possibly explain by the fact that 66 out of the 135 female athletes questioned were from Canada, increasing the possibility of them having knowledge about the reputation of the universities and colleges due to geographical proximity to the institutions.

As Ridinger and Pastore (2000), previously suggested, social and environmental factors also played a key role in the college choice of the student-athletes. Many of the athletes want to come to the United States in order to have the opportunity to live the “American lifestyle.” Living close to big-city centers, or going to highly populated universities was not necessarily the focus. Simple the chance to live the “American experience” is what some student-athletes included as one of the significant reasons why they chose to come to the NCAA.

In a study concerning American student-athletes, Martin and Dixon (1991), suggested that peer and family influence played a major role in college choice for these student-athletes. International student-athletes, although counting influence of others as a reason why they might have chosen to come to the United States, peer influence is not one of the major motivational factors. The reason for this happening might be that recruiting international student-athletes is now only starting to be common in most countries. When there will be a full wave of one generation of international student-athletes who have come through the NCAA, perhaps more influence will be detected in the next generation of these athletes who will later migrate to the United States in order to practice there sport.

No significant differences amongst motivational factors were found between genders. Both women and men were equally influenced by the same factors, and in the same degree of importance. The only minor difference was regarding the scholarship factor. Women athletes rated the possibility of a scholarship slightly higher than the men student-athletes. Perhaps a

reason for this is that the majority of female athletes were, as stated early, from Canada.

Although the Canadian university system is similar, their intercollegiate athletic system is much different. No scholarships are given to intercollegiate athletes, making the possibility to study for free while practicing a sport at an American institution an extremely important motivational factor. One of the students believed that,

"....., the opportunity to get a great education for a low price was definitely the most attractive factor. While post-secondary education in Canada is far less expensive, Canada does not offer athletic scholarships of any kind. Also, probably due to the establishment of NCAA athletics, collegiate sports are far more competitive in the United States, which I think contributes to higher motivation and consequently, greater personal success for athletes."

The practical implication of this research includes the value of the findings to recruiters in colleges and universities across the United States. Knowing what motivates the international student-athletes in coming to The United States will aid in recruiting tactics as well as help in finding the right institution for a particular athlete. Not only will the recruiters from these institutions gain from the body of knowledge, but also companies who play the role as the middle man between the athletes and the United States colleges and universities will be able to use the information in placing their home country athletes in the right institutions. The increase in numbers of international student-athletes is the main indication that these findings can increase the success of recruiting in the future.

Concerns

As stated earlier, there are many reasons why coaches in the United States would want to bring in international student-athletes. There are although, some issues which arise in the recruitment of these athletes. Not only do immigration status and visa issues arise, but there is an increasing concern that the international student-athletes who are coming to the

NCAA have played at a professional level. The NCAA has tried to regulate eligibility for international student-athletes, which may at times cause problems with accessibility for these athletes to the NCAA institutions. In the International/Select Student-Athletes form- Division I , the NCAA states clearly that an individual loses amateur status is he or she competes on any professional athletics team or receives benefits not authorized by the NCAA. (NCAA Bylaw 14.5.1). Knowing this, it is perhaps easy for athletes who come from countries and institutions that are unknowing of the NCAA rules and regulations to break eligibility requirements. As the NCAA cannot regulate every university, college, or league around the world, it is difficult to know exactly if the student-athlete can be eligible to play in the NCAA. This can become a frustrating process as young freshman American student-athletes are sometimes pushed aside in order to play an international student-athlete who has perhaps had professional exposure to the sport.

Future Recommendations

The lack of research and literature in this field needs to be addressed. With the increasing rate in the numbers of international student-athletes coming to practice in the NCAA, this area of intercollegiate sports needs to be examined closely. Much research needs to be done in order to simply collect demographic data on the international student-athletes who are presently in the NCAA. Also, research on this topic should be conducted at Division II and Division III levels, where the percentage of international student-athletes who are on university and college rosters may be higher. Although limited, there is some literature on the reasons why coaches are looking outside of the United States to recruit certain athletes. This being known, future research should be examine if the majority of coaches who are recruiting

overseas are mainly international coaches, or if American and international coaches alike are equally recruiting overseas.

Future research could look into the differences between influencing motivational factors and the home country of the student-athletes. Due to this particular study having limited amounts of student-athletes from many countries, future research should try to compare student-athletes to each other

Future research is needed to explore which factors help retain the students through their eligibility years, and also on their possible future involvement with their college or university. Although the reasons for recruiting international student-athletes are numerous, retaining the students through their full eligibility is sometimes an issue. Certain student-athletes use the NCAA system as a stepping stone towards gaining entrance to professional sports leagues and tours. If this is a reality that expressed itself on many athletic rosters, universities and colleges will have a lower graduation rate for their student-athletes, which therefore could hurt the reputation of the athletic programs. The relationship between these student-athletes and the NCAA system could help improve athletic competition in the NCAA as well as open relationships between American colleges and Universities and other countries in facets other than in athletics. Also, future research is needed in order to look at team dynamics and how having international student-athletes on a roster affects team dynamics. Having international student-athletes on athletics teams can do elevate the competition level, but can also help in cultural awareness and challenge perspectives.

In conclusion, the necessity of studying international student-athletes is easily supported. At a time where universities and s across the 51 United States are trying to increase their diversity and recruit students from every corner of the globe, the recruitment of

international student-athletes is increasing in importance not only for athletic departments but for institutions as a whole. The future will determine how the relationship between these student-athletes and NCAA institutions will develop, and until then, focus should be but on this particular demographic in order to have a better understanding of this increasing population.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

[illegible]

Volunteering opportunities										
The positive advice from parents/guardians										
Exposure to professional leagues										
Siblings' experiences at U.S. college										
Financial situation at home										
Sport season schedule										
Your parents past success in athletics in US										
Chance to leave hometown										
Chance to play year-round										
Library Resources										
Sponsorship of athletic department by well-known sport brand										
Health insurance benefits										
NCAA college conference										
Past experience of athlete from same country										
Home country's coach college experience										
Living arrangements for student-athletes										
Current team members										
Campus dining and meal plan opportunities										
Closeness of athletic facilities to campus										
Athletic therapy resources / Personal trainers										
Academic advising opportunity										
Workout facilities										
Fraternities and Sororities on campus										
Information Technology operations (e.g. wireless campus)										
Program of study at colleges										
Possibility to travel throughout the U.S.										
Size of academic classes										
Possibility to leave parental influence at home										

Gender



What is your gender



Male



Female

Year



Which eligibility year are you participating in?



Freshman



Sophomore



Junior



Senior



Other

Age



What is your age?

0 to 255

Scholarship



Which kind of scholarship, if any, are you under while participating at your current institution?



Partial Scholarship



Full Scholarship



No Scholarship

Country



What is your home country?

Sport



In what sport do you participate in as a NCAA student-athlete?

APPENDIX B – EMAIL TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT-ATHLETES

International Student-Athlete,

International student-athletes have been making major contributions to NCAA athletics for over fifty years. Close to nearly all Division I institutions have been involved in recruiting international student-athletes from numerous countries overseas or neighboring countries. Newspaper editorials and magazine articles have often been written about the subject, but little research actually exists on the motives of these student-athletes for coming to the United States.

As part of my Master's Thesis in Sport Management, I have constructed a questionnaire that will attempt to pull together demographic data on this unique group as well as determine the motivational factors that influenced your choice in coming to an American university or college.

The importance of this study is vital to the survival of the population of international student-athletes in the NCAA!

For those completing the questionnaire, you will be entered in the chance to win a gift certificate at Starbucks!

ONLY INDIVIDUALS 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER ARE ALLOWED TO COMPLETE THIS STUDY

Protection of confidentiality/anonymity:

All the collected information will be held confidential and only viewed by the researchers.

Risk / Alternative Treatments: There are no risks involved in this research and participation is voluntary.

THANK YOU!!

Stephanie Garant-Jones

VITA

Stephanie Jones was born in Chandler, Quebec, Canada. Born to the parents of Tommy Jones and Francoise Garant, she is the eldest of two daughters. She is accomplished both academically and professionally. In 2005, she graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Sport Management from Brock University in St.Catharines, Ontario. She was named most promising Sport Management student while studying at Brock University. She soon after accepted a position as a Graduate Teaching Associate in the Physical Education and Activity Program at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee. She was awarded the Hobt Teaching Award during both years she spent with the program. In 2007 she graduated with a Master's of Science Degree with a concentration in Sport Management at the University of Tennessee. Dedicated in the field of sport management, she has worked with numerous sporting organizations both regionally and internationally.

Stephanie looks to pursue her passion for sports as she beings her professional career on an international stage by teaching at Tsinghua University in Beijing, China.