

Revenue generation in collegiate athletics:
An exploratory case study of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) compensation
for the community college student-athlete

by

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B.S., Kansas State University, 2003
M.S., Kansas State University, 2005

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

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Abstract

In the last several decades, revenues for intercollegiate athletic programs in Power 5 Conferences have reached levels of corporate business. As these revenues have soared, criticism from the public has increased and “the most repeated complaint about college athletics is that it is a “business” or “commercial activity” (Osborne, 2014, p. 143). Sources of this revenue include industries such as merchandising, media, broadcasting, and video games. Over time, student-athletes have become aware that their image or likeness is being commercialized in these industries for private profit. Therefore, questions arose about the labor of student-athletes and if they are being exploited in an industry in which administrators, coaches, and institutions generate millions of dollars in revenue while student-athletes are prohibited from accepting compensation under the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rules for amateurism.

From this mounting pressure, a lawsuit was filed by a former student-athlete, Shawn Alston, that claimed the NCAA’s rules for amateurism were in violation of Section 1 of the Sherman Act. This case reached the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) in the summer of 2021 with SCOTUS ruling in favor of Alston. As a result, the NCAA was forced to suspend the rules of amateurism in adopting interim policy for the use of a student-athletes Name, Image, or Likeness (NIL).

Therefore, as NIL policy is put into practice within intercollegiate athletics, it is anticipated that opportunities will flow down to all levels, including community colleges. The following exploratory multiple case study describes the perceptions of presidents, athletic directors, men’s and women’s basketball coaches, and men’s and women’s basketball student-athletes at three Midwestern community colleges for how NIL policy could affect the student-athlete experience at community colleges.

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| List of Tables | x |
| Acknowledgements | xi |
| Dedication | xii |
| Chapter 1 - INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Background | 2 |
| Rationale for Study | 8 |
| Problem Statement | 12 |
| Research Purpose | 13 |
| Research Questions | 14 |
| Population | 14 |
| Research Design | 14 |
| Data Collection & Analysis | 16 |
| Significance of Study | 17 |
| Role of the Researcher | 17 |
| Definition of Terms | 18 |
| Summary | 20 |
| Chapter 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW | 21 |
| History of Community College Athletics | 21 |
| Student-Athlete Amateurism | 27 |
| Intercollegiate Athletics Revenue | 33 |
| Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) Policy | 37 |
| Compensating Student-Athletes Research | 44 |
| Summary | 49 |
| Chapter 3 - METHODOLOGY & METHODS | 50 |
| Introduction | 50 |
| Constructionism | 51 |
| Theoretical Framework | 52 |
| Multiple Case Study | 57 |
| Site and Participant Selection | 59 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Human Protection | 60 |
| Pilot Study..... | 60 |
| Data Collection | 62 |
| Data Analysis | 65 |
| Trustworthiness..... | 66 |
| Summary | 68 |
| Chapter 4 - RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM MEMBER INSTITUTION CASE STUDIES | 69 |
| Introduction..... | 69 |
| Research Questions | 69 |
| Member Institution 1 | 70 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 71 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)..... | 73 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 74 |
| Member Institution 2 | 76 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 77 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)..... | 80 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 81 |
| Member Institution 3 | 83 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 83 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)..... | 86 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 87 |
| Member Institution Cross-Case Analysis | 88 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) | 89 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) | 89 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) | 90 |
| Summary | 90 |
| Chapter 5 - PEER PARTICIPANT GROUP ANALYSIS | 92 |
| Introduction..... | 92 |
| President Peer Participant Group Theme(s)..... | 92 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 96 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)..... | 96 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 97 |
| Athletic Director Peer Participant Group Theme(s) | 97 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 100 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s) | 101 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 101 |
| Men's Basketball Coach Peer Participant Group Theme(s) | 101 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 105 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s) | 106 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 106 |
| Women's Basketball Coach Peer Participant Group Theme(s) | 106 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 110 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s) | 111 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 111 |
| Men's Basketball Student-Athlete Peer Participant Group Theme(s) | 111 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 114 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s) | 115 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 115 |
| Women's Basketball Student-Athlete Peer Participant Group Theme(s) | 115 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 118 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s) | 119 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 119 |
| Peer Participant Cross-Group Analysis | 119 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s) | 119 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s) | 120 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 120 |
| Summary | 121 |
| Chapter 6 - ANALYSIS, RECOMMENDATIONS, & CONCLUSIONS | 123 |
| Introduction | 123 |
| Cross-Case Analysis of Member Institution Cases and Peer Participant Groups | 124 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme | 124 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s) | 125 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s) | 129 |
| Community College Amateurism and Subjective Theory of Value | 131 |
| Recommended Practices for Community Colleges | 134 |
| Implications of NIL Policy | 137 |
| Future Research Recommendations..... | 141 |
| Limitations of the Study | 143 |
| Summary | 144 |
| First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme | 144 |
| Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme | 145 |
| Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme | 145 |
| References | 147 |
| Appendix A - Volunteer Participant Interview Stimulus Questions & Discussion Prompts..... | 155 |
| Appendix B - Research Question Alignment Table | 157 |
| Appendix C - Pilot Study Verbal Consent Statement..... | 158 |
| Appendix D - IRB Approval Letter | 159 |
| Appendix E - Informed Consent Form | 160 |
| Appendix F - Volunteer Participant Recruitment Letter..... | 162 |

List of Tables

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table 3.1. Peer Participant Groups | 64 |
| Table 5.1. President Peer Participant Group | 95 |
| Table 5.2. Athletic Director Peer Participant Group..... | 100 |
| Table 5.3. Men’s Basketball Coach Peer Participant Group | 105 |
| Table 5.4. Women’s Basketball Coach Peer Participant Group | 110 |
| Table 5.5. Men’s Basketball Student-Athlete Peer Participant Group | 114 |
| Table 5.6. Women’s Basketball Student-Athletic Peer Participant Group | 118 |
| Table B.1. Research Question Alignment Table | 157 |

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the El Dorado Craig's. To my children: Boston Sofia, Breklyn Sahda, and Basil Sinclair; you are the greatest blessings in this life. I love you.

To my wife: Emily Jean (Jeano), where my soul yearns and finds compassion, grace, and joy; thank you for giving me confidence and endless support to achieve my aspiration, you are lovely. I love you.

Chapter 1 - INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher education in the United States have experienced tremendous growth and revenue generation for their intercollegiate athletic programs in recent decades, particularly for National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I university programs aligned in a Power Five Conference according to Wolohan (2015). As popularity has grown for sports such as football and men's basketball, it is easy to understand and feel the excitement of these sports at events such as March Madness and Championship Bowl games. As both an undergraduate and graduate student, I was able to experience life of major college athletics as both a student-manager and graduate assistant for a men's basketball team in the Big XII Conference. It is both an engaging and exciting lifestyle to travel to games, witness media attention, meet high-profile individuals, and feel a part of a team. Even though I did not experience the full measure of competition and the pressures associated with expectations for performance, I was provided a first-hand experience of life as a student-athlete. In these supporting roles, I witnessed the thrill of victory, agony of defeat, and the tireless work for preparation invested by student-athletes in a culturally diverse environment. This experience was my training ground for beginning a professional career at the community college level as a collegiate basketball coach. In these daily processes, I also witnessed struggles as student-athletes navigated a competitive performance environment in higher education. Some of these individuals struggled financially, had little to no family support, or were not academically prepared. Despite these hardships, the efforts of student-athletes at the NCAA Division I level helped generate multi-million-dollar revenues (NCAA, n.d.). However, while they received compensation in the form of grant-in-aid scholarships to cover costs of tuition, fees, textbooks, room, and board it is necessary to explore if opportunities for student-athletes to earn additional compensation is equitable and

supports the educational experience of student-athletes.

Background

As revenues have soared, criticism from the public has increased and “the most repeated complaint about college athletics is that it is a “business” or “commercial activity” (Osborne, 2014, p. 143). At the NCAA level, this becomes apparent in reviewing the sheer size of conference contracts as they amass astounding amounts of money and parallel revenue generation by corporate business. For example, Grimmatt (2015) notes the Pac-12 Conference agreed to a 12-year, \$3 billion contract with ESPN, to be split amongst conference members. This lump sum divided equally amongst its 12-member institutions would distribute \$250 million of revenue per institution. Furthermore, the NCAA announced a 14-year, \$10.8 billion contract with Turner Broadcasting and CBS to televise the NCAA basketball tournament in 2010. This influx in revenue has resulted in more lucrative, multi-year, multi-million-dollar contracts for coaches while NCAA standards of amateurism prevent student-athletes from receiving compensation. One position is that “reform is necessary to bridge the gap between the NCAA’s increasing revenue and college athletes’ stagnant position” (Grimmett, 2015, p. 855). Counter to this position, Osborne (2014) identified that participating in collegiate competition is a privilege with many benefits and while privilege comes with responsibility, student-athletes can choose not to participate if they are unhappy with the situation.

According to the NCAA, more than 500,000 student-athletes compete in 24 sports (NCAA, n.d.). Even though the NCAA has over half a million student-athletes competing across three divisions, it only has two main revenue streams, generating \$867.5 million from the Division I Men’s Basketball Championship (March Madness) television and marketing rights and \$177.9 million from Championship ticket sales (NCAA, n.d.), which does not include ticket

sale revenues from football bowl games. These revenues are then distributed amongst 14 expenditure sources: Sport Sponsorship and Scholarship Funds (\$222M), Division I Basketball Performance Fund (\$168.8M), Division I Championships (\$153.8M), Student Assistance Fund (\$86.6M), Student-Athlete Services and Championship Support (\$64.5M), Division I Equal Conference Fund (\$53.6M), Academic Enhancement Fund (\$49.2M), Division II Allocation (\$53.3M), Membership Support Services (\$23.3M), Division III Allocation (\$35.2M), Division I Conference Grants (\$10M), Educational Programs (\$3.8M), Other Association-Wide Expenses (\$58.4M), and General & Administrative Expenses (\$44.8M) (NCAA, 2020). In review, while the NCAA generates approximately \$1 billion in revenue each year, these same funds are expended with nearly \$100M providing funds to support student-athletes at the Division II and III levels and argued that a few top revenue producing sports support the majority. Therefore, supporting the claim that “it is only appropriate to provide suitable compensation for the student-athlete who makes those university opportunities possible” (Haden, 2001, p. 681). One sub-set of this group of student-athletes are the high-profile performers who are easily recognizable in public from televised competition at both the regional and national level. In parallel with their professional counterparts, these student-athletes perform in a role such as quarterback, running back, or lead their team in scoring. Due to this name recognition, Ed O’Bannon brought national attention to this issue making the argument it is only fair to allow these performers to earn compensation in a free market by profiting from opportunities generated from Name, Image, or Likeness otherwise known as NIL compensation with an Antitrust Lawsuit in 2009 (Sheetz, 2016).

Models of compensation for student-athletes is not a recent development, proposals have

previously been made such as the “Net Revenue Distribution Model” (Schlereth et al., 2019) and the “Laundry Money” proposal (Haden, 2001). However, when designing models of compensation for student-athletes, several issues arise such as status as employees, taxation, Title IX, and Antitrust issues. Within this, Haden (2001) identifies the most commonly cited obstacle of a pay-for-play scheme in the Sherman Antitrust Act as it prohibits the restraint of trade or commerce. Therefore, the NCAA could not simply determine a stipend to be paid as business activities cross state lines and violate regulations of interstate commerce. Adding complexity to these issues is the core philosophy of the student-athlete as an educational journey and the status of amateurism defined by the NCAA as “someone who participates, and always has participated, in sports for pleasure and for the physical, mental, or social benefits” (Schott, 1996, p. 31). However, due to rapid growth and enormous revenues generated for universities through marketing, merchandise, and ticket sales from intercollegiate athletics, support from the O’Bannon case expanded to create equitable opportunities for student-athletes to earn compensation for outstanding performance and recognizable social status. This has particular merit when also considering residual revenues generated in the forms of increased enrollments and expanded media exposure. Furthermore, these revenues support opportunities for sub-levels of collegiate competition and while advancement to professional leagues such as the NFL and NBA is restricted out of high school, a gap exists in the literature to explore how compensating student-athletes beyond established means influences a student-athletes pursuit of a higher education, particularly for student-athletes at institutions of limited resources and specifically, community colleges. As Diede (2005) points out, “the community college finances are influenced by the same factors affecting other levels of higher education” (p. 43). For example, government financial support from the state and local levels, tuition, fees, and donor support.

However, “while the basis of support is the same, the vision, mission, and structure of the community college is significantly different from larger colleges and universities” (Diede, 2005, p. 43). As it relates to student-athletes and intercollegiate athletics revenue, there are a couple of important distinctions to identify.

First, for student-athletes at two-year institutions, their eligibility is subject to the same amateurism rules at NCAA institutions as stated in NCAA bylaws 12.02.6 Intercollegiate Competition and 12.01.3 “Individual” vs. “Student-Athlete” (NCAA Division I Manual, 2021, p. 60-61). Secondly, while two-year intercollegiate athletic programs are organizationally structured and function similar to their university counterparts, two-year institutional revenue does not amass television and media rights revenue. This could be for several reasons, but many of the student-athletes competing at two-year institutions compete with similar displays of athletic performance and research needs to consider how new legislation for NIL compensation could impact these student-athletes, particularly as their careers may progress to the NCAA level.

Although it is clear legislation is gaining traction at the state level, the issue of compensation has now reached the highest level of judicial governance at the United States Supreme Court. In a recent hearing, “justices of the Supreme Court of the United States questioned whether amateurism is an essential part of the NCAA’s business model” (Murphy, 2021, p. 2). The appeal hearing is in response to a California judge’s ruling in 2019, in which a former West Virginia University student-athlete, Shawne Alston and plaintiffs sued claiming “NCAA rules violate federal antitrust laws because Plaintiffs would receive greater compensation in exchange for their athletic services” (Rule, 2019, p. 4-5). In her ruling summary according to Rule (2019), Judge Claudia Wilken stated the following:

Restricting non-cash education-related benefits and academic awards that can be provided on top of a grant-in-aid has not been proven to be necessary to preserving consumer demand for Division I basketball and FBS football as a product distinct from professional sports. Allowing each conference and its member schools to provide additional educational-related benefits without NCAA caps and prohibitions, as well as academic awards, will help ameliorate their anticompetitive effects and may provide some of the compensation student-athletes would have received absent Defendant's agreement to restrain trade. (p. 3-4)

In addition to the judicial system, legislators, and policymakers, another organization demonstrating support for NIL compensation is the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. Members of this group include thought leaders in higher education such as current and former university presidents, university trustees, former students, and nationally regarded leaders in higher education or college sports (Knight Commission, n.d.). According to the Knight Commission (n.d.), the organization was established in response to highly visible athletics scandals and exists to promote and lead transformational change that prioritizes the education, health, safety, and success of college athletes. Their leadership has resulted in policy changes improving graduation rates, reducing time demands on college athletes, and the disclosure of financial data. As an advocate for integrity in collegiate athletics, the Knight Commission (2020) has publicly stated their support for NIL compensation and a belief that an updated model for college sports is necessary to ensure fair treatment and the well-being of students. Expressing a concern for not establishing pay-for-play schemes, the Knight Commission issued the following five guiding principles:

1. Fairness to Athletes as Students

2. Informing Athletes on NIL Rights
3. Oversight of NIL Rights
4. Guardrails for NIL Rights
5. National Uniformity

These guidelines, preceding court rulings, and legislation have acted as the prelude for allowing compensation in the form of NIL and could result in Supreme Court rulings and federal legislation that drastically changes the landscape of intercollegiate athletics. The ripple effects will extend to all levels of college sports and it has become necessary to understand how a new business model could change community colleges.

According to the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) (n.d.) it supports over 60,000 student-athletes each year equating to approximately one-tenth the number of student-athletes supported by the NCAA. Also divided across three divisions, the NJCAA supports competition in the following sports for men and women: basketball, bowling, cross country, golf, half marathon, lacrosse, soccer, swimming and diving, tennis, and track and field. Additionally, baseball, football, and wrestling are supported for men only and beach volleyball, softball, and volleyball are supported for women only.

However, unlike the NCAA, not all institutions of the same status compete under the governance of the NJCAA. Consider the state of California for example, according to the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCCAA) (n.d.), they are authorized to administer athletic activities for approximately 24,000 student-athletes in the state. Supporting the aforementioned sports by the NJCAA, the CCCCCAA also oversees competition in tennis, water polo, and badminton. It is important to note that not all institutions sponsor all sports. For

example, while there are numerous community college institutions, approximately only 120 sponsor football between the NJCAA and CCCAA.

In contrast, there are nearly 130 NCAA Division I-A football programs, not including Division I-AA, Division II, and Division III. The Division I-A programs are bolstered by massive media contracts which build a national platform for competitions to be broadcast during an academic year, making it difficult for NJCAA student-athletes to receive public attention. While advances in technology have built visual platforms for live streaming on the internet, a lack of exposure is contributing to community colleges being left out of much of the discussion for NIL compensation.

In summary, multi-million-dollar revenues for institutions of higher education in Power 5 Conferences and the NCAA have created a tension in the space for those receiving a share of this revenue; primarily coaches, administrators, and private businesses, but not student-athletes who are prohibited from receiving compensation due to rules for amateurism at all levels of intercollegiate athletics. From this, thought leaders in higher education have recognized a need for a change and lawsuits have rendered opinions from the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS). As a result, litigation has resulted in interim Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) policy allowing student-athletes the ability to earn compensation from the use of their NIL for business activities such as endorsing products, making appearances, signing autographs, or hosting a camp. However, the focus of the potential effect of this benefit is focused on student-athletes competing in Power 5 Conferences and how this might affect the experience of student-athletes at community colleges needs to be explored.

Rationale for Study

The focus of the debate and public interest for student-athlete compensation has

primarily been focused on the NCAA level, but the second-largest athletic association in the country is the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) with over 500-member institutions in 44 states. As a governing body of intercollegiate athletics for two-year institutions, the NJCAA's stated mission is "to foster a national program of athletic participation in an environment that supports equitable opportunities consistent with the education objectives of member colleges" (NJCAA, Handbook, p. 3). Similar to the NCAA, across the country, "3400 teams compete in 28 different sports across three divisions in the NJCAA" (NJCAA, Handbook, p. 3). Despite a robust membership, the accomplishments of student-athletes at this level are often overlooked and not understood by the public. Amongst the three divisions, varying philosophies are outlined by the NJCAA, most notably at the Division I level in which full grant-in-aid scholarships are permitted whereas only tuition, fees, and books are covered at the Division II level, and no grant-in-aid is permitted at Division III institutions.

Each year, many of these student-athletes aspire to compete at NCAA institutions in their competitive sport. For a myriad of reasons, student-athletes choose to begin or continue a playing career at two-year institutions. These competitive years provide foundational experiences as a launching pad to a playing career at a NCAA institution. Some players need skill development, others need to improve academic performance, and some transfer from NCAA institutions to community colleges looking for a second chance. While NJCAA institutions are governed by their own constitution they are closely aligned with the NCAA. Student-athletes who plan to pursue a competitive playing career beyond their two-year institution must meet criterion for eligibility set forth by the NCAA and meet standards for amateurism. Therefore, due to the open transfer of student-athletes between two-year and four-year institutions, how NIL compensation could benefit student-athletes at two-year institutions

needed to be explored.

As an example, in the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference (KJCCC), only recently have athletic grant-in-aid scholarships been expanded allowing for funds to cover costs beyond tuition and books for Division I institutions. According to Section VI of the KJCCC 2019-2020 handbook, “NJCAA guidelines for Division I scholarships are the same as NJCAA starting in 2018-2019” (p. 10). In other words, the KJCCC has now adopted the policy permitting full grant-in-aid athletic scholarships for sports competing as classified as a NJCAA Division I activity. This is a change in KJCCC by-law policy as previously the conference restricted this grant-in-aid opportunity to only cover for tuition and books, even though it has been allowed by the NJCAA for a number of years to cover room, board, and fees as well. Despite this limited financial opportunity, community colleges have a rich tradition of developing student-athletes for competition at the highest levels of NCAA Division I and beyond to the professional ranks. This success though, has not been achieved without challenges for those responsible in leading student-athletes; coaches and athletic directors. For example, coaches have an uphill battle when recruiting student-athletes who are also being recruited by institutions in NJCAA Regions who allow full grant-in-aid scholarships. This is particularly true when the student-athlete qualifies for other financial aid such as a Pell Grant. In this instance, the additional financial aid can be used for costs beyond tuition, room and board, fees, and textbooks as they are covered by the grant-in-aid athletic scholarship. Therefore, how NIL compensation could benefit the student-athlete may have a greater influence in a region or conference that offers a limited athletic grant-in-aid scholarship opportunity.

In 2019, the state of California passed Senate Bill No. 206, “an act to add Section 67456 to, and to add and repeal Section 67457 of, the Education Code, relating to collegiate athletics”

(California Legislative Information, 2019, p. 1). With this legislation, California lawmakers broke from the NCAA in allowing student-athletes at NCAA institutions the ability to earn compensation from business activities associated with NIL compensation. While the bill didn't include community colleges, it did not explicitly exclude them, but instead directed the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to establish a working group in order "to review various athletic association bylaws and state and federal laws regarding a college athlete's use of the athlete's name, image, and likeness for compensation" to submit to the California Legislature for recommendations by July 1, 2021 (California Legislative Information, 2019, p. 1-2). According to California Community Colleges (n.d.), the working group had established the following five recommendations:

1. Apply SB 206 to California Community Colleges
2. Recognition and Scope of Athlete's Right to Publicity *Approved*
3. Limiting Direct Compensation Based on Athletic Ability or Performance *Approved*
4. Limitation on Permitted NIL Activities *Approved*
5. Educational Programming to Support Athlete NIL Activities *Approved*

Since the passage of SB206, other states across the country have passed or proposed similar legislation. For example, in Kansas, the house of representatives recently passed HB2264, "an act concerning student athletes at postsecondary educational institution student athletes; permitting compensation for the use of a student athlete's name, image, likeness rights, or athletic reputation" (Kansas Legislature, 2021, p. 1). Furthermore, the definition of postsecondary institution within the bill includes community colleges and it was sent to the senate after passing the house with 95 yea votes to 29 nay votes. The senate referred the bill to the committee on judiciary who refereed it to committee on federal and state affairs. In May

of 2022, the bill died on senate general orders (Kansas Legislature, 2022, p. 1). However, while not enacted as law yet, research was needed to explore how NIL compensation could impact the community college student-athlete.

Lastly, since policy implementation for NIL will have a far-reaching ripple effect across several organizations, it is necessary that all potential stakeholder interests are considered.

However, as identified by Sorbe (2020), the Division I Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) has been reluctant to embrace NIL compensation stating:

No one is talking about how proposals for name, image, and likeness reform – both state and federal – will affect sports other than football and men’s basketball or a handful of elite student-athletes in other sports. No one is talking about what the proposals will do for limited resources institutions, historically black colleges and universities, or international student-athletes. (Division I SAAC, 2019, p. 2).

Furthermore, the implementation of NIL legislation will result in changes across the system of intercollegiate athletics and another area of concern is “the apparent conflict between amateurism and NIL legislation jeopardizes the intent of Title IX” (Sorbe, 2020, p. 2). While Title IX was enacted in 1972 by the Department of Education (DOE) to prevent discrimination on the basis of sex at institutions who receive federal funding, it is most commonly discussed in issues relating to student-athletes. According to Sorbe (2020), Title IX legislation was championed by former United States Representative Patsy Mink of Hawaii after her own experiences of discrimination and applies to all aspects of federally funded education programs and activities, including publicly funded community colleges.

Problem Statement

The first public community college began in 1901 as Joliet Junior College (JJC) in Joliet,

IL just outside of Chicago, IL (Joliet Junior College, n.d.). Over the next century, community colleges expanded their footprint and “by 1993, community colleges had become a permanent component of American higher education” (Cohen & Kisker, 2010, p. 329). Now, according to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) (n.d.), there are over 1,100 members across the country. Many of these institutions sponsor intercollegiate athletic teams and “consistent with the past four years of data, about half of men’s basketball transfers remain in Division I, while a quarter transfer out of Division II and a quarter transfer out of the NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, etc.” (NCAA Research, 2019, p. 7). This matriculation makes it necessary that community college student-athletes are not overlooked in policy considerations and this research explores how this could affect the community college student-athlete experience.

Research Purpose

As institutions of higher education explore how to implement policy and legislation for student-athletes to earn compensation from the use of their NIL, several issues such as amateurism, employment law, antitrust law, and legislation for commerce and higher education must be navigated. The ability of student-athletes to benefit from the use of their social status is not new to intercollegiate athletics “as a reward, the outstanding football player becomes well known to a large number of people through publicity resulting from his athletic achievements” (Newman, 1941, p. 1). However, while literature focuses on policy for implementation of NIL compensation at the NCAA level, smaller two-year institutions, must navigate this climate with significantly smaller budgets and resources. For example, according to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEPS) (2020), Kansas State University collected just over \$900,000,000 in total revenues and other additions during fiscal year 2020, while Independence Community College only collected nearly \$15,000,000. Therefore, the purpose of

this research was to explore how NIL compensation could affect the experience of intercollegiate student-athlete participants in men's and women's basketball at smaller community college institutions with enrollments of less than 10,000 students.

Research Questions

The guiding question for this research is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy?

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience?

The second sub-question is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies?

Population

This study includes member institution cases at three rural community colleges from a community college conference in a Midwestern state in the following six peer participant groups: men's and women's basketball student-athletes, men's and women's basketball coaches, athletic directors, and presidents at each institution. To recruit participants, a recruitment e-mail was sent to community colleges in a Midwestern state who sponsor intercollegiate sports for men's and women's basketball.

Research Design

For this research, a qualitative research design was selected for a multiple case study. In studies involving qualitative inquiry, rich, contextual details are essential for participants of a study to illuminate their experiences for a researcher and "the purpose of qualitative research is to describe, explore, and explain phenomena being studied" (Ploeg, 1999, p. 36). Based on the understanding that each participant of the study has experiences that can be influenced by a

multitude of variables including their role within a team structure and their position of influence from first year to second year, an exploratory multiple case study methodology was selected. While other methodologies such as narrative inquiry were considered, participant experience with compensation beyond established means is a new area of research and a topic in which participants are unlikely to share many stories of lived experience.

According to Bhattacharya (2017), “case study research is commonly used in qualitative research to answer focused questions with in-depth inquiries” (p. 109). This distinction adds further credence for a multiple case study methodology as the purpose of the study is not to generalize the findings in data analysis across populations, but “to inform policies or to uncover contributing reasons for cause-and-effect relationships” (Bhattacharya, 2017, p. 109). Across the country, how NIL compensation influences the journey of student-athletes at two-year institutions will be varied from a multitude of complexities. Institutions in one region of the country may embrace NIL compensation opportunities more fervently while some leagues or athletic associations may enact a more conservative approach. In the Midwest, a tradition rich history exists in the popularity for intercollegiate athletics and by selecting research participants for cases from these two-year institutions, participants can provide in-depth insight as “the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena” (Yin, 2009, p. 4). Therefore, in this research, a multiple case study methodology through a subjective theory of value lens explored the influence of NIL compensation allowing readers an ability to apply findings as interpreted.

Multiple case study design, similar to single case study, is used as a research method to “understand a real-life phenomenon in depth” (Yin, 2009, p. 18). However, multiple case study research differs from single case study because “single-case designs are vulnerable if only

because you will have put all your eggs in one basket” (Yin, 2009, p. 61). In other words, while a researcher is exploring the same topic, by including two or more cases, a deeper analysis is possible as Yin (2009) points out, “having two or more cases will produce an even stronger effect” (p. 62). Therefore, for the purposes of this study, by including two or more cases exploring the possible impact of policy for NIL compensation, a deeper understanding was developed based on a variety of complex variables.

Data Collection & Analysis

To collect data, processes for conducting unstructured interviews and document review was followed. To conduct interviews, a campus visit was made to each member institution case who volunteered for individuals to participate in a peer participant group. If a volunteer participant was unavailable for a face-to-face interview from a peer participant group, an interview time was scheduled for synchronous facilitation via phone conferencing or over the internet using the web application, Zoom. To stimulate discussion, a set of stimulus questions and discussion prompts was used, but not followed in a pre-determined order. In addition to unstructured interviews, historical records and archives were searched as document review. Specifically, the documents that were requested and reviewed include: athletic department handbooks, conference handbook, conference website, institutional websites, meeting minutes, and notes from memoing.

Following the data collection process, a process for thematic analysis was followed to conduct data analysis. To do so, interviews were transcribed, read, and reviewed. During analysis, text was bracketed and sorted to a corresponding research question. From this,

sorted data was analyzed for any emerging themes from each member institution case. Also, data was sorted and analyzed amongst each peer participant group for emerging themes in cross-case analysis.

Significance of Study

The significance of this study is in examining the influence of NIL compensation at institutions of limited resources, specifically rural community colleges with student enrollments of 10,000 or less. As a result of this study, community college administrators and policymakers can understand how other institutions are responding to the implementation of NIL policy. Furthermore, the perceptions of presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes for how compensation can influence the student-athlete experience helped discover important issues and stakeholder priorities for intercollegiate athletics at smaller community colleges.

Role of the Researcher

Just like many young kids growing up and as an adult still today, a passion of mine is athletics, specifically: basketball, baseball, and football. As a child and a teenager, I primarily played baseball and basketball as well as officiated these sports for extra income. This passion for sports grew into a motivation to pursue collegiate coaching as a profession, and I coached primarily at National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I institutions, capturing the Jayhawk West and Region VI Championships at Butler Community College in 2010 for Men's Basketball. In June of 2014, I transitioned careers to a position within higher education administration as it fit both the growing needs of my family and career aptitudes. I am still on this career path today and in considering a topic for a dissertation, I was drawn to a research inquiry to evaluate how recent legislation for NIL compensation may influence the educational experience of community college student-athletes.

My first-experience with intercollegiate athletics was working as a student-manager for a men's basketball team in the Big XII Conference. Since I was not a player, I did not experience the full measure of collegiate competition though I gained a perspective of being a student-athlete witnessing their triumphs and struggles on a daily basis. Therefore, when I moved into a career of collegiate coaching, a challenge I experienced was a perception that I was not qualified enough as I did not fully understand the nature of being a collegiate student-athlete. Also, in parallel to this experience, I experienced the same perception from faculty when I transitioned to higher education administration, that I was not qualified enough as I had not been a full-time faculty member. These experiences have pushed me to prove my capabilities, that not only am I qualified enough, but have more to offer than my current professional platform allows. This is a foundation for motivation in pursuing the highest level of education my profession offers and in doing so, contribute knowledge to a subject I am passionate about, proving my capacity in both worlds.

Furthermore, these experiences are valuable as a researcher in the field of intercollegiate athletics as they will allow me the ability to interact with the data that is an affordance for inference and deep meaning in analyzing the research data that would not be available to another researcher without these first-hand experiences. However, it is also my responsibility as a researcher to guard against potential bias in conducting research having gained a breadth of direct experience prior to conducting a study as discussed in chapter 3.

Definition of Terms

Amateur. Someone who participates, and always has participated, in sports for pleasure and for the physical, mental, or social benefits. (Schott, 1996, p. 31)

Full Grant-in-Aid. According to the NCAA 2021-2022 handbook, "a full grant-in-aid is

financial aid that consists of tuition and fees, room and board, books and other expenses related to attendance at the institution up to the cost of attendance established pursuant to Bylaws 15.02.2 and 15.02.2.1 (p. 209).

March Madness. According to Balseiro et. al (2010), NCAA Division I Men's Basketball National Championship Tournament.

NCAA. According to Brooks & Davies (2008):

the core purpose of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, founded in 1906, is to regulate competition among the more than one thousand colleges and universities who voluntarily submit to its authority and to integrate intercollegiate athletics into higher education so that the educational experience of the student-athlete is paramount. (p. 747)

Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL). An individual's property right in their Name, Image, or Likeness. According to Feldman (2016), "student-athletes have created tremendous value in their NIL's and, absent NCAA restrictions, would receive significant compensation for them in an open market" (p. 3).

Power 5 Conference. According to Wolohan (2015), represents the biggest and wealthiest college-sports conferences with NCAA member institutions in the Pac-12 Conference, Big 12 Conference, Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Big Ten Conference, and Southeastern Conference (SEC).

Student-Athlete. Commonly recognized as a male or female participant of a sport at the secondary or postsecondary level. According to Aiello (2016), the term was first introduced by the NCAA's first executive director Walter Byers in 1951. However, "the definition of "student-athlete" was deliberately ambiguous because college players were not students at play (which

might understate their athletic ambitions), nor were they just athletes in college (which might imply they were professionals)” (Aiello, 2016, p. 160).

Surplus Value. According to Ehrbar and Glick (1986):

Labor power appears on the market as a commodity and the capitalist is able to purchase this commodity at its value. However, the value of labor power is less than the abstract labor which the capitalist extracts from this same commodity in production. Surplus value is the difference between the total value produced and the value of labor power (p. 465-466).

Summary

As an introduction, this chapter has covered topics for intercollegiate athletics revenue, student-athlete amateurism, student-athlete compensation, and NIL policy. Furthermore, the chapter identifies a research purpose, research questions, a description of the problem, and a significance for the study. Terms have been identified that are operationalized in research and processes for data collection and analysis have been described. Lastly, possible limitations of the study and researcher bias have been presented.

Chapter 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

On a broad spectrum, the term student-athlete can prompt a number of responses as Diede (2005) notes “the mere utterance of the words collegiate athletics elicits a wide range of discussions and emotions” (p. 12). Therefore, it is no surprise that a number of topics exist around the practices, procedures, and policies of intercollegiate athletics. A longstanding issue that has intensified in recent years is the chasm between the revenue generated by major intercollegiate athletic programs and the amateur status of student-athletes. This divide has intensified conversations on the topic for if student-athletes should be paid beyond institutional grant-in-aid, and if so, how? From the perspective of student-athletes, grant-in-aid scholarships that cover tuition, fees, and living expenses is not an equitable representative share of the revenue produced from their labor. On the other side of the debate, institutions of higher education, government, and governing agencies such as the NCAA, see student-athletes as amateur participants and not professional athletes or employees. Further compounding the issue for student-athletes is the revenue companies in business enterprises such as merchandising and entertainment earn. In order to address this issue, litigation has been pursued by current and former student-athletes to allow an ability to earn revenue as a student-athlete without jeopardizing eligibility. Therefore, the following review covers these topic areas in current literature: history of community college athletics, student-athlete amateurism, intercollegiate athletics revenue, Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) policy, and compensating student-athletes research.

History of Community College Athletics

The enterprise of intercollegiate athletics in the twenty-first century that participants and spectators are familiar with today has grown from humble beginnings. According to Jones

(1997), “the development of sports in higher education evolved out of the needs of students to relieve the tediousness of studies and their strict, daily regiment” (p. 33). This focus on participation is a stark contrast to the environment today as the sole focus of competition seems to be on winning as institutions of higher education engage in an arms race to recruit the most talented student-athletes. This contrasting philosophy is described by Jones (1997) as “although winning was an acceptable consequence of competition, the system’s real purpose centered on “gentlemen” developing lifetime leisure activities” (p. 33-34). However, over time, athletic participation became more competitive and by the early twentieth century, it was clear a formal association was needed to provide regulation and governance. This resulted from “due to the lack of regulation, football injuries were commonplace, serious, and in some cases, resulted in the death of players” (Menke, 2010, p. 18). Therefore, in 1905, under the leadership of United States President, Theodore Roosevelt at a summit with college presidents, the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States was formed. Five years later, in 1910, the association’s name was changed to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) (Menke, 2010). This early history set the stage for growth in intercollegiate participation and nearly thirty years later, the establishment of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

The movement to create an organization focused on two-year intercollegiate athletics began in 1937 as a group of “representatives from 13 California two-year colleges” (*NJCAA History*, n.d., para 1) met in Fresno, CA to petition the NCAA to allow their two-year institutions admittance to competition at NCAA events. However, the NCAA rejected the petition in the spring of 1938 to reserve representation for four-year institutions and “the 13 California representatives reassemble[d] at the West Coast Relays and approve[d] the adoption of a constitution for a national two-year collegiate athletics association drafted by Oliver E. Byrd”

(*NJCAA History*, n.d., para 2). At the outset, NJCAA participation was focused on four geographical regions in California and according to the NJCAA Timeline (1930-1939, n.d.):

the founding member colleges (all from California) of the NJCAA included:

Bakersfield College, Chaffey College, Compton College, Fullerton Junior College, Glendale Junior College, Los Angeles City College, Pasadena Junior College, Riverside Junior College, Sacramento Junior College, San Bernardino Valley College, San Mateo Junior College, Santa Monica City College, and Visalia Junior College.

(para 4)

Providing leadership for the establishment of a system for two-year college athletics, Oliver E. Byrd from San Mateo Junior College was selected as the organizations first president, “Byrd later became an instructor at Stanford University and later established the school’s Health Education Department” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1930-1939, n.d., para 5).

In 1939, “the first national championship event in NJCAA history takes place with the holding of a National Track & Field Championship Meet at Sacramento Junior College” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1930-1939, n.d., para 6) in California. Also, “at this event the group adopts the official name “National Junior College Athletic Association” as well as eligibility standards for national championship participants” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1930-1939, n.d., para 7). Claiming the title from the track and field national championship event, Compton College from California became the first NJCAA National Champion.

Early in the 1940’s, led by the second NJCAA president, Hershel Smith, “officials divided the United States into six regions: Region 1 (Northern California); Region 2 (Central California); Region 3 (Southern California); Region 4 (Southwest); Region 5 (Mountain); Region 6 (Eastern)” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1940-1949, n.d., para 1). In June of 1941, the organization

experienced its largest attendance as “over 30 colleges from Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1940-1949, n.d., para 3) attended the third track & field championships in Denver, Colorado. At this event, the first NJCAA executive meeting was held.

Shortly after its creation however, the NJCAA paused activities due to World War II and once resumed, began expansion discussions to include the sports of football, basketball, and swimming. Credited as putting the NJCAA “on the map”, “the first NJCAA Basketball Championship Tournament is held in Springfield, Mo...at the State Fieldhouse on the campus of Southwest Missouri State College” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1940-1949, n.d., para 10). Also, according to the NJCAA Timeline (n.d.), Marin Junior College emerged victorious and representatives from Hutchinson, KS submitted a bid to host the tournament. The bid was successful and the NJCAA Division I Men’s Basketball National Championships moved to Hutchinson, KS in 1949. As of 2021, the city still hosts the tournament at the Hutchinson Sports Arena and will for a number of years into the future as the city approved a \$29.4 million bond project for updates to the arena nearly five years ago according to the Hutch Post (*Sports Arena*, 2021).

Going forward into the 1950’s, according to the NJCAA Timeline (n.d.) expansion happened quickly with membership growing to over 200 colleges in 33 states prompting the NJCAA to modernize its constitution and eligibility rules. In 1952, the California Junior College Association split from the NJCAA. At the time, concerns about the future of the NJCAA started to emerge as membership fell to approximately 130-member institutions. However, the opening of the first Hutchinson Sports Arena that same year, “signaled that despite the California-

setback the NJCAA was heading in a positive direction” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1950-1959, n.d., para 9).

In 1955, NJCAA “membership increased to 184 colleges in 36 states” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1950-1959, n.d., para 12) and continued to gain traction as a legitimate national organization by creating under the advisement of the American Association of Junior Colleges, new policy. By working together, “the two organizations jointly release[d] a Statement of Principles Conducting Junior College Athletics” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1950-1959, n.d., para 10). By the conclusion of the 1950s, the expansion continued to see growth as the NJCAA launched its first championship bowl game for football in 1956. They also began discussing the eligibility for student-athletes transferring from NJCAA to NCAA institutions and awarded Grand Junction, Colorado the NJCAA Baseball Championship according to the NJCAA Timeline (n.d.).

While it is widely noted that a proliferation of community colleges emerged in the 1960s and 1970s as institutions opened doors across the United States, so did membership in the NJCAA as it “eclipses 300 colleges for the first time, surging from 289 in 1963-64 to 329 for the 1964-1965 academic year” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1960-1969, n.d., para 20). Also, during this time notable figures emerged such as Roger Staubach, Spencer Haywood, and George Killian. Staubach, who started his career playing for New Mexico Military Institute, later led the Dallas Cowboys to two Super Bowl Championships after winning the 1963 Heisman Trophy at the US Naval Academy. Haywood, who played at Trinidad State Junior College in Colorado, was selected to represent Team USA at the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City. Killian, who was selected as the first NJCAA Executive Director in 1969 as the day-to-day operations of managing the NJCAA were growing, “said Haywood’s selection and performance in the ‘68 Olympics was the best thing that ever happened to the NJCAA” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1960-1969,

n.d., para 26). Lastly, in 1965, Vincennes University from Indiana became the first team east of the Mississippi River to win the NJCAA Men's Basketball Championship Tournament in Hutchinson, KS. A key contributor to the team was Dan Sparks, who later coached at Vincennes and Wabash Valley College amassing 847 career wins and an induction into the NJCAA Men's Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame (*NJCAA Timeline*, n.d.).

In the 1970s, membership in the NJCAA surpassed 500 colleges and regulations were passed for student-athlete financial assistance after establishing a Scholarships and Grant-in-Aid Committee in the late 1960s according to the NJCAA Timeline (n.d.). Several other significant changes were also established as “in response to Title IX legislation being signed into law by President Richard Nixon, NJCAA President Homa. S. Thomas launches a special study committee to research starting a women's division” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1970-1979, n.d., para 5). By a vote of 19-2, the NJCAA joined the NCAA and the NAIA in “becoming the first of three major collegiate athletic organizations to integrate women's athletics into their platform” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1970-1979, n.d., para 9). At the end of the decade, “membership in the NJCAA was at 564 colleges with 489 filing membership in both the men's and women's division” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1970-1979, n.d., para 16). Also witnessed was the first African-American, John Mitchell, playing football at the University of Alabama after being recognized as an NJCAA All-American at Eastern Arizona College (*NJCAA Timeline*, n.d.). Mitchell furthered his career in athletics as a football coach, the first African-American coach at Alabama and an assistant coach with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Following tremendous advancement in the previous decade, the 1980s produced many notable athletes and coaches who began their careers at two-year institutions according to the NJCAA Timeline (n.d.) such as Nolan Richardson, Bernadette Mattox, Anthony “Spud” Webb,

Mike Rozier, Bob Bottger, Ronnie Arrow, Mitch Richmond, and Jim Thorpe. However, the decade did not pass without a couple of notable advancements for the association. First, “the board expanded to include four college presidents selected by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1980-1989, n.d., para 20). Secondly, “the NJCAA Board of Directors vote[d] to approve semester-based eligibility standards for student-athletes” (*NJCAA Timeline*, 1980-1989, n.d., para 22). Interestingly, the NJCAA Timeline (n.d.) points out how significant of an achievement this was as they became the first national collegiate sports association to have semester-based eligibility requirements. Lastly, the NJCAA expanded opportunities for student-athlete participation by launching a Division II for men’s basketball, this proved to be the starting point of expansion as other sports expanded into a second division as well according to the NJCAA Timeline (n.d.).

In closing, today the NJCAA governs intercollegiate competition across 24 regions except for the states of California, Alaska, and Maine. The California Junior College Association has been renamed the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCCAA) and member institutions are still banned from joining the NJCAA. Therefore, as umbrella organizations associated with the NCAA, policies and procedures enacted by the NCAA invariably require parallel consideration and enactment by two-year institutions.

Student-Athlete Amateurism

From the inception of intercollegiate athletics, student-athletes have been considered amateur participants, not professional performers. This has been a longstanding viewpoint and it has been stated “the NCAA plays a critical role in the maintenance of a revered tradition of amateurism in college sports” (Olivas & Gajda, 2016, p. 107). The principle of amateurism defined by the NCAA is as follows in the 2021-2022 NCAA Division I Manual:

Student-athletes shall be amateurs in an intercollegiate sport, and their participation should be motivated primarily by education and by the physical, mental, and social benefits to be derived. Student participation in intercollegiate athletics is an avocation, and student-athletes should be protected from exploitation by professional and commercial enterprises. (p. 3)

In a parallel definition, the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCCAA) Constitution and Bylaws (2021-22) defines amateurism as “an amateur athlete is one who engages in a particular sport for the educational, physical, mental, and social benefits derived there from, and to whom participation in that sport is an avocation” (p. 57). Furthermore, the CCCCCAA (2021-22) states:

Students shall not represent a college in any athletic competition unless they are an amateur athlete in the sport(s) in which they compete. Students shall be deemed professional and ineligible to participate in that sport if any one (1) of the following exists – If the student:

- A. Takes or has taken pay in any form for sport participation.
- B. Has signed an agreement of any kind to compete in a professional sport.
- C. Has been paid for his/her athletic participation. (Exception: Athletes who compete against professional teams or individuals may receive reimbursement for their actual cost of food, lodging, and transportation as verified in writing by the event sponsors)
- D. Has ever played on a professional team, unless the student meets the criteria as listed in Bylaw 1.1.2.
- E. Has agreed to be represented by an agent of an organization in the

marketing of his/her athletic ability.

Exception: A prospect may allow a scouting service or agent to distribute personal information (e.g., high-school academic and athletic records, physical statistics), to member institutions without jeopardizing his or her eligibility, provided the fee paid to such an agent is not based on placing the prospect in a collegiate institution as a recipient of institutional financial aid.

- F. Subsequent to becoming an athlete at the collegiate level, has accepted any remuneration for or permitted use of his/her name or likeness to advertise or endorse a product or service or any kind.
- G. Is an international student and has his/her educational costs partially or fully paid by the student's national sport body or sport club. (p. 58)

In addition to definitions provided by the NCAA and CCCAA, the NJCAA states “amateur athletes are those who engage in sports for the physical, mental, and/or social benefits they derive from participation and to whom athletics is an avocation and not a source for personal financial remuneration” (NJCAA Bylaws, 2021, p. 25). Therefore, across these definitions, it is clear the intent of amateurism involves participation based on the ability to benefit from the physical, mental, and social aspects of athletics.

However, while many, if not the majority of student-athletes derive these benefits today, according to Hart (2019), “the field of college athletics has seen an increasing tension between two ideas” (p. 10). As profits of commercial enterprise have grown dramatically, the tension has centered around the limits placed on the amount and types of compensation a student-athlete can receive.

Up until the early 1950s, the idea of amateurism “was enough to prevent compensation,

at least large-scale compensation, within college athletics” (Hart, 2019, p. 10). Since then, the NCAA has defined the scope of permissible grant-in-aid for student-athletes. Under NCAA article 15.02.06, “full grant-in-aid is financial aid that consists of tuition and fees, room and board, books, and other expenses related to attendance at the institution up to the cost of attendance established pursuant to Bylaws 15.02.2 and 15.02.2.1” (NCAA Division I Manual, 2021, p. 209). Therefore, according to Highsmith (2019), student-athletes are not allowed to receive direct payments, enter into agreements for compensation following the completion of competition, or receive a salary. These same stipulations apply for student-athletes competing at two-year institutions as violations of the rules would jeopardize a student-athletes amateur status upon transfer.

In response to this, policy has been adapted over time to expand the amount of compensation a student-athlete can receive within the boundaries of amateurism. According to Hart (2019), Article 12 of the NCAA was expanded in 2015 to “cover up to the full cost of attendance” (p. 11). This allowed for expenses beyond traditional grant-in-aid to cover expenses such as “transportation, supplies, and other living expenses” (Hart, 2019, p. 11). Within the boundaries of amateurism though, this increase is comparable to a cost-of-living adjustment and not a representative share of the revenue generated by intercollegiate athletics.

However, grant-in-aid is not distributed equally across national organizations, divisions, or even institutions. For example, at the NCAA level, Division III member-institutions are not allowed to provide any grant-in-aid related to intercollegiate athletic participation. Whereas, at the highest level of NCAA Division I competition, especially in football and men’s basketball, not only does a student-athlete have all their costs of attendance covered, they also may receive additional stipends.

This same disparity also occurs at two-year institutions where for example, the CCCAA does not allow grant-in-aid scholarships for intercollegiate athletics, but sets the following policies in their 2021-2022 Constitution and Bylaws for Scholarships/Grants:

1. Student-athletes are eligible to receive:
 - a. Federal or state aid.
 - b. An academic grant which is based solely on academic achievement.
 - c. A grant which is open to any other student on campus and which does not have athletic participation or athletic ability as one of the criteria.
 - d. Other scholarships from on/off campus groups whose criteria are not based on athletic ability or participation. (p. 90)

In contrast to this, the NJCAA allows grant-in-aid scholarships and “is defined as any institutional aid given to any student, for any source, on the basis of his/her athletic capabilities or athletic association” (NJCAA Bylaws, 2021, p. 33). Across the three NJCAA divisions, grant-in-aid is awarded according to the following philosophies from the 2021-2022 NJCAA Handbook:

Division I programs support three primary principles in the belief that these principles will provide further definition of the philosophy of the division:

- Provide resources that are in alignment with NJCAA rules and regulations and the member institution’s educational mission, thus allowing the following:
 - Full-scholarship opportunities that permit its members to recruit elite talent regionally, nationally, and internationally in their pursuit of regional and national excellence and prominence;

- An unparalleled athletic experience from the practice field/court to the game-day experience; and
- Support for a competitive athletic schedule outside their region primarily against other NJCAA Division I programs while maintaining compliance with each institution's mission;
- Support national championships that would include a geographical representation through district championships and selection of at-large teams of championship caliber. (p. 11)

NJCAA Division II parameters include the following:

- Scholarships provided with a maximum of tuition/fees/books;
 - Competition schedules predominately based on geography;
 - Geographic representation at District playoffs;
 - National Championships with geographical representation and competitiveness.
- (p. 12)

Division III programs seek to uphold the following principles:

- No financial support or aid may be given to student-athletes based on their athletic ability;
- Focus in on the student-athlete experience;
- Priority given to regional, in-season competition and championship play;
- Places a priority on geographical representation with at-large bid opportunities in some sports. (p. 13)

With such a wide disparity in the amount and types of permissible grant-in-aid scholarships available, some student-athletes struggle to make ends meet. For example, John Mosley, men's

basketball coach at East Los Angeles College, a two-year institution in California, states in episode 1: “off the court, there’s less that we can control in California Community College...there’s no meal plans here” (Whiteley, 2021, 28:14-28:08 [timestamp]). Furthermore, Lonnie Teper, an adjunct professor of kinesiology, states: “three and four of them are living in a one-bedroom apartment, trying to make it and going to their classes and remaining eligible...” (Whiteley, 2021, 27:42-27:36 [timestamp]). A stark contrast from the experience of a men’s basketball student-athlete at an institution in a Power 5 Conference who in addition to having on-campus meals and lodging, often times will travel to away games on a chartered flight and be afforded five-star accommodations.

Intercollegiate Athletics Revenue

The growth of revenue within the industry of intercollegiate athletics has been well documented. This revenue growth has not solely been limited to the NCAA or member institutions either as “the Collegiate Licensing Company who happens to be the primary partner of the NCAA owns 85% of the college licensing market” (Highsmith, 2019, p. 26). According to Josie (2018), this started several decades ago, particularly from a landmark supreme court case, NCAA v. Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma. In this case, it was “declared the NCAA to be in violation of antitrust laws in its handling of television games involving its member schools” (Josie, 2018, p. 31). However, the court ruled partly in favor of the NCAA as their “decision found that NCAA rules aimed at preserving the “amateur” quality of college athletics are valid under the Sherman (Antitrust) Act” (Josie, 2018, p. 30-31). At a time when television and media were beginning to drive revenue, this decision has provided a legal foundation for the NCAA to preserve its position on amateurism and continue to divide shares of revenue only amongst member institutions.

Since the 1984 supreme court case, NCAA revenue has been focused on the Division I men's basketball tournament as football revenue was no longer in the purview of the NCAA. According to Josie (2018), "in 2016, the NCAA took in more than \$700 million in television revenue from the men's Division I basketball tournament alone" (p. 32). This figure represents an increase of nearly four times the annual amount when "in 1989 CBS surpassed the billion-dollar mark when it renegotiated with the NCAA for exclusive broadcast rights" (Jones, 1997, p. 67) for the men's basketball tournament covering a six period from 1991-1997.

With such huge revenues at stake, "it is easy to forget, given the visibility of college athletics in this country, that this is one of the few nations where sports teams are built into the schools and colleges" (Newman et al., 2004, p. 93). Furthermore, Newman et. al. (2004) point out another concern in that "defenders of Title IX have observed that if some of the perks and overspending were cut for football and basketball, there would be plenty of money left for other teams" (p. 94). Therefore, is the mission of intercollegiate athletics to serve the purposes of amateurism or develop professional athletes?

Adding complexity to the issue of revenue is the cost of seeking a competitive advantage. According to Newman et. al (2004) from Hearn (2002), "only 48 of the 320 schools in Division I have programs that are profitable, with the rest operating at an average annual deficit of \$3 million" (p. 94). Despite this, many institutions have continued to expand facilities at extraordinary costs to compete in a growing arms race for the most talented student-athletes. Also, as compensation has soared for many coaches, institutions are now liable for huge sums of money when employment is terminated. These payments are known as "dead money" and according to Lavigne and Schlabach (2021), "from Jan. 1, 2010 to Jan. 31, 2021, public universities in FBS conferences paid out more than \$533.6 million in dead money to head

coaches and assistant coaches in football and men's and women's basketball" (p. 1). Some of these buyout totals are astounding as in the example of former LSU Tigers football coach Ed Orgeron, who was dismissed in October 2021. Orgeron "is owed about \$16.9 million, which will be doled out in 18 installment payments through December 2025" (Lavigne & Schlabach, 2021, p. 1). In more than one instance, these types of long-term buyouts have left athletic departments with a payroll that may include two or three coaches of a sport in a given year. However, Harvey Perlman, Athletic Director at the University of Nebraska stated he "regarded the payouts we made as we changed coaches as the just the cost of doing business" (Lavigne & Schlabach, 2021, p. 3). With so much being paid to coaches, it seems that the student-athlete is being overlooked and the Knight Commission (2021) has responded to this spending in their recently published Connecting Athletics Revenues with the Educational Model of College Sports (C.A.R.E.) report.

According to the Knight Commission C.A.R.E. (2021) report, "college sports in Division I, most notably in Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) football, are in the midst of a runaway financial race that threatens to upend and undermine the educational model of college athletics" (p. 2). To support systemic change, the C.A.R.E. (2021) report makes recommendations across the following five core principles; Transparency, Independent Oversight, Gender Equity, Broad-based sports opportunities, and Financial responsibility for athlete education, health, and safety. To do so, several examples are provided by the report. In addressing coaching salaries, it is recommended that a "luxury tax" system should be established "by assessing financial penalties for total coaching salaries that exceed a certain limit" (Knight Commission, 2021, p. 8). As another example, "conferences could require each Division I institution to spend an amount equal to at least 50 percent of "shared athletics revenue distributions" on the health, education,

safety, and well-being of college athletes and/or university academics” (p. 6). While many of the C.A.R.E. report recommendations shift the focus back to the student-athlete, this type of systemic change is complex and implementation will face a number of challenges. Of particular concern is the source of this revenue, when so much of the revenue generated is from private sources, what would be the incentive for an institution to concede a perceived competitive advantage? These issues have a familiar history though as a committee from The American Association of College Professors expressed the following concerns about college football:

that the last month of the football season suffers “a very appreciable loss in value” for the undergraduates; that “the enormous financial outlay...creates in the undergraduate mind a false sense of importance”; that the sheer physical size of the stadium dwarfs the significance of the library, laboratory, and lecture hall. (Villard, 1926, p. 490)

Amongst these discussions, student-athletes are caught in the middle. Due to the pressure of rising revenues for athletic departments, institutions of higher education, the NCAA, media companies, and merchandising enterprises, a growing perception is that labor of student-athletes is being exploited. In one example, this gained notable attention when student-athletes began to recognize the use of their image and likeness by a video game company, Electronic Arts (EA) Games. This led to lawsuits by former and current student-athletes to be allowed a share of profits from the use of their name, image, and likeness because until recently, the NCAA controlled the use of name, image, and likeness as long as they were student-athletes (Highsmith, 2019). This policy has restricted student-athletes as individuals to profit from the use of their name, image, and likeness in promotion, endorsements, merchandising, or video games.

Lastly, another potential concern is the perception that a growing gap of revenue inequality could position student-athletes to be more vulnerable to exploitation, potentially in the

industry of gambling. Placing wagers on athletic contests is not a new avocation and generates huge sums of revenue. According to the Netflix documentary *Bad Sport* (2021), at Arizona State University in 1994, Stevin Smith and Isaac Burton were convicted of shaving points. As a result, Smith received a one-year and one-day prison sentence, an \$8,000 fine, and 200 hours of community service. Burton received three years of probation, 200 hours of community service, and an \$8,000 fine. However, the biggest loss was for Burton as his involvement cost him an opportunity to play in the NBA. It would seem that at a major NCAA Division I institution, student-athletes would enjoy a number of benefits, but Burton (2021) stated, “There was times, I didn’t eat...I would sit in that room hungry, bunch of times...I would walk to other people’s dorms and ask for something to eat” (Wardle & Adams, 2021, 1:01:22-1:01:10 [timestamp]). As a result of this disparity, Burton also stated, “that’s why they need to start paying the college kids” (Wardle & Adams, 2021, 1:55-1:52 [timestamp]).

Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) Policy

As in any social order, there are the “have’s and the have not’s” and the organizational structure of intercollegiate athletics is not exempt from this phenomenon. Based on my work experience, at the top of the hierarchy are the NCAA Division I institutions, most notably in a Power 5 Conference. Some of their student-athletes are afforded modern, stylish living arrangements, access to training tables designed by nutritionists, and provided with first-class travel accommodations. On the other end of the spectrum, are the student-athletes at small institutions, most notably community colleges. The student-athletes at these institutions might live in residence halls or on their own, eat sack lunches, and travel to away contests by passenger vans or buses and eat fast food.

In practice, NIL policy stands on the hyphen within the phrase student-athlete, a potential

compromise on middle ground between the ideals of amateurism and the big business of college sports. On one hand, college athletes are not professionals, but can now cash in on revenue driven by their athletic performance. While on the other hand, for the majority of student-athletes who won't have an opportunity to pursue professional playing careers, preserving the structure for students to pursue academic credentials.

Legal challenges regarding the use of NIL as individuals have become the battleground for student-athletes in earning a larger share of revenue in the multi-billion-dollar industry of intercollegiate athletics. One argument is that “competitive balance is necessary for collegiate sports because institutions have single-handedly built their brands on the backs of their student-athletes” (Highsmith, 2019, p. 28). By ensuring competitive balance, the NCAA believes they are keeping student-athletes from being exploited as otherwise, performance would determine compensation.

The movement towards modifying the compensation cap for student-athletes began when “the NCAA and its member institutions voted to expand the compensation cap by allowing schools to cover up to the full cost of attendance” (Hart, 2019, p. 11). Also, according to Hart (2019), the change was predicated on “the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals’ holding in a landmark case titled *O’Bannon v. the NCAA*” (p. 11). Today, the NCAA has implemented an interim policy permitting student-athletes the ability to earn compensation from the use of their Name, Image, or Likeness until federal legislation is drafted or new NCAA policy is created. Within this, student-athletes can now earn compensation from business activities such as public appearances, product endorsements, and social media under the following guidelines from the NCAA Media Center (2021):

1. Individuals can engage in NIL activities that are consistent with the law of the state

where the school is located.

2. College athletes who attend a school without an NIL law can engage in this type of activity without violating NCAA rules related to name, image, and likeness.
3. Individuals can use a professional services provider for NIL activities.
4. Student-athletes should report NIL activities consistent with state law or school and conference requirements to their school. (p. 1)

Immediately following this change, a number of student-athletes began to cash in on compensation opportunities. However, these cases were publicized primarily from student-athletes at NCAA institutions, leaving a gap to be explored for student-athletes at two-year institutions.

The NIL policy change has also caused the NJCAA, CCCAA, and NCAA member institutions to respond with their own publication of implemented policies clarifying how NIL opportunities can be exercised by student-athletes. For example, Kansas State University, a NCAA Big XII-member institution, has provided definitions and clarification across seven categories and a Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) section. In section 1 of the Kansas State NIL Policy (2021) it states:

student-athletes may use their NIL to promote their own business, promote a corporate entity, establish their own camp or clinic, make an appearance at a location and receive compensation, or sign autographs and receive compensation.

(p. 1)

Also, in section 2 (2021), the NIL Policy states:

Student-athletes may not enter into a contract or other agreement with a third-party

for NIL compensation if the NIL activity includes any Kansas State University or K-State Athletics logo or trademarks without having received prior written approval for use, is conducted in any K-State Athletics facilities unless the facilities have been rented in the same manner as made available to the general public, or involves a commercial product or service that conflicts with NCAA, University, and/or K-State Athletics policy, including but not limited to:

Adult entertainment and/or pornography, Alcohol, Alternative or electronic nicotine product or delivery systems, Bars and nightclubs, Cannabis-related enterprises including dispensaries, grow suppliers, seed companies, etc., Drug and/or alcohol paraphernalia, Casinos or other Gambling Services, Performance enhancing drugs, Recreational drugs, Sports Wagering, Tobacco and/or tobacco alternatives, or Weapons. (p. 1)

At the two-year institutional level, the NJCAA Bylaws (2021) have the following parameters for NIL:

The following acts shall not cause a student-athlete to lose their amateur status: participating in radio or television programs for the purpose of promoting an amateur athletic event; receiving compensation for supervision of physical education, playground, or recreational activities; receiving compensation for use of name, image, or likeness to promote any commercial product or enterprise, or public or media appearance so long as it does not conflict with the institutions existing partnerships, sponsorships, and agreements; a member institution allowing a student-athlete to receive compensation in compliance with their state law. (p. 26)

Similar to the NJCAA outlines for permitted use of NIL activities, the CCCAA Bylaw 1.1.6

(2021) provides the following criterion stating “individuals may be compensated for name, image, and likeness activities, including those related to the athletic reputation (NIL) as permitted by California State law and consistent with the Bylaws contained in this section” (p. 58):

- A. Institutions are prohibited from providing a prospective or current student-athlete with compensation in relation to the student-athlete’s name, image, likeness, or athletic reputation (NIL).
- B. Institutions may prohibit student-athlete activity if such activity is in conflict with a provision of existing institutional agreements.
- C. Student-athletes are required to disclose compensated NIL agreements/activity to their institution’s athletic director no later than 72 hours of the agreement or activity occurring. Student-athletes are encouraged to disclose, where possible, such agreements prior to entering into them.
- D. Student-athletes may:
 - 1. Use institutional marks with institutional approval as allowed by the institution.
 - 2. Identify themselves as a student-athlete at their respective institution in NIL activities as allowed by the institutions.
 - 3. Sell their personal team-related merchandise (equipment/apparel/shoes) provided to them by their institution, if such merchandise is normally retained by the student-athlete and not to be reused by the institution.
 - 4. Use institutional facilities subject to all applicable institutional processes for facility usage or rentals.

5. Participate in crowdfunding and/or fundraising activities for the purpose of financing their own business; raising money for a nonprofit or charitable entity; or under extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control for necessary educational and personal expenses, or family emergencies.
6. Hire professional service providers to advise and represent student-athletes in developing and managing NIL opportunities.

E. Student-athletes may not:

1. Receive compensation, either in-kind or monetarily, for engaging in the following NIL activities:
 - a. Compensation in exchange for a student-athlete or prospective student-athlete's participation, performance, or awards.
 - b. Compensation in exchange for a student-athlete's decision to attend the institution.
 - c. Compensation for work not performed.
2. Hire agents or other professional service providers for the purpose of securing a professional sport contract or opportunity. (p. 58-59)

Therefore, due to pressure from rapidly rising intercollegiate revenues and new policy such as NIL compensation, a couple of major shifts could be signaling an overhaul of the student-athlete model. First, an organization based in Atlanta, GA has developed a new high school basketball league for players 16-18 years old that will pay at least \$100,000 according to Young (2021). The league, Overtime Elite (OTE), provides a pathway for players to skip the complexity of the NCAA and pursue a professional playing career. Also, according to Young (2021) "the league is backed by Overtime investors including NBA stars Kevin Durant and

Carmelo Anthony, and venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz” (p. 2). Adding support for the league, National Basketball Association commissioner Adam Silver stated “I think it’s generally good for the community to have optionality, especially when solid people, which appears to be the case in [OTE], are backing it and behind it” (Young, 2021, p. 2).

Unintentionally, the NBA has carved the niche for the establishment of the OTE league with a requirement that a player be 19 years of age before they enter the league. While the NBA also has a pathway to a professional playing career in their G-League, a semi-professional league, Overtime Elite also has a vision for academics. As a part of their academy vision, OTE (2021) states:

At OTE, we believe in the power of a personalized, self-directed approach to education. Our athletes are empowered with the agency and opportunity to create their path to mastery of grade level content at their own pace, with the support of our content specific, professional Learning Facilitators. OTE Academic programming consists of 5 key components. (p. 1)

To deliver academic content, OTE plans to use an online platform and also offers the ability for players to earn dual college credit.

Secondly, following the United States Supreme Court ruling permitting NIL compensation, the NCAA issued a memorandum in November outlining a new constitution for governance out of concern that they are now vulnerable for additional litigation. According to the Associated Press (2021), “the rewritten constitution focuses more on the NCAA’s broader goals of athlete welfare than the previous version, which took a more granular approach” (p. 1). In a constitution that has been reduced to just over 18 pages, the NCAA (2021) has outlined the following changes:

- One constitution across all three divisions at about one-fourth the length of the current constitution.
- Clearly stating the Association's priorities.
- Providing divisions the authority and autonomy to reorganize and restructure themselves.
- Streamlining decision-making authority on Association-wide issues to a Board of Governors reduced from 21 members to nine.
- For the first time, the board and each of the divisional leadership bodies will include student-athletes as voting members. (p. 1)

In sum, the draft constitution shifts the role and responsibility for governance back to member institutions, conferences, and empowers student-athletes in decision-making. As a comparison, this model would function similar to the United States Court system with the NCAA acting as the U.S. Supreme Court, only managing major issues.

Compensating Student-Athletes Research

While new policy permitting compensation for the use of a student-athlete's name, image, and likeness is not a fully developed pay for play model, current research provides some insight to former student-athlete's perceptions of how compensating student-athletes would effect intercollegiate athletics. In a recent qualitative study, Highsmith (2019) points out "the student-athlete is never included in discussions about pay for play" (p. 54). In the study, Highsmith (2019), uses thematic analysis to interpret data patterns. To collect data, interviews were conducted with "participants [that] included seven females and nine men ranging from ages 27 to 45 years old, all of whom competed at the Division I level" (Highsmith, 2019, p. 57). Across various sports according to Highsmith (2019), nine participated in football, three in track

and field, one in soccer, two in volleyball, and one participated in both women's basketball and track & field.

From data analysis, Highsmith (2019) identified themes across 5 categories: athlete loyalty, athletic department success, future of the NCAA, perception of NCAA, and benefits of pay for play. In the category of Athlete Loyalty, all the participants showed a distrust for the NCAA and one participant explained how they did not receive an increase for grant-in-aid they were promised due to good performance according to Highsmith (2019). From an employment perspective, what would the response of a coach be if the athletic director promised a contractual salary raise following a successful season, but never delivered?

As it related to the theme of Athletic Department Success, Highsmith (2019) identified a pattern for improved academic success stating:

participant 15 expressed how he would have been motivated to complete his degree and contribute to the academic success of the university, but due to his family's economic status at the time, he thought that foregoing his collegiate career to pursue a professional career was the best option for him at the time. Pay for play would encourage athletes to stick around so that they could leave college with a degree, therefore encouraging academic success in the classroom. Participants 5, 12, 13, and 15 were participants that left college early to pursue professional careers in sports. These 4 participants all had similar feelings about their decision to leave and how academics [was] not a concern they had because their sole purpose for participating was to play at the next level. (p. 61)

Unfortunately, this may be the case for many student-athletes and for those that leave, they may never return to complete their degree.

According to Highsmith (2019), the next two categories, future of the NCAA and perception of the NCAA were two main themes that developed from participant responses following the question: “can student-athlete compensation change college athletics?” (p. 62). From this, Highsmith (2019) identifies that the majority of the participants believed the NCAA was exploitative by not having support structures in place beyond a student-athletes playing career. Therefore, as it relates to the future of the NCAA, Highsmith (2019) states:

due to the student-athletes inability to capitalize from their name or likeness, four of the research participants believed that the future of the NCAA would result in NCAA reform, where the NCAA would revisit their rules and make adjustments to current policies that prevent student-athletes from capitalizing off of their name and likeness. (p. 63)

Based on the timing of this research (2019), this topic would have been regularly discussed in mainstream media and could have contributed to the perception of these participants, however with the 2021 NCAA policy changes for NIL compensation, these restrictions are being modified.

Lastly, in the category of Benefits of Pay for Play, Highsmith (2019) notes “that nine of the participants identified their family’s socioeconomic status as middle class, and the remaining participants either identified their family’s socioeconomic status as below middle class or poverty level” (p. 64). Of the participants that identified as below middle class or poverty level, “felt their decision to play college sports would bring honor to their family and assist their families out of poverty” (Highsmith, 2019, p 64). In addition, “these participants were also pro pay for pay due to their family’s inability to contribute financially while they were in college” (Highsmith, 2019, p. 64). For the participant group that identified as middle class, two were on

partial scholarship and all participants took a student loan at some point in their academic journey according to Highsmith (2019). However, across socioeconomic statuses, Highsmith (2019) identified that all had common agreement for compensation, but that criterion should be in place to determine who is eligible to receive compensation such as, how much a student-athlete contributes to the success of a team. While it is too early to know how the implementation of name, image, and likeness compensation may influence a pay for play model, it is interesting that the student-athletes in this study believe that a social order must exist in determining who can benefit from compensation.

In another qualitative study, Josie (2018) examined the perceptions of student-athletes for the effects of a college athletes union. The formation of a union for intercollegiate athletes has been proposed by student-athletes to advocate for issues related to their participation and it can be assumed that compensation could be one of a myriad of issues a union would advocate for. The Josie (2018) study involved three phases:

participation in the initial (survey) phase with 62 of 124 (with 1 opt-out) participating in the initial phase of the research study leading to the second phase, that being a focus group involving 10 participants and concluding with the third phase, interviews involving 10 participants (selected stratified sampling) and all participants active within the university athletic program in Baltimore, Maryland. (p. 66)

According to Josie (2018), 21 males and 41 females participated in the study, 11 were freshmen, 18 sophomores, 16 juniors, 15 seniors, and 2 graduate students (p. 68). From the study, Josie (2018) identified four major themes: knowledge, compensation, student-athlete versus student-employee, and unfinished business. Also, “three supplemental themes, quality of life, revenue sharing, and medical insurance, came from the focus group phase while the

supplemental themes of experiences, classism, and respect came from the interview phase” (Josie, 2018, p. 75).

The knowledge theme did not produce much insight into the views or perceptions of student-athletes for the establishment of a college athlete’s union other than a lack of awareness according to Josie (2018). This was contributed to the fact that about half of the participants were not familiar with unions and as Josie (2018) describes, at the time of the study, the lack of awareness could be attributed to a regional group of student-athletes identifying a solution to an issue before gaining the attention of a wider audience.

From the theme of compensation, participants became more engaged in the focus groups and topics regarding student-athlete compensation. They identified improved medical benefits as a motivation to unionize, but preferred increased compensation in meeting a true cost of attendance according to Josie (2018). From this, while adding compensation to cover the “true cost of attendance” is not a pay for play model or the ability to benefit from the use of name, image, or likeness, it is clear that a population of student-athletes believe current compensation rates are insufficient.

In the theme category of student-athlete versus student-employee, “the participants provided a diverse range of responses in the survey, interviews, and focus group segments” (Josie, 2018, p. 82). For example, it was expressed that scholarships could be considered compensation and therefore student-athletes are employees and should be entitled to unionize and benefits that other employee groups receive according to Josie (2018). This position seems that student-athletes place a value on their labor in terms of input and the value that is created for the university either in exposure by representation or the ability to profit from revenue generated.

Lastly, in the theme category of unfinished business, Josie (2018) states, “these and other responses from the interviews and focus groups indicated that the participants see the unionization efforts by the student-athletes at Northwestern University as incomplete, or “unfinished business” (p. 85). While it is not clear as to whether or not unionization would be a positive step in helping student-athletes address issues of compensation, labor unions in higher education are common across institutions amongst other employee groups for negotiating compensation packages that provide labor.

Summary

In closing, this chapter has provided a literature review for the history of community college athletics, student-athlete amateurism, intercollegiate athletics revenue, NIL policy, and student-athlete compensation research. In summary, the history of intercollegiate athletics at two-year colleges began separately from four-year institutions when their application to join the NCAA was denied. Today, the CCCAA governs competition for two-year institutions in the state of California and the NJCAA governs competition for two-year institutions across regions in the rest of the country for approximately 85,000 community college student-athletes between the two organizations. Student-athlete amateurism has been the model striking a distinction between college participation and professional athletes. Intercollegiate athletics revenue has risen to levels similar to corporate business and has called into question whether the current models for student-athlete compensation are appropriate. This has resulted in policy being adopted to allow student-athletes the ability to benefit from the use of their NIL.

Chapter 3 - METHODOLOGY & METHODS

Introduction

The following chapter provides an overview of the multiple case study research design for this study in the following topic areas: constructionism, theoretical framework, multiple case study, site & participation selection, human protection, pilot study, data collection, data analysis, and trustworthiness.

According to Creswell (2014), there are three primary approaches a researcher can choose from as a foundation in designing a study: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods. In selecting a design, a researcher must consider the research questions that the study aims to answer. For research questions framed toward objective theories, a quantitative design can analyze variables using statistics. On the other hand, for research questions aimed toward subjective theories, a qualitative design can help researchers interpret data and develop themes. As a combination of the two, a mixed-methods design employs both quantitative and qualitative processes for data collection and analysis.

For the purposes of this study, a qualitative multiple case study research design was employed as a research foundation. This approach was selected as NIL compensation for student-athletes is an emerging topic and an open-ended, exploratory method was needed. While the topic of compensating student-athletes beyond traditional grant-in-aid has been ongoing, the perceptions for how policy change permitting NIL compensation could impact student-athletes at the community college level needed to be studied. Also, due to the variance of the student-athlete experience, informing the qualitative approach is a view of constructionism. Furthermore, a multiple case study design was selected to provide access to multiple cases across

several institutions. By exploring the topic beyond a single case, greater depth can be provided in answering the research questions.

Constructionism

Participating in intercollegiate athletics is arguably one of the richest and most diverse set of experiences a college student can have. Student-athletes are often from any location in the world and this collection of individuals brings together culture, race, ethnicity, educational background, socioeconomic status, and family experiences in a unique way. Once assembled on a campus, these individuals comprise a team who is focused on accomplishing a common goal, winning a championship. However, how each individual determines meaning for their life in this experience is based on a number of variables. For example, experiences in the classroom, on the playing surface during practice or competition, travel, interactions with media and fans, relationships with teammates and coaches, academic support, and living arrangements can influence the meaning derived from participation.

Furthermore, considering the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) is the governing body in intercollegiate athletics for over 500-member two-year institutions across three divisions, the experiences of student-athletes, even within the same sport, are extremely varied. How each individual describes this experience is best rooted in an epistemological framework of constructionism because “what constructionism claims is that meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting” (Crotty, 1998, p. 43). In other words, how each individual interacts within their world is varied based on experiences and understanding these experiences are best understood through how the individual constructs their own meaning. The pressure of competition, academic expectations, and interaction with the media and public are just a few examples that cannot be described

holistically in a linear format. Also, “according to constructionism, we do not create meaning...we construct meaning” (Crotty, 1998, p. 43-44). Therefore, how each of the research participants describe their experiences can also be influenced by the culture around them, relationships with coaches and teammates as well as other support structures such as family. Additionally, each of these participants will bring their own set of lived experiences and positionality whether they realize it or not.

This variance supports a view of constructionism as a walk-on student-athlete is likely to describe a different perspective of their experience and the meaning it may have for their life versus the star athlete. The walk-on student-athlete most likely did not receive much public attention, may have only participated for the benefit of engaging with peers and participation in the activity of sport. While on the other hand, the star athlete may describe a much deeper meaning, one that may have transformed their life and continue to reap lifelong benefits from due to their increased social status. The meaning derived from student-athletes will also likely vary by level, a student-athlete at a two-year institution may find a different meaning in their participation than the student-athlete at an institution in a Power 5 Conference.

Therefore, once an individual has had the opportunity to evaluate their experience by weighing the variables, they can determine the meaning and impact for their life. For the purposes of the cases in this study, participants consider their perceptions for how NIL compensation could impact the student-athlete experience based on their constructed meaning.

Theoretical Framework

The subjective theory of value was developed following Karl Marx’s Labor Theory of Value (LTV). In his theory, Marx presents the view of labor as a commodity in which “labor power appears on the market as a commodity and the capitalist is able to purchase this

commodity at its value” (Ehrbar & Glick, 1986, p. 465-466). Furthermore, according to Ehrbar and Glick (1986), Marx provides an explanation of surplus value and equal exchange “that all value is created only through the expenditure of labor in production” (p. 466). As a theoretical framework, “the subjective theory of value is one which asserts that price is essentially based on the process of circulation and that circumstances connected with the process of production are merely one factor” (Shibata, 1931, p. 74). According to Hull (1932), “the main representative of the Subjective Theory of Value is Professor [Ralph Barton] Perry” (p. 17). From Perry’s book, *The General Theory of Value* (1926), Hull (1932) identifies

the problem to which he attempts an answer is indicated on page 4 where he says: “The theory of value must locate the seat or root of value. Is a thing valuable because it is valued?... Or is a thing valuable because it is valuable? (p. 17)

Furthermore, Perry (1926) as cited by Hull (1932)

tells us in the opening paragraph of Chapter 2 that what we call value is very closely linked up with our motor-affective life, that is to say, with instinct, desire, feeling, will and all their family of states, acts, and attitudes. (p. 17)

According to Reinecke (2010), “the question of what constitutes the source of economic value has dominated the history of economic thought since the 18th century” (p. 566). Today, the industry of intercollegiate athletics is clearly valued by consumers when examining the cost of ticket prices, merchandise, apparel, and subscription costs. Reinecke (2010) also states, “markets co-exist with and implicate other systems of normative qualification that assign values, worth, or more literally greatness to persons, ideas, and objects” (p. 565). Therefore, from this perspective, creditability is added to the industry of intercollegiate athletics as a service in which consumers place a high value and for those who participate, can generate social capital and a

higher social status. However, forces beyond consumer interest and demand can influence value such as political influence or government regulation.

This definition strengthens a constructivist epistemology and is a credible theory to explore the influence of NIL compensation on the journey of student-athletes. At the crux of the issue for compensating student-athletes is how the value of their labor is being exploited as the industry of intercollegiate athletics has experienced tremendous revenue growth. In highlighting this perspective, Supreme Court Justice, Clarence Thomas commented “it strikes me as odd that coaches’ salaries have ballooned and they are in the amateur ranks, as are the players” (Kirshner, 2021, p. 2). While student-athletes are held at bay and compensation capped; coaches, athletic directors, media and merchandising businesses receive huge financial windfalls. According to Reinecke (2010), “exploitation results from the antagonistic relationship between capital and labour” (p. 566) and Highsmith states “exploitation is the utilization of people or things to gain a profit” (p. 27). Furthermore, Miller (2012) as cited by Highsmith (2019) states that “the literature on the exploitation of student-athletes has identified two types of exploitation that apply to the discussion; the first is referred to as mutually advantageous exploitation, and the second is consensual exploitation” (p. 28). Under NCAA governing policy, “student-athletes participating at NCAA regulated institutions currently are not considered employees of those institutions for purposes of federal employment statutes including the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)” (Hart, 2019, p. 15). In this example of the NCAA and student-athlete relationship, a viewpoint of consensual exploitation could exist as in order to be a participant at the NCAA level, student-athletes concede their status as employees. Also, adding complexity to the issue are regulations as pointed out from (Friedman, Parent, & Mason, 2004) as cited by Hart (2019), “at the center of this tension lies the issues surrounding the NCAA’s legal exemption from

specific labor, tax, and antitrust laws” (p. 10). These exemptions coupled with NCAA policy have created a complex web of issues to navigate in trying to determine the value of intercollegiate athletics and how revenue is shared.

Student-athletes would undoubtedly generate a value from their labor as a commodity based on how many hours they spend practicing their skills and competing. In aligning with this, Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan, “asked why the court shouldn’t see the NCAA as an organization that has undisputed power over its market and uses the idea of amateurism to fix the price of labor?” (Murphy, 2021, p. 4). However, not all commodities produce the same value, such as in the case of the diamond-water paradox. While water is essential to all human life, as a commodity, its value pales in comparison to a diamond. Other variables, such as supply and demand play a role in determining the value of a commodity. Conversely, the “subjective theory of value places value on how scarce and useful an item is, rather than basing the value of the object on how many resources and hours of labor went into creating it” (Kagan & Howard, 2020, p. 1). For intercollegiate athletics, there is a scarcity of opportunity in advancing from high school athletics to the NCAA. According to NCAA Research (n.d.), only 495,000 of nearly 8 million will advance (p. 1), approximately 6 percent. This limited opportunity adds creditability for the subjective theory of value as according to Eabrasu (2011) “scarcity is a sine qua non condition for establishing a theory of value” (p. 218). However, Eabrasu (2011) also points out “that this does not tell us if value is subjective or objective” (p. 219). To determine this, Eabrasu (2011) relies on a praxeological interpretation appropriate for this study stating, “value is subjective if it is the exclusive outcome of a real action performed by an intentional being” (p. 233). In other words, based on how the consumer choices for intercollegiate athletics are affecting the value of the product produced from student-athlete labor, is policy for NIL

compensation an equitable opportunity?

Even though there is practical application for the theory of subjective value in studying intercollegiate athletic issues, Eabrasu (2011) points out from Grice-Hutchinson (1952) and Hutchinson (1994) that “the theory of value has a long and uneasy history” (p. 217). Furthermore, Eabrasu (2011) states, “for an accurate understanding of subjective value, it is useful to start from the broader idea of subjectivity” (p. 218). In other words, if the opinions of others supported a perspective from student-athletes that their labor was being exploited, then the accuracy of this opinion would be subjective. However, if an opinion can be established that the labor of student-athletes is being exploited independent of a subjective consideration, then an objective opinion would be valid. Considering the wide-range and complex set of lived experiences of student-athletes, this provides a foundational rationale for subjective value as a theoretical framework.

From the student-athlete perspective, fair questions could be; what is our value and how should it be compensated? For example, the high-profile student-athlete workload goes beyond playing surfaces. They have obligations to the media, promotion events, and fan engagement to name a few. Therefore, the business of intercollegiate athletics is both valued and valuable. It is valued for a number of reasons in the skills that student-athletes gain from participation such as lifetime fitness habits, teamwork, conflict resolution, hard work, dedication, goal accomplishment, and lifelong interpersonal relationships. Also, over time intercollegiate athletics has proven to be a valuable vessel for breaking down social barriers of race, ethnicity, and culture. There are not many other areas of life in which the opportunity exists for individuals from all over the world to gather together to accomplish a common goal.

Furthermore, “the concept that value is subjective also arguably means it cannot be

consistently measured” (Kagan & Howard, 2020, p. 2). For the business of intercollegiate athletics, value is subjective as the fans are the consumers in collegiate athletics and determine value by voting with their dollars. For example, how much they are willing to pay to attend a men’s sporting event or a women’s sporting event, a NCAA or NJCAA event, and a championship are just a few of the variables that influence value.

From an economic standpoint, intercollegiate athletics is valuable for the revenue it drives thereby creating employment opportunities in a number of fields. For example, a common structure of an athletic department includes employment in administration, business operations, compliance, game management, facilities management, coaching, administrative support, and human resources. However, in an economic downturn such as a depression or world war, where would society place the value of intercollegiate athletics in their life? As Hull (1932) points out, “any object, any situation, any event, acquires value only when interest is taken in it” (p. 18). Therefore, it would most likely fall on a list of priorities after aspects such as faith, family, safety, employment, and education.

Multiple Case Study

In qualitative research, a researcher has several options when selecting a design for their study such as narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies as identified by Creswell (2014). According to Stake (1995) and Yin (2009, 2012 as cited by Creswell 2014):

case studies are a design of inquiry found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event,

activity, process, or one or more individuals. Cases are bound by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. (p. 14)

However, according to Hays (2014), “case studies are often viewed as an easy way to do research” (p. 225). Hays (2014) goes on to state though that “as with most research approaches, case study work is actually quite demanding, requiring reflective and very focused research efforts” (p. 225). Therefore, due to the flexibility institutions have in implementing policy for NIL compensation, an exploratory multiple case study design was selected for this study as it is likely that perceptions would vary across the three member institution cases and six peer participant groups. For example, an athletic director, president, coach, or student-athlete in a member institution case may have a negative perception whereas an athletic director, president, coach, or student-athlete in the same member institution case could have a more favorable perception. Case study research differs from other qualitative research as Hays (2014) identifies, “case studies are unlike ethnographies in that they seek to answer focused questions by producing in-depth descriptions and interpretations” (p. 218). Furthermore, while “generalization is not a goal in case studies, for the most part, because discovering uniqueness of each case is the main purpose” (Hays, 2014, p. 218), generalizability can be possible according to Hays (2014) “when based on the several studies of the same phenomenon” (p. 219). Rooted in this explanation is rationale for selecting a multiple case study rather than a single case. In the end, “case study research ordinarily leaves the determination of meaning and worth to the consumer of audience who may make their own naturalistic generalizations by drawing on the information in the case study” according to Stake (1995, p. 85 as cited in Hays 2014, p. 219). Therefore, in designing a multiple case study, consumers of the research are left with a broader

scope in determining their own generalizations across community college leagues and community college regions rather than at the institutional level.

Site and Participant Selection

Prior to collecting data for the study, a process for site selection and participant selection was employed first. According to Creswell (2014), “the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual materials) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question” (p. 189). Therefore, for participation in the study, six groups of peer participants were selected from three community colleges in a Midwestern state community college conference on a volunteer basis. Midwestern community college athletic conferences for two-year institutions are National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) members. This region was selected as it has a rich tradition of intercollegiate athletics for community colleges hosting competitions across the following sports: baseball, men’s and women’s basketball, men’s and women’s cross-country, football, men’s and women’s golf, men’s and women’s soccer, softball, men’s and women’s tennis, men’s and women’s track & field, volleyball, and wrestling. By choosing only member institution cases from a Midwestern community college conference, a bounded system was created both in location and peer participant groups for conducting a multiple case study. In recruiting cases at member institutions, a recruitment e-mail was sent to member institution presidents and athletic directors with follow-up phone call and e-mail inquiries as needed.

In order to be selected as a volunteer participant for the study, each participant must have been engaged with a member institution case in one of six peer participant groups: president, athletic director, men’s or women’s basketball coach, and men’s or women’s basketball student-athlete. Following the acceptance of a member institution to participate in the study as a case, a

recruitment e-mail was sent to individuals of each peer participant group seeking volunteers.

Once a volunteer participant was identified, they received a letter summarizing the purpose of the research study and an informed consent form.

Once volunteers were identified for each participant group, on-site visits were made to member institution's 1 and 2 campuses to conduct unstructured interviews. For member institution 3, an on-campus visit was not possible so unstructured interviews were conducted synchronously using the web platform, Zoom, or via phone conferencing. As a campus visit, I toured the campus virtually through the member institutions website.

Human Protection

Any volunteer participant could opt-out at any time at no risk to themselves. Also, to ensure the confidentiality of each research participant, pseudonyms were used in writing related to research findings and any data collected was stored in a password protected file. Any electronic recording devices used for recording were password protected, in this study, a cell phone or laptop equipped with software for video and audio recording. Lastly, prior to conducting the study, approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Kansas State University. Documentation of approval could be provided to any member institution or volunteer participant. In the event of a request for IRB approval from a volunteer member institution case, a separate IRB application was submitted to that member institution's IRB.

Pilot Study

Prior to applying to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval, a pilot study was completed. The purpose of the pilot study was to flesh out any details that needed to be considered in the research design for data collection. Five volunteer participants were

interviewed: a former community college president, a community college director of student academic achievement, a former community college student-athlete and collegiate coach, a former community college student-athlete and community college student affairs professional, and a former student-athlete and community college coach. Each participant received an e-mail detailing their consent as voluntary and their right to opt-out at any time without harm or consequence. Also, each participant received an attachment in the e-mail with the documents labeled Appendix A and Table B.1. Participants were asked to review the alignment table, stimulus questions, and discussion prompts prior to a scheduled interview.

At the beginning of each interview, a verbal consent statement was read as referenced in Appendix C. During the interview, memos were recorded and following each interview, a summary of notes were typed and the interview was watched to ensure accuracy. After a summary of the notes had been recorded, a copy was sent via e-mail to each participant to review for accuracy. A common theme of the “have’s and have not’s” was identified in the following comments, “will widen the gap of have’s and have not’s for 4-year and 2-year student-athletes” (Participant 2, 2022), “greater divide in have’s and have not’s” (Participant 4, 2022), “the bigger the college, the bigger the issue” (Participant 1, 2022), and “could exasperate unlevel playing field within community colleges as not all community college athletic programs are created equal” (Participant 2, 2022). Also, based on participant review of the proposed stimulus questions and discussion prompts, several new topic areas were discussed which resulted in the addition of six sets of stimulus questions. These are listed in Appendix A in bold font and are as follows:

1. What processes for NJCAA rules training does your institution follow for student-athletes? Has training been conducted for NIL policy at your institution?

2. Who governs NIL policy & who is responsible for compliance oversight? Would a violation of NIL policy be considered a student code of conduct violation?
3. How do you think NIL opportunities could impact recruiting?
4. Could NIL create a celebrity culture for student-athletes on campus?
5. As student-athletes transfer, do you think NIL opportunities could create a culture of free agency?
6. Do you think NIL opportunities for local student-athletes may be greater or less than compared to their out-of-state teammates?

In closing, conducting the pilot study provided valuable experience before conducting research. It is important to note that while a theme was identified from volunteer participants in the pilot study, this same theme may or may not be a perception of volunteer participants in the multiple case study. Also, while the pilot study participants posed additional topics related to NIL policy, the resulting stimulus questions may or may not have been used in this dissertation's data collection.

Data Collection

To collect data for the study, two processes for data collection were used, unstructured interviews and document review.

Unstructured Interviews

To gain each participant's perspective, unstructured interviews were used to collect data. As Hays (2014) identifies, "interviews are one of the richest sources of data in a case study and usually the most important type of data to be collected" (p. 229). An unstructured format was selected to allow an opportunity to ask follow-up questions and as Creswell (2014) states, "that in qualitative interviews...these interviews involve unstructured and generally open-ended

questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants” (p. 190). Also, according to Creswell (2014), there are five formats for conducting interviews with one of the five being to, “conduct an unstructured, open-ended interview and take interview notes” (p. 193) and another being to “conduct an unstructured, open-ended interview; audiotape the interview; and transcribe it” (p. 193). For the purposes of this study, interviews were audio recorded and transcribed so that memoing could occur for document review in analysis.

A campus visit was made to each volunteer member institution case to conduct interviews face-to-face, except for one institution where Zoom or phone conferencing interviews were conducted. During the interview, a set of stimulus questions and discussion prompts were used to initiate discussion as listed in Appendix A. These questions and prompts were open-ended to allow each interview participant the ability to respond as they have interpreted the inquiry. Furthermore, the introductory stimulus questions and discussion prompts were formatted as a foundation in allowing each interview participant the opportunity to describe their own background as well for any background information to be provided regarding NIL compensation if an interview participant was unfamiliar with the topic. Lastly, by using stimulus questions and discussion prompts, each interview was allowed to follow a path for follow-up based on responses. This opportunity for follow-up in an unstructured environment provided a richer opportunity for discovery and a more meaningful experience for each participant.

Unstructured interviews were conducted across six peer participant groups at three member institution cases of a Midwestern community college conference: presidents, athletic directors, men’s and women’s basketball coaches, and men’s and women’s basketball student-athletes at three community colleges. Unstructured interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. For the purposes of confidentiality, volunteer participants are identified as follows:

Table 3.1. Peer Participant Groups

| Peer Participant Group | Participant Name |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| President | President 1, President 2, President 3 |
| Athletic Director | AD1, AD2, AD3 |
| Men's Basketball Coach | MBB C1, MBB C2, MBB C3, |
| Women's Basketball Coach | WBB C1, WBB C2, WBB C3 |
| Men's Basketball Student-Athletes | MBB SA 1, MBB SA 2, MBB SA 3 |
| Women's Basketball Student-Athletes | WBB SA1, WBB SA 2, WBB SA 3 |

Participation in the peer groups for coaches and student-athletes was limited to the sports of men's and women's basketball. In addition to unstructured interviews, requests were made for athletic department handbooks, policy manuals, published data, and conference meeting minutes for data archive review. A data table was built and organized for thematic data analysis by member institution cases and for cross-case analysis of peer participant groups from reading data transcripts and coded by the following research questions: Guiding Research Question (GRQ), Sub-Question 1 (SQ1), or Sub-Question 2 (SQ2). Research findings are presented as they developed into overarching theme(s) and sub-theme(s) as related to the research questions within each member institution case and cross-case analysis of peer participant groups.

Documents

Secondly, as a part of the data collection process, document archives were retrieved and analyzed. As Creswell (2014) identifies, "this data may take the form of photographs, art objects, videotapes, website main pages, e-mails, text messages, social media text, or any forms of sound" (p. 190). Therefore, archived documents that were requested and analyzed as

identified in Table B.1 include: athletic department handbooks, conference handbook, conference website, member institution websites, Equity in Athletic Disclosure Act (EADA) reports, and meeting minutes. In order to solicit any internal documents from member institution cases, a request was made to the president and athletic director of each participating member institution case as well as the conference commissioner.

Data Analysis

Following the data collection process according to Hays (2014), “the case study researcher is faced with reams of data” (p. 232). At this point in the research process, Hays (2014) indicates, “the researcher acting as a detective must search through the clues (data) to follow threads of evidence (patterns of consistency in the data) to a final decision” (p. 232). To do so, the research questions must be used as a compass as “they are the threads to be followed” (Hays, 2014, p. 232). In accomplishing this, Creswell (2014) identifies six steps in the data collection process:

Step 1. Organize and prepare the data for analysis.

Step 2. Read or look at all the data.

Step 3. Start coding all of the data.

Step 4. Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis.

Step 5. Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative.

Step 6. A final step in the data analysis involves making an interpretation in qualitative research of the findings or results. (p. 197-200)

Therefore, in order to analyze data, a process of transcribing the audio recordings was the first step. As Creswell (2014) describes, “this involves transcribing interviews, optically scanning material, typing up field notes, cataloguing visual material, and sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the sources of information” (p. 197). Once this was complete, the next phase was to read through the data for evaluation and depth. To do so, Creswell (2014) provides a few strategies saying “sometimes qualitative researchers write notes in margins of transcripts or observational field notes, or start reordering general thoughts about the data at this stage” (p. 197). In the third step, thematic coding was used, which involved “the process of organizing the data by bracketing chunks (or text or image segments) and writing a word representing a category in the margins” according Rossman and Rallis (2012, p. 197-198 as cited in Creswell, 2014). Another consideration however, is whether or not to use only codes emerging from data, pre-determined codes, or a combination of both according to Creswell (2014). For the purposes of this study, codes were developed as they relate to the research questions, which as Hays (2014) identified are the compass to follow. The coding process also allows for analysis themes to emerge in completing step four. In the fifth step, an approach for how to describe the analysis was determined with “the most popular approach being a narrative passage” (Creswell, 2014, p. 200). Lastly, the final step involves “making an interpretation in qualitative research of the findings or results” (Creswell, 2014, p. 200). In this study, bracketed text from transcripts was sorted and organized in a thematic data analysis table using Microsoft Excel.

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, it is also the responsibility of a researcher to verify the accuracy and reliability of their findings as well as make readily available any bias the researcher may

hold. According to Creswell (2014):

there are eight primary strategies...triangulate different data sources of information, use member checking, use a rich, thick description to convey the findings, clarify the bias the researcher brings to the study, present negative or discrepant information, spend prolonged time in the field, use peer debriefing, and use an external auditor. (p. 201-202)

For the purposes of this study, triangulation, member checking, bias clarification, and rich, thick descriptions were the primary methods used.

Through a process of member checking, the accuracy of data collection was ensured. To do so, Creswell (2014) states “this does not mean take back the raw transcripts to check for accuracy; instead, the researcher takes back parts of the polished or semi-polished product” (p. 201-202). By doing so, each volunteer participant had an opportunity to check their interview statements for accuracy and provide clarification.

Secondly, through a process of reflexivity, any potential bias was presented to readers. While some potential bias had already been presented, Creswell (2014) also identifies, “good qualitative research contains comments by the researchers about how their interpretation of the findings is shaped by their background, such as their gender, culture, history, and socioeconomic origin” (p. 203). Also, by using rich, thick descriptions, validity is added as “when qualitative researchers provide detailed descriptions of the setting, for example, or offer many perspectives about a theme, the results become more realistic and richer” (Creswell, 2014, p. 202).

Furthermore, this type of detailed description provides depth for readers in determining how to apply findings for themselves as context is understood beyond what is presented. For example, descriptions also include inferences, social connections, feeling, and sentiment.

Lastly, as Hays (2014) points out, “findings in case studies are more likely to be trusted as true because of the use of triangulation of methods and sources” (p. 230). To do so, Hays (2014) states that “it is important that the researcher remember that triangulation requires multiple sources of data and multiple methods in answering each question” (p. 230). For this study, this included interview transcripts, document archives, and memoing.

Summary

In closing, qualitative research is not a linear process, but the topics covered in this chapter outline a theoretical framework, methods, and methodology for conducting the study. The subjective theory of value is applied as a theoretical framework and a multiple case study is the research design. The cases are member institutions of a Midwestern community college conference who sponsor men’s and women’s basketball. A site visit was planned to each of these peer participant case institutions except in the third case in which interviews were conducted through Zoom or via phone conferencing, and unstructured interviews, document archives, and memoing are sources of data collection. Data analysis was conducted for emerging themes within the member institution cases and in cross-case analysis. Lastly, a pilot study was conducted and the results of the study produced several topics that could be addressed and resulted in the addition of several stimulus questions or discussion prompts.

Chapter 4 - RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM MEMBER INSTITUTION

CASE STUDIES

Introduction

In the dog days of summer each year, community colleges welcome back student-athletes to campus and often, these student-athletes arrive with nothing more than an opportunity to pursue a dream. While some community colleges located in urban areas offer intercollegiate athletics, this multiple case study involved participants located in rural areas where in many cases, the community college is an economic driver and most likely an economic lifeblood. The goals of community college student-athletes mirror their peers at NCAA institutions, but the resources available at community colleges pale in comparison. Spaces for competition are funded by partnerships amongst community college institutions and local cities and school districts. Scholarship dollars are rarely fully funded for an entire roster and to cover the full cost of attendance, student-athletes must rely on federal and institutional financial aid. The following chapter provides a description of themes as they relate to the research questions that emerged from data analysis through the subjective theory of value within each member institution case.

Research Questions

Within each member institution case, the research was guided by one overarching question and two sub-questions. The guiding research question (GRQ) is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy?

The first sub-question (SQ1) is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience?

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies?

Member Institution 1

The first community college site visited was a one-stop-shop that included housing classrooms, a gymnasium, the president's office, athletic offices, and student services for financial aid, admissions, advising, and the cashier. Sporting a décor from the 1960's, the hallways were a maze of classrooms, offices, labs, a library, and a hall of fame room. Athletic offices are housed off the concourse of the gymnasium with the athletic director centrally located with support staff and coach's offices surrounding in an office suite except for men's basketball. The athletic director's office is a cramped space that includes a storage area with a collection of supplies. The men's basketball office was a small space with traditional office supplies such as computer monitors and a small whiteboard. Hanging on the wall were a couple of pictures, one of Michael Jordan and another of Kobe Bryant. Around campus, a baseball field is located adjacent to resident halls and the soccer field is a partnership of competition and solar panels.

Student enrollment is less than 1,500 students and less than 50 full-time faculty were employed in the fall of 2021 according to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The demographics of students by race and ethnicity were approximately: 60% White, 10% Hispanic/Latino, 6% Black or African American, 4% two or more races, 4% Non-resident alien, 1% Asian, and 1% American Indian or Alaska. Also, in reviewing the 2022 men's and women's basketball rosters, approximately 12 student-athletes were participating from outside the state and 2 student-athletes were participating from an international location.

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question (SQ1) of this study is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following themes developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) at member institution 1: “No longer Amateurs” and “Fewer Resources”.

It was perceived that NIL would have a negligible effect for their student-athletes, but that if student-athletes were being paid based on their status as a student-athlete, they are no longer amateurs and should be recognized as professionals as described by the president and a men’s basketball student-athlete.

President 1: It’s certainly going to change the college game, with NIL, I think we’re no longer amateurs.

MBB SA1: I feel like if you're making money for playing basketball, you should be treated and called a professional.

The majority of student-athletes at this rural community college do not receive a full grant-in-aid scholarship and with fewer resources, it is only possible to fund full scholarships for less than 50% of a team’s roster. If a coach offered a full scholarship, it would reflect the coach’s anticipated production a student-athlete would provide for the team’s overall success.

President 1: I can tell you we don’t have many resources to full ride very many people. We do it on occasion and they better be damn good.

MBB C1: Like a full scholarship with your Pell money back is a big deal. That’s what

kids are chasing. I can offer about four and a half or five full scholarships for a roster of 15.

Based on a lack of resources, it was perceived that NIL would simply not be very impactful as described by a women's basketball student-athlete, the women's basketball coach, and the athletic director.

AD 1: I would say overall you just do not have the level of name recognition.

WBB C1: But I don't see at the JUCO level where it's going to be very impactful. But it might be. I mean, a local steakhouse might name a sandwich and then you might get to eat for free. That might be the compensation level we're talking about at the JUCO level.

WBB SA1: I don't know if it would change the experience a whole lot. I think it would help, you know, other kids might not come to community colleges having everything paid for. So, I know that'll help a lot of student athletes.

Based on a lack of resources and an unequal distribution of grant-in-aid, concerns could develop within a team based on this inequity as described by the athletic director and a women's basketball player.

AD 1: I could see it also being a negative in the sense of the jealousies or the issues that it could create on a team if one player knew that another player was getting this, and this, and this. And he felt that he deserved it, or she deserved it, and they weren't getting anything.

WBB SA1: If other athletes are finding out you have this opportunity and they don't. They might bash on you for that, and they might be jealous of what opportunity you get. I feel like, just in that kind of sense, there could be some negative things.

Therefore, these themes are variables of the subjective theory of value as the current brand value of this rural community college athletics programs does not produce revenue. However, small, one-time opportunities such as complimentary services could develop and if so, could be helpful to rural community college student-athletes. Furthermore, any negative effects such as team jealousy or team chemistry issues are variables as value is linked to our motor-affective life as identified by Perry (1926) as cited by Hull (1932).

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) of this study is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following themes developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) at member institution 1: “Lack of Governance” and “Unintended Consequences”.

As an emerging issue, participants responded to the newly adopted NIL policy by expressing a concern that it is too early to know what situations could arise because of the policy but anticipated it will filter down to their rural community college.

President 1: It’s still too early on to really know what some of the scenarios are that could happen. What are the unintended consequences that are going to come out of this? We know that anything in the NCAA tends to trickle down – rules wise and eligibility wise.

AD 1: I think it will be something that we’ll have to watch a little bit how it plays out at the NCAA level to see what the trickle down, what effect that would have at the junior college level.

Participants also described a perspective that NIL policy was implemented due to a lack of governance and incidents of impermissible activities in which student-athletes were being compensated in violation of amateurism by-laws. Therefore, by permitting compensation

through NIL policy, barriers of bureaucracy and responsibilities of oversight by a governing organization are reduced.

MBB C1: I think it gets rid of a lot of the red tape, per se, that they had to deal with prior to that. It's probably a lot fewer cases that they have to deal with by allowing it.

WBB C1: I've heard stories second hand where when guys would go out to eat, they never paid for a meal. Also, money in the boot, stuff like that and that was for the backup quarterback. So, someone's facilitating that stuff already, I just think now it's probably legalized.

From an economic lens, NIL policy filtering down to the rural community college level is a variable of the subjective theory of value as when a product or brand develops significant value such as the case for institutions in Power 5 Conferences, a result is that off-brands or products eventually filter into a free market economy. For member institution 1, it is too early to know what the unintended consequences are, but new opportunities for student-athletes to earn compensation are now permitted.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) at member institution 1: "Early Stages".

Even though participants at member institution 1 described perceptions and perspectives of themes for "No Longer Amateurs", "Lack of Resources", "Lack of Governance", and "Unintended Consequences", they recognize a need for NIL policy, but have not implemented institutional policy. It is anticipated that NIL policy and practices will filter down to this rural

community college, but so far, only discussions have begun amongst conference leadership as evidenced from archive meeting minute documents and comments from the athletic director.

AD 1: I feel like that is something we need to move towards eventually. I can't say that I know exactly what policies we would put in place. At this point we've had some small discussions but really have not instituted any plans.

Furthermore, the men's basketball coach, the women's basketball coach, a men's basketball student-athlete, and a women's basketball student-athlete confirmed that no institutional policy has been published at the college and that there are more pressing matters to attend to currently than NIL.

MBB C1: Again, not that I've seen. Maybe I missed it. Maybe it was something where I saw it and I was like, that's the least of my worries right now.

WBB C1: Yeah, and so those policies – but we probably need some, I don't know what ours is.

MBB SA1: No. Not really. But honestly, I feel like, all the student-athletes know what these schools expect from you, what your coaches expect.

WBB SA1: Not that I'm aware of.

In summary, participants at member institution 1 described perceptions and perspective themes of “No Longer Amateurs” and “Lack of Resources” related to the first sub-question (SQ1). They described perceptions and perspective themes of “Lack of Governance” and “Unintended Consequences” related to the second sub-question (SQ2). Lastly, a theme of “Early Stages” emerged related to the guiding research question (GRQ).

Member Institution 2

The second community college site visit in stark contrast to the first as the college serves multiple campuses. The main campus has a regular rhythm of transition between classes similar to a university as students change buildings across campus and intercollegiate athletics teams have separate facilities for their offices, practice, competition, and workout spaces. The president's suite is housed on the second floor in a non-academic building on campus filled with meeting spaces much like a convention center. The office suite has a large reception area, conference room, and office space about the size of a small classroom. The men's and women's basketball offices are housed in the gymnasium. Each locker room suite has separate areas for coaching offices, film rooms, and player lockers. Adorned with flat screen televisions, projectors, leather lounge furniture, trophies, and action shots of recent accomplishments, these facilities are similar to NCAA institutions, but on a smaller scale. South of the gymnasium are football and soccer practice fields. The baseball team has a downtown stadium; the softball team competes at a field in partnership with the local city, and the football stadium complex is adjacent to campus with press boxes and luxury suites and shares space with soccer and track and field for competitions.

Student enrollment is approximately 7,000 students and nearly 150 full-time faculty were employed in the fall of 2021 according to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The demographics of students by race and ethnicity were approximately: 60% White, 15% Hispanic/Latino, 8% Black or African American, 2% Non-resident alien, 5% Asian, and 1% American Indian or Alaska. Also, in reviewing the 2022 men's and women's basketball rosters, approximately 15 student-athletes were participating from outside the state and 1 student-athlete was participating from an international location.

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following themes developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) at member institution 2: “Unrealistic Expectations” and “Inequity is the Norm”.

At the crux of the issue for student-athletes is whether their labor is being exploited. Through the lens for subjective theory of value, participants at member institution 2 perceive that with NIL, student-athletes may develop unrealistic expectations. The president believes that before compensation is paid, a value must be produced from labor.

President 2: I grew up, again, I’m quite a bit older than you but grew up in a family where my dad’s perspective was, “Don’t ever expect anybody to pay you. You get in and do a job and do the very best you can do, and if they think you’re doing a good job they’ll pay you. And then you say thank you for what you get.

Furthermore, student-athletes may develop perceptions of NIL opportunities that could exist from the media or conversations with their NCAA peers, but not realize the market at a rural community college is only connected to the local community and these opportunities will be very limited as the athletic director, women’s basketball coach and men’s basketball coach described.

AD 2: Yeah, I could see McDonald’s say, hey, help us with a commercial and we’ll give you 10 free meal cards or something like that.

WBB SA2: I’m not sure there will be many opportunities at the junior college level.

Maybe within smaller local businesses there might be some. I’m just not sure how many people or businesses here locally are thinking about endorsing junior college players.

MBB C2: At the junior college level I can see limited opportunities for NIL because you must have a name, image and likeness to be valuable. I can't really see any of our athletes making enough money on NIL opportunities to come even close to what a Pell Grant would be. I think it would pretty much start and finish with local opportunities. If there's a locally owned business, individuals, or local families that would want to participate with our student-athletes, that could be mutually beneficial.

Secondly, participants described a current structure of compensation that is unequal but illustrates that inequity is a standard business practice. Grant-in-aid is provided in the form of athletic scholarships for participation, but that student-athletes at rural community colleges rely heavily on federal financial aid, particularly a Pell grant.

MBB C2: Especially at the junior college level where you have probably a majority of our student athletes are financial aid qualifiers, or they don't come from environments where they have a lot of extra. They're very dependent on the scholarship. They're very dependent on Pell Grant.

For example, a men's basketball student-athlete stated that not all receive a full scholarship, but the women's basketball student-athlete stated they have most of their expenses covered.

MBB SA2: Like I said, especially for a junior college athlete. Not everybody receives full scholarships.

WBB SA2: For me, my books and tuition are covered. Pretty much everything. I receive a stipend check. I live across the street at the school apartments, so I receive a check that covers my rent for the month, and it includes enough money for me to buy groceries and things like that.

In relationship to inequity, the athletic director expressed a concern that situations could arise in which student-athletes may realize that they receive less compensation or grant-in-aid than their teammates and this could have a negative effect on the team's success.

AD 2: We've had reports of – they're supposed to go get their checks from the coach. At first, we didn't think much – when it gets changed over to stipends and full rides and stuff, the kids had to go to accounts receivable and pick up their check. And so little Johnny's sitting in the back row watching big Johnny getting his check. How much did you get? Seriously? You got that much? How come I'm not getting that much? And then he goes back to the coach.

Furthermore, the women's basketball coach expressed a concern that providing another path to compensation for student-athletes will only exasperate inequity and create a bigger divide for those that have and those who do not.

WBB C2: Because all this is going to do, this name, image and likeness, is the rich are going to get richer.

In summary, the themes of “unrealistic expectations” and “inequity is the norm” are variables of the subjective theory of value. Even though the labor of student-athletes is equal to their NCAA peers, revenue is not produced from student-athletes creating a brand value at small, rural community colleges. Furthermore, in a free market economy, labor is compensated based on value and at member institution 2, some student-athletes receive more grant-in-aid than others, presumably as a result of the value they add to their team's overall success.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following themes developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) at member institution 2: “Here to Stay” & “External Pressure”.

Across the industry of intercollegiate athletics, a variety of opinions and perspectives exist about NIL policy, but participants at member institution 2 expressed the perspective that no matter individual opinion, NIL is here to stay as described by the president, athletic director, and men’s basketball coach.

President 2: It’ll be an interesting picture and landscape to watch over the next few years because it’ll likely flow to the community college level. Then the next level is going to be high school because there’s already big names that are keeping their eyes on high school freshmen and sophomores.

AD 2: Well, it’s not going away I can tell you that.

MBB C2: I feel like the game has changed because just very generally you’re allowed to make money now off NIL which wasn’t the case before.

Secondly, participants described how new external pressures will exist from third parties. This could be private business, local boosters, media, parents and/or friends.

President 2: Yeah, and I think the whole concern about undue influence, undue outside influence, conflict of interest, potentially.

AD 2: Could it promote some shady stuff? Yeah, it could get to that stage if that player was there.

WBB SA2: Because you don’t really want to place restrictions and make them feel that they can’t do anything without somebody’s permission.

MBB SA2: I don't think at that point it's always the school's responsibility. I think at some point it comes down to the player himself. If you want to take these deals you have to make sure you're doing it the right way and at your own risk. Because the institution is not making you take those deals, you're taking it yourself so that's your responsibility.

In summary, the themes of "here to stay" and "external pressure" are variables of the subjective theory of value. Policymakers are aware of the shifting landscape for intercollegiate athletics in adapting to NIL policy. For rural community colleges, a number of variables will exist in determining best practices for institutions, but how NIL could affect the student-athlete economically will be a consideration. Secondly, in adopting institutional policy, the potential influence of third parties needs to be considered to include guardrails that protect student-athletes from being exploited.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) at member institution 2: "Flows Downhill". It is anticipated that similar to any policy change that occurs at the NCAA level, NIL will be no different and participants described that even though their institution has not taken much action regarding NIL policy other than for student-athletes to communicate with the athletic department, it will flow down to their level.

President 2: The presidents haven't talked about it a whole lot. I anticipate that it will – you know, water flows downhill. It's going to flow down to the community college level.

AD 2: We put a little page in our athletic handbook just to say, hey, communicate with us

and your coaches if something comes up or you're offered something.

MBB C2: I'm very limited on my understanding of what the institution has done. Other than we are well aware that NIL exists, our athletes are able to participate in a NIL program, and if anybody in our program is presented with a NIL opportunity that we report it to the athletic administration.

WBB C2: Not much. I'm going to make myself sound really bad here. We talked about it a little bit in the beginning.

Furthermore, the president expressed a perspective that as policy is being adopted, ensuring the integrity of the process for the institution, the athletic programs, and the individual student-athlete needs to be a priority.

President 2: How do you ensure the integrity of that process for not only your institution and per your athletic program, but for that individual? How do you help them as well?

In summary, the theme of "flows downhill" is an aspect of the subjective theory of value as NIL policy has variable economic considerations. For rural community colleges, the economic impact of NIL will be far less than NCAA counterparts, but how these opportunities impact the ability of local boosters to provide giving beyond the current model for grant-in-aid could impact the student-athlete experience. In other words, how much value student-athletes place on opportunities for NIL compensation will correlate to the depth and detail of institutional policy that will be necessary.

Member Institution 3

The final site was not visited in-person as interviews were conducted virtually. From a virtual tour on the institution's website, the college is rurally located just off a two-lane highway and comparable in size to the first site visit. However, the campus floorplan is similar to the second institution with several buildings across campus such as a cultural arts center, student union, theatre, academic center, and library. Architecturally, the campus crosses between a 1960's décor and modern designs in recently constructed residence halls. Visually, the virtual tour creates the sense of visiting the past while entering the present from when the institution was first established to modernization. The men's and women's basketball teams share competition space off campus with the city and the local high school at a newly constructed, modern event center.

Student enrollment is less than 1,500 students and less than 50 full-time faculty were employed in the fall of 2021 according to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The demographics of students by race and ethnicity were approximately: 75% White, 2% Hispanic/Latino, 3% Black or African American, 9% two or more races, 3% Non-resident alien, and 1% Asian. Also, in reviewing the 2022 men's and women's basketball rosters, approximately 17 student-athletes were participating from outside the state and 4 student-athletes were participating from an international location.

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience.

The following themes developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) at member institution 3: “Unlevel Playing Field” and “Local Issues”.

President 3: We do it on ACV [Actual Cash Value]. We do it on two full rides and then we also do everyone else on books and tuition. So, we go through and calculate what the books and tuition costs are for all student-athletes.

AD 3: You’ll never be able to level the playing field, no matter how hard you try. Because bylaws used to limit grant-in-aid. And it was always in an effort to “level the playing field.” But no matter what you do, you’ll never be able to level the playing field because, I mean, [a larger populated town] is a much different place than [a smaller populated town].

In other words, despite the policy guidelines that are in place for grant-in-aid at the national and conference level, the local economies that rural community college institutions are located in impact the ability of local entities to contribute to their athletic programs. Policy alone cannot level the playing field and NIL policy will be subject to the same local economic influences as grant-in-aid opportunities are currently.

Furthermore, participants described that if NIL compensation exists for their rural community college student-athletes, the opportunity would be local and most likely complimentary.

AD 3: It’d be on a much more local level probably. Whether it’s free meal vouchers to a local restaurant, or maybe more trade out for a lack of a better way of putting it than writing checks, a trade-out with the restaurant. You’re not getting any money, but you’re getting to eat at a fill-in-the blank restaurant once a week or gift cards.

However, it was anticipated that issues within local boosters and the community could arise as student-athletes may begin to place more value on NIL opportunities than the current grant-in-aid model.

MBB SA3: I think that's awesome. I think it's great that they're starting to get paid. It should have been happening, to be honest. I'd say that. That's my thoughts on it.

WBB SA3: Personally, I don't have nothing against it. But I think that gives college students more exposure to be seen, to be heard, and also give them more finances, because college is very expensive. And I think that it also helps some students. So, I think that's a good idea.

This shifting value is a variable of the subjective theory of value and could result in less exposure for student-athletes and diminished community involvement.

President 3: I think it becomes very, very complicated. Because I will tell you, I dealt with a student issue last week where a parent was upset that their son was on some type of advertisement the college had done. And they didn't say name, image, and likeness, but that's what they were getting at. I said, "Sir, it's not an issue. I'll take his photo off everything we have. It's not a problem at all."

MBB C3: I mean, we had a jewelry store in town. He does a little cable ad and he was wanting to use our guys ever since I've been here. And so now that they can do it, I'm like, they're probably going to want to be paid – he didn't want to compensate. So they're probably not going to do it now for free.

In summary, the themes of "unlevel playing field" and "local issues" are variables of the subjective theory of value. No matter the policy that is implemented within intercollegiate athletics, policy alone cannot create equity within local economies. How much value is placed

on NIL opportunities within local economies will determine how local constituents engage with student-athletes for NIL compensation and issues that arise from these partnerships will vary between rural community college communities.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) at member institution 1: “Reacclimate”. Business industries are adept at strategic planning and modernizing operations for new technology and processes, but also in adapting to changing perceptions and attitudes about acceptable practices and social behavior. There is a breadth of examples in which coaches, student-athletes, boosters, and other constituents have engaged in impermissible activities in order to seek a competitive advantage. The perceptions of participants at member institution 3 is that part of the reason that NIL policy is now permitted is because these practices have saturated the culture of intercollegiate athletics and have become acceptable in public opinion. Therefore, the business of intercollegiate athletics is changing.

President 3: So, we have literally gone from an FBI probe in the course of three years to Jackson State openly talking about giving a player a million dollars or having an accusation against them in a NIL deal. Do I believe that structure has changed dramatically can stay the same? 100% not. The model is going to have to evolve. What it looks like, I don’t know.

Furthermore, participants acknowledged that “stuff was going on anyway” and that according to a student-athlete, they no longer have to hide how coaches try to help them.

AD 3: I mean, it’s the stuff that was going on. Whether people acknowledged it or just

looked the other way, whatever it might be, those things were happening. Now it's legal.

WBB C3: I mean, that stuff's been going on anyway. So, I mean, the only thing they're doing now is making it legal, I mean, to be honest. There's a lot of things when it comes down to it that people want to kind of push up under the rug. But this right here is just bringing everything to light. So, I don't think that's going to be a big deal.

MBB SA 3: I think it's good that they started the NIL. Now some players can get paid, you know what I'm saying? They don't have to hide some of the things that, you know, that the coaches do for them, what people do for them. Just – it helps – because college student's struggle too with cash and money.

In summary, as intercollegiate athletics adapts to the changing business for NIL compensation, this rural community college believes that a new set of acceptable practices will be the norm for student-athletes to receive compensation beyond grant-in-aid. However, as identified in sub-question 1, they anticipate the effect to negligible.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) at member institution 2: "Hands Off". The perceptions of participants at member institution 3 is that new policy is adapted at the top of the organization, in this case at Power 5 institutions, and then works its way down the system creating new and unique challenges.

President 3: I think NIL has really created some unique challenges.

AD 3: We've not changed or written any policy. So right or wrong, we kind of just stayed out of it. We don't have anything in there yet. It's something that probably needs

added but I haven't figured out how to address it. Just like everything else, it'll trickle down to a certain extent. It starts at the Top 5, goes to the lower D1 and then trickles on down and eventually gets to us.

MBB C3: Other than basically when all that came out the NJCAA said that we were doing it as well. Basically, they told us we had to stay out of it. Our kids could do it but it wasn't something we could negotiate, or we could even bring up. It all had to come third party.

In other words, member institution 3 has not created new policy to address NIL compensation and to this point have approached the changed landscape with a wait and see approach. Student-athletes are permitted to pursue opportunities for NIL compensation, but no regulation or governance has been determined for the institution. As an aspect of the subjective theory of value, industries may choose to evaluate how value is experienced in a market before creating new policy or implementing practices.

Member Institution Cross-Case Analysis

Member institution one and the third member institution share the most commonality in size and location. As rural communities, the closest metropolitan area is a couple of hours to drive. Their student bodies are small, serving less than a couple thousand students each year. The second member institution, while located in a rural community, is also regionally located adjacent to a metropolitan community; access is a short commute. Their student population is averaging nearly four times the number of students on the campuses of member institution's one and two on an annual basis. However, for competition spaces, also sharing facilities in partnership with the city and local school district. Lastly, demographics across the three member institutions are similar with at least approximately 60% of the institutions total student

enrollment identifying as White, a noticeable contrast to the distribution of demographics of student-athletes participating on men's and women's basketball rosters at each member institution.

First Sub-Question (SQ1)

In cross-case analysis of sub-question 1 (SQ1), member institution 2 and member institution 3 have similar perceptions through a lens of the subjective theory of value, the business model for intercollegiate athletics creates inequity. Even though each member institution is subject to the same governing policies, other variables such as local economic factors, booster support, and school size contribute to inequity within the student-athlete experience. The volume of resources available at each member institution varies and creates a competitive advantage or disadvantage for talent acquisition in student-athlete recruiting. Even though the resources available at rural community colleges are far less compared to NCAA counterparts, the impact of NIL compensation beyond a negligible effect could be more substantial for a rural community college institution compared to another. Lastly, member institution three describes how the issues that arise from this new environment within the student-athlete experience will be realized at the local level.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2)

From cross-case analysis of the sub-question 2 (SQ2), member institution 1 and member institution 2 have similar perceptions through a lens of the subjective theory of value, the resulting effects of NIL policy on the student-athlete experience are not entirely known and variables such as pressure from external entities or variances in practice will result in unintended consequences. In other words, it is not possible to foresee all the scenarios that will likely occur as a result of NIL permeance and in an environment in which a lack of governance has existed,

NIL policy could be added burden of enforcement. Furthermore, member institution 2 and member institution 3 have similar perceptions through a lens of the subjective theory of value, NIL policy is the new normal and community college institutions will not be exempt from a market economy that is reacclimating and implementing a new business model.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ)

Lastly, in cross-case analysis of the guiding research question (GRQ), all three member institutions have a similar perception through a lens of the subjective theory of value, NIL policy will eventually work its way into the business practices of community college athletics. However, even though each member institution has approached the issue cautiously to see how it plays out at the NCAA level as an emerging practice, it is understood that policy changes have an impact on the student-athlete experience. The result of this impact will have an effect on the value of this experience for rural community college student-athletes, even though it was perceived the effect will be negligible.

Summary

In summary, student population demographics at each of the member institution cases is approximately two-thirds White. However, many of the student-athletes competing for the men's and women's basketball teams are an out-of-state or international resident. In other words, it is likely that the demographics of players for these team's is not representative of the campus population. The member institutions are located in rural areas and student-athletes contribute to a diverse campus culture of experiences.

From sub-question one, the thematic data analysis themes of "Fewer Resources" and "No Longer Amateurs" developed in the first case, themes of "Unrealistic Expectations" and "Inequity is the Norm" developed in the second case, and themes of "Unlevel Playing Field" and

“Local Issues” developed in the third case. From sub-question two, the thematic data analysis themes of “Lack of Governance” and “Unintended Consequences” developed in first case, themes of “Here to Stay” and “External Pressure” developed in the second case, and the theme of “Reacclimate” developed in the third case. Lastly, the thematic data analysis theme of “Early Stages” developed in the first case, the theme of “Flows Downhill” in the second case, and the theme of “Hands Off” developed in the third case.

Chapter 5 - PEER PARTICIPANT GROUP ANALYSIS

Introduction

In addition to thematic data analysis across the member institution cases, thematic data analysis was also conducted across the six peer participant groups for perceptions of the student-athlete experience at each member institution. The following chapter provides a description and analysis of perceptions that emerged through a subjective theory of value lens within each peer participant group.

President Peer Participant Group Theme(s)

The president's peer participant group brought together decades of varied and higher education work experience. Each president's path to their current leadership position was different and demonstrates times are changing as a traditional path to a college presidency is no longer the norm. In addition to the member institution research themes, the presidents described various themes of the student-athlete experience at their rural community college that make their experience valuable through the subjective theory of value.

The first community college president (President 1) brought a wealth of knowledge and work experience to his role that is atypical for presidents as traditionally, college presidents ascend through academic administration. Beginning a career as an intercollegiate football coach following a playing career at a NAIA college, he became one of the youngest head coaches in college football in the conference at the time. His vastness of coaching and higher education experience includes working as a graduate assistant, NAIA coach, community college coach, assistant dean of students, resident hall manager, academic dean, and then president. President 1 described a perspective for intercollegiate athletics participation that in part is informed by these varying roles and why with NIL, student-athletes are no longer amateurs.

Athletics in community colleges are a springboard for student-athletes as well as employees. The opportunity to promote yourself and get recruited as a student-athlete by doing what you need to do in the classroom, in the off-season, during the season, to show your skill sets, to show your wares. Where you put yourself in respected competition nationally. I think it's the same for coaches and faculty or staff members. We are a springboard. If you have desires and higher-level goals, if you want to go to a four-year college or university, a community college can help you gain that experience, exposure, and make connections to help you springboard to those levels as well. I did it. It works.

In summary, President 1 provides a perspective that for the community college conference his student-athletes compete in, the window for opportunity is a tremendous springboard not only for a playing career beyond the community college level, but also for completing an academic journey and preparing for life. He contributes this to the disciplined structure of a team environment despite the number of challenges and misperceptions associated with community colleges.

The second community college president interviewed (President 2) provided a different background of work experiences and little direct work experiences within intercollegiate athletics. Her path to a community college presidency was more traditional, gaining experience as a faculty member and a vice president of academics while working in leadership roles and collaborating with athletic director's and leadership for the conference and NJCAA region. Even from a different perspective in higher education, President 2 shared similar themes as President 1 about a perspective for the community college athletic experience:

I've always felt like, even those challenges that go along with athletics programs and costs associated, it's a piece of a community college education that is really critical

because it creates an opportunity for student engagement on campus. It not only gives them an opportunity to compete again at a level higher than high school level which is typically the next step for our student-athletes. It gives them an opportunity to excel with peers at a more competitive level. It gives them a connection to the institution where they are. It gives them an opportunity to be led and mentored by good adults. And for a lot of students, it's their opportunity to a pathway for their academic goals.

In summary, President 2's perspective highlighted the opportunity for student-athletes to compete at a higher level and engagement for life as a college student. By participating, student-athletes can develop campus connections as well as connections with a college's constituents and stakeholders. Through this access to community, student-athletes have access to mentors and achieve the ability to overcome financial or academic barriers.

The final president interviewed (President 3) did not ascend to a community college presidency in a traditional path like President 2, but gained experience in higher education leadership from a governing position working for the state regent's and described the following community college athletic experience:

I work very heavily with athletics – we have, I believe nine sports in total that participate in the NJCAA. We are a very homogenized population in this state, it's a huge source of diversity for our campus. So, it's been a wonderful thing for diversity, equity and inclusion on our campus. The other thing is, we are able to attract not only diversity in nationality and ethnicity, diversity in thought as well because we're able to get people from all over the United States to come to our campus as well as international students. The college offers, I believe two full rides per each sport and I work on the Equity in Athletics Survey on an annual basis. My whole philosophy when we go through and start

working with these young people is we need to focus on character. When talent exceeds character, you have a really bad problem.

President 3 described a very hands-on approach in working with athletics from signing every letter of intent (LOI), working on budgets, and being intentional about getting to know the student-athletes on his campus by establishing relationships. His perspective for participation emphasized relationship building and the value of intercollegiate athletics for providing diversity on their campus. He also emphasized the value of good character for team success, preparing students for life beyond athletics, and setting realistic expectations.

Across the perspectives of the presidents, each described how athletics at a rural community college contributes to the development of student-athletes beyond their playing career. Support to complete academic credentials by President 1, opportunity for competition at a higher level, campus engagement, mentoring, and academic credentials by President 2, and opportunities for life preparation and a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion by President 3.

Table 5.1. President Peer Participant Group

| Participant | Themes |
|--------------------|---|
| President 1 | Academic Credentials Life Preparation |
| President 2 | Campus Engagement Mentoring Academic Credentials |
| President 3 | Culture of Diverse Experiences Character Development |

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) in the president peer participant group: “Personal Growth”.

Each of the president participants described an aspect of individual growth as a valuable part of the student-athlete experience. President 1 described how student-athletes become prepared for life with skills such as discipline, hard work, and networking. President 2 described how student-athletes have access to mentoring and guidance from leaders on campus. Lastly, President 3 described how student-athletes develop character and grow as individuals through the student-athlete experience. For many student-athletes, these benefits could not be realized without the support of grant-in-aid compensation.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) in the president peer participant group: “Academic Credentials”. President’s placed more emphasis on completing an academic journey as the path for student-athletes in creating a sustainable living wage for themselves at a rural community college. While it was recognized that remuneration from NIL is possible, the value of wages earned from labor related to earned academic credentials greatly outweighs the value of potential wages from NIL as a result of labor as a community college student-athlete.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) in the president peer participant group: “Low Priority”. President’s placed more emphasis on other aspects of the student-athlete experience as benefits rather than NIL. In other words, NIL at a rural community college is a low priority from the perceived perspectives of presidents.

Athletic Director Peer Participant Group Theme(s)

As a group, the athletic directors brought nearly a century of combined experience in public education, higher education, and athletic administration to their unstructured interviews. The first athletic director (AD 1) was a public education teacher and a coach for basketball, football, girl’s tennis, and girl’s golf before teaching and coaching basketball at a community college and then a four-year university prior to his current role. AD 1 described a perspective for community college athletic participation that transcends as a philosophy on how to lead your life:

When I look at my own personal experience being a student-athlete in college, there are so many life lessons that you learn. I think that in any setting you are going to have to face adversity and athletics teaches you a lot about how to overcome adversity. Also, learning to be part of a team is very important, learning how to work together is a good lesson of learning how to work hard. If you want to be successful, student-athletes have to understand the concept of hard work and work ethic is something that we have lost some in our society. Life is somewhat competitive in a lot of areas and understanding the value of winning and losing, that somebody has to lose, and how to accept losing, and

how to learn from losing. Another thing that is valuable is it helps pay your education.

When you are a student-athlete, you can earn a scholarship, and not everybody gets that opportunity and that helps and motivates you. Athletics can be used as that vehicle to get an education. There's a lot of leadership skills that are developed outside of practicing and teams to help students learn life skills, whether it's dealing with mental health, learning how to study, understanding how to manage your money.

In summary, AD1's perspective for participation centers on life lessons. He believes that intercollegiate athletic competition teaches how to overcome adversity, work as a member of a team, and develop leadership skills. Furthermore, from competition, individuals learn how to accept and learn from losing even within a competitive environment that is focused on winning.

The second athletic director (AD 2) has the most direct experience to reflect on, nearly forty years, working in sports medicine before his current role. From these lenses, he provided a succinct perspective for participating in community college athletics. The brevity of his perspective mirrors his style of conversation in his unstructured interview. His approach to answering questions often searched for the "right thing to say" rather than an expansion of intuitive experience.

Intercollegiate athletics at our institution strives for excellence in giving the student-athlete the education and sports experience to succeed in the future.

While he did not expand beyond this statement, AD 2's perspective is a reflection of how community college athletics is a steppingstone to future success. This could be advancing to a greater competitive level, completing an academic journey, or deploying skills gained as a student-athlete for success in life.

The third athletic director (AD 3) had a range of experiences as an athletic director at two

community colleges, as a graduate assistant, a student-athlete, and providing national leadership for the NJCAA. His perspective describes how not everyone aspires to compete at the NCAA Division I level.

Community college athletics is an avenue. My dream as a kid was to play baseball at a community college. I grew up in a town with a community college and I wanted to play baseball for that community college. Now my 11-year old son's dream is to play baseball at a community college and take them to the JUCO World Series. Those are the exceptions. There's not a timeline. Generally, people don't dream to play community college athletics. But what community college athletics provides is an opportunity to get to that dream school. Your dream school may not be calling you today, but it's a way to bridge that gap to the next step and playing your sport as a way to do that. Whether that next step is joining the work force, which is more common in some of our women's sports, or moving on to a [NCAA] Division 1 school, or playing professionally. We are a springboard to the next step of your life and using your athletic ability to do that.

In summary, AD 3's perspective focused on how community colleges can help people to achieve their aspirations and dreams. He recognized that it is rare for someone's dream to start at a community college, but it can help bridge the gap from where a college athlete starts and where they finish. Numerous examples exist for student-athletes who began their career at a community college, completed a portion of their educational journey, continued, and then finished a playing career as a professional.

Table 5.2. Athletic Director Peer Participant Group

| Participant | Themes |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Athletic Director 1 (AD 1) | Being a Team Member Overcome Adversity Leadership Development |
| Athletic Director 2 (AD 2) | Athletic Success Academic Success |
| Athletic Director 3 (AD 3) | Pursue Aspirations & Dreams Springboard Academic Credentials |

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) in the athletic director peer participant group: “Springboard Development”.

The athletic director participants described various aspects of student-athlete development and resulting opportunities as a valuable part of the student-athlete experience. AD 1 describe how student-athletes learn hard work, how to overcome adversity, and be a team member. Skills that carry forward beyond a playing career. AD 2 was direct in his assessment, but developing student-athletes for success athletically and academically prepares them for their next steps in life. Lastly, AD 3 described how student-athletes through development within

community college athletics can springboard to their next opportunity. For many student-athletes, these benefits could not be realized without the support of grant-in-aid compensation.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) in the athletic director peer participant group: “Academic Success”. Each of the athletic director participants describe how community college athletics provides student-athletes with a pathway to academic success. Similar to the president peer participant group, they placed emphasis on completing an academic journey as the path for student-athletes in achieving success beyond their student-athlete experience at a rural community college and this would be more valuable than opportunities for NIL remuneration.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) in the athletic director peer participant group: “Low Priority”. Similar to the president peer participant group, athletic director’s described other aspects of the student-athlete experience as more beneficial than NIL.

Men’s Basketball Coach Peer Participant Group Theme(s)

The men’s and women’s basketball coach peer participant groups brought forth the richest set of diverse work experiences as some of the coaches have coached both men and women. A couple of the coach’s also have experience in sports media, a traditional role for coach’s following a coaching career rather than a prelude. The first men’s basketball coach (MBB C1) played in college, coached in high school and on the AAU circuit before his current

role. His perspective on participation in intercollegiate athletics centered on basketball being a vessel for pursuing lifelong opportunities from education.

I tell my guys a lot to use basketball as a tool to get your education and use education as a tool to improve your life. If you want to get your degree, let basketball be the avenue to do that. But also, I tell them this a lot – as a former teacher and a supporter of education, don't look at your degree as an obstacle. You've got to look at your degree as a tool to make your life better and go forward. Something you can always fall back on, I tell them a lot, the goal is always to make money on your mind eventually in your life. Not on your body. Because at some point your body is going to give out and your degree can give you a way to do that. But I view sports as an avenue for a lot of players or a lot of people to do so because they wouldn't have the chance to otherwise.

In summary, MBB C1's perspective focuses on breaking down the perception of academics as a barrier to athletic success. From his view, the opposite is true in that academics is the primary vehicle for achieving success as an athlete. It goes beyond the unwritten belief that is something to "just get done" and rather a journey that will be valuable for the remainder of an individual's life. He believes the ability of your mind will take you farther than the ability of your body.

The second men's basketball coach (MBB C2) also played collegiately before starting his career as an assistant community college coach and housing coordinator before working his way into a head coaching position. His perspective for participation leans heavily on transferring to a four-year university and on a side note, taking advantage of newly available NIL opportunities.

With us being so direct and honest in what our expectations are with what they're getting into each day, I would hope that they come in with the expectation that they're going to

get better and open up more opportunities. It's circumstantial, some guys are fully ready, and although we won't let them settle or be satisfied with where they are as a basketball player, they may have the intention to come in here and get their academics in order so that they're able to qualify for the NCAA. And part of that as it relates to NIL may be okay. I may come in here for a year and understand that I may not make any money off NIL. Or I could go to Institution A and maybe make \$1,000 in NIL, play Division 1 basketball. Or I could go to a community college for a year, not have any NIL opportunities, but if I get better or I get my grades in order, then I may be able to go to Institution B where there may be \$10,000 worth of NIL opportunities. So, they may want to better themselves in the classroom, better themselves on the floor, which will obviously give them more opportunity to get into the NCAA than they would have had coming out of high school.

In summary, MBB C2 emphasized how his program's expectations are focused on getting better and preparing for a transfer opportunity. He understands that he signs players to his roster for a variety of reasons from academic remediation to looking for a bigger platform to be recruited, but in the end, community college athletics is a step along the journey.

The third men's basketball coach (MBB C3) grew up around community college basketball and started a career in television before coaching at both the NCAA and NAIA levels and arriving at a community college as a head coach. He did not directly provide a perspective for intercollegiate participation, but in the following comment demonstrated a concern about unrealistic expectations for the current transfer climate.

At the end of the day, a kid comes to school to be a student-athlete. To get an

education. I don't know the exact number, but it's not good, your chances of making a living playing a sport and making enough money where you won't eventually have to do something – I mean it's a very small population. What they're doing with the way things are, and this goes to the transfer portal and NIL. These kids are going to get out of school and they're not graduated, a lot of them will never go back and they've blown an opportunity. To me, that's the worst part of all of this. I don't think they've really thought this through. Because what happens, I have on loan guys, four former guys on the transfer portal this year. A lot of credit hours, they couldn't transfer, or they were put behind. Instead of graduating, if they'd stayed at their one school they'd have graduated this spring but now they're probably going to stay another two years, and does that school want to pay for when they're done? To me, those are the bad parts of it.

In summary, MBB C3 highlighted in his perspective the fact that only a small percentage of student-athletes have an opportunity to play professionally and earn a sustainable living wage. Therefore, the focus should be on education preparing student-athletes for life. He also noted how the transfer portal is setting up a culture of unrealistic expectations and student-athletes are pursuing opportunities for transfer and in some cases, not realizing they are forgoing their ability to complete an academic journey.

Table 5.3. Men’s Basketball Coach Peer Participant Group

| Participant | Themes |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Men’s Basketball Coach 1 (MBB C1) | Break-down Academic Barriers Academic Credentials |
| Men’s Basketball Coach 2 (MBB C2) | Skill Development Transfer Academic Credentials |
| Men’s Basketball Coach 3 (MBB C3) | Academic Credentials Life Preparation |

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) in the men’s basketball coach peer participant group: “Academic Credentialing”.

The men’s basketball coach participants described various aspects of academic development as a valuable part of the student-athlete experience. MBB C1 described how he advises students not to view a degree as an obstacle, but as a lifetime achievement. MBB C2 provided a perspective that student-athletes need academic remediation and would forgo potential NIL earnings for the potential of greater earnings in the future. Lastly, MBB 3 described how student-athletes may transfer to pursue compensation opportunities even though this may be harmful to their progress in completing a degree.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) in the men's basketball coach participant group: "Student First". Each of the men's basketball coach participants described how achieving academic success is the first priority for their student-athletes. They placed more value on academic success than NIL remuneration at a rural community college.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) in the men's basketball coach peer participant group: "Changing Business Model". The men's basketball coach participant's do not have direct involvement in pursuing NIL compensation for their student-athletes, but are in regular contact with student-athletes in the transfer and recruiting process who have knowledge of NIL compensation.

Women's Basketball Coach Peer Participant Group Theme(s)

The first women's basketball coach (WBB C1) also started his career in sports media before coaching in high school, as a community college assistant and now a community college head coach bouncing between several states coaching men's and women's basketball. He described a different motivation and perspective for female student-athletes competing within community college athletics than their male peers.

There was a girl I watched play at Christmas time in Texas at a tournament. One of my friends and I were joking as we were watching her play and he said "Where do you think

that girl's going to?" "UCONN, right?" And she was good. 6'1" guard, and we google it, oh, she's going to Duke. They had five D1 level kids on their team and they're a small, small school. I like one of the other kids who you can tell she's really good, but they have two D1 posts, and they have this kid that's going to Duke and she just doesn't get much run. But she plays, and you can tell that the teammates love her. So, I go talk to her and give her my card. I talk to their coach just by chance in the hospitality room and I said, we were joking she's going to UCONN. And said, "Well, coach, I kind of had that same thought. She visited UCONN, but she chose Duke instead." "Really? In the big picture of things, that's kind of crazy." He said, "No. I asked her, why did you choose Duke over UCONN, with the prestige and all that? She said, the education, coach. The Duke education is worth way more." She's a really smart kid, too. "It's worth way more than a UCONN education. I'll get further in life with a Duke education than I will with a UCONN education." That's a good point.

Furthermore, WBB C1 had the following perception when asked about the difference in motivation for a men's student-athlete vs. a female student-athlete:

Being a men's coach, every guy is going to the NBA, and if you just give them a chance they're coming. On the women's side, the biggest thing I've run into the last five years is, "You know coach, I just don't think I'm going to play anymore." You know – guys are always going to the NFL or the NBA or the major leagues. They've got that mind set. Where women know after four years in all likelihood, unless they go play professionally overseas or get in the WNBA or something like that on the basketball side, there's a cap. So, their education as an ability to earn money is way more valuable.

In summary, WBB C1's perspective centered on a comparison for why male student-athletes

have a desire to participate versus the motivation for female student-athletes. Citing an example of how a female prospective student-athlete chose an opportunity to compete at an institution where she believed the academic credentials would be more valuable compared to the academic credentials from another institution in which the opportunity to win was greater. From his perspective in coaching male student-athletes, he stated they all believe they are going to have a professional playing opportunity to earn a living wage whereas female student-athletes see the academic journey as the vessel to earn a sustainable living wage.

The second women's basketball coach (WBB C2) coached girls' basketball in high school and boys during the summer on the AAU circuit and currently has 15 years of experience as a community college head coach. During his unstructured interview, a perspective on amateurism describes that beyond the definition for student-athlete amateurism, student-athletes receive a number of perks not available to the average student.

My thoughts are probably in the minority. I feel like that it should be amateurism. The fact that they get a free education, and that's what they're here for is plenty. Athletes get the opportunity to travel. When we travel, they get free travel with us, they get free food, they get an opportunity for extra help in study halls because they miss a class. I think it's some perks that the regular student doesn't get and I think we forget sometimes that this is about academics first. So, I wish the amateurism was more like it was 10 years ago than it is now.

In summary, WBB C2 believed his perspective in favor of an amateurism model is a minority opinion. He emphasized the perks of being a student-athlete beyond a free education such as free travel, free meals, and academic support. In short, student-athletes have opportunities,

resources, and a support system in place that allows them to participate in an extracurricular activity that they love.

The third women's basketball coach (WBB C3) has been coaching nearly 20 years both with men and women. His career crossed several state lines and also includes coaching experience at the high school, prep school, and NCAA Division III levels and described the following perspective for student-athlete participation.

It builds character. It teaches them how to be a team player or continues to teach them how to be a team player. Those are skills that you would need on a job being able to work with other people from different backgrounds. In high school you're pretty much around the ones that you grew up with. When you talk about on the collegiate level, everyone comes from different places so it's more intense, I guess you could say.

In summary, WBB C3's perspective emphasized the life skills student-athletes gain from participation. He touched on team building, character building, and diversity. These skills carry on beyond playing careers into the workforce and interpersonal relationships.

Table 5.4. Women’s Basketball Coach Peer Participant Group

| Participant | Themes |
|--|---|
| Women’s Basketball Coach 1 (WBB C1) | Academic Credentials Ends after College |
| Women’s Basketball Coach 2 (WBB C2) | Free Education Paid Travel and Free Food Academic Support |
| Women’s Basketball Coach 3 (WBB C3) | Build Character Team Member Culture of Diversity |

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) in the women’s basketball coach peer participant group: “Academics and Development”.

The women’s basketball coach participants described variables of the student-athlete experience that make an amateurism model valuable at rural community colleges. WBB C1 described how female student-athletes place more emphasis on the value derived from academic credentialing than athletic success. WBB C2 provided a perspective that student-athletes receive a number of free perks from paid travel, free food, and academics support. Lastly, WBB 3

described how student-athletes learn skills through teamwork and in a diverse culture that provide value for the rest of their life.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) in the men's basketball coach participant group: "Amateurism". Each of the women's basketball coach participants described how achieving academic success is their first priority for their student-athletes. They placed more value on academic success and the perks of student-athlete participation than NIL remuneration.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) in the women's basketball coach peer participant group: "Not a Priority". The women's basketball coach participant's provided anecdotal knowledge of NIL, but did not have a perspective that NIL compensation would be significant benefit for female student-athletes.

Men's Basketball Student-Athlete Peer Participant Group Theme(s)

Across the student-athlete peer participant cases, three men's basketball and three women's basketball student-athletes were interviewed. They had varying reasoning for pursuing an opportunity to play community college basketball which often aligned with the descriptions that peer participants in the president, athletic director, and coach's groups described as a perspective for student-athlete participation.

The first men's basketball player (MBB SA1) grew up on the East Coast before traveling

to the Midwest to pursue a playing opportunity. He originally started his playing career at another Midwest community college before transferring to his current institution. As a NCAA qualifier for basketball out of high school, he did not receive an opportunity to play at the NCAA level which led him to pursue a community college. At the time of the interview, he had exhausted his community college eligibility and had the following aspirations and plans:

Right now, I'm just going through the recruiting process. So, now I'm just ready to go to the university, study pre-law, and try to go overseas after.

In summary, MBB SA1's motivation for pursuing an opportunity to play community college basketball confirms the perspectives of the president, coaches, and athletic director peer participant cases. He sought an opportunity to bridge a gap between not having an opportunity to play at the NCAA level out of high school in order to pursue his dream of playing professionally. From his perspective, he won't be able to compete at the highest level professionally in the NBA, but could compete as a professional overseas. As a plan to pursue a lifelong sustainable earning wage, he plans to complete an academic journey studying pre-law.

The second men's basketball player (MBB SA2) was a NCAA Division I transfer to his current opportunity at a community college. He called another state in the Midwest his home.

I came here wanting to kind of be in an in-between point from bouncing back from Division 1. I wanted to go to a place that could still challenge me the same way a Division 1 college does while it gives me a chance to grow as a person and as a player, and then ultimately go back Division 1. For me Division 1 has been a dream since I was a kid and I know it's something that I'm capable of. Last year I went Division 1 as I had offers coming out of high school in Division 1. There's a lot of hype around Division 1.

They give you the biggest stage as far as playing professionally. And now they give you the biggest stage as far as making money off the court as well.

In summary, MBB SA2 pursued a NCAA Division I playing opportunity out of high school, but discovered it wasn't the best fit. He transferred to a community college as a stepping stone for development with the plan to transfer back to the NCAA Division I level. He has a broader perspective of the playing opportunities available to him highlighting that NCAA Division I provides the largest platform to be seen as a professional, but also stating that it is not the level of competition for everyone.

The third men's basketball player (MBB SA3) had completed his community college eligibility and transferred to a NCAA Division I institution. He grew up playing basketball, but didn't get really serious about a playing career until his junior year in high school. Prior to that, the goal was to play football until injuries from concussions and broken bones became too serious. Following his playing career, he has professional playing career aspirations stating:

To the leagues. Wherever it can get me paid.

However, he also stated that he has other motivations for playing collegiate basketball.

I love playing ball. I love playing basketball. I just love the game. Everything about the game just motivates me. Basketball is something I can do to get my mind off a lot of things. I can like – when I'm going through things – just go to the court to dribble that ball. It helps me a lot, nothing about money. Money is going to come, you know, if you've got love for the game, you don't care about nothing else.

In summary, MBB SA3's perspective underpinned that despite professional aspirations, he loves to play the game and this is his foundational motivation for playing. While his dream to play professionally confirms the perspectives of president's, athletic directors, and coaches, it also

demonstrates that a deep passion for the activity of sport must exist to be competitively successful.

Table 5.5. Men’s Basketball Student-Athlete Peer Participant Group

| Participant | Themes |
|---|--|
| Men’s Basketball Student-Athlete 1 (MBB SA1) | Bridging the Gap for Transfer Play Professionally Academic Credentials |
| Men’s Basketball Student-Athlete 2 (MBB SA2) | Skill Development Bridge the Gap for Transfer |
| Men’s Basketball Student-Athlete 3 (MBB SA3) | Play Professionally Pursue Passion |

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) in the men’s basketball student-athlete peer participant group: “Bridge the Gap”.

The men’s basketball student-athlete participants described that rural community colleges provide student-athletes with an avenue to compete at a higher level in order to pursue the highest level of competition collegiately and ultimately, professionally. MBB SA1 and MBB SA3 described their professional aspirations. MBB SA1 and MBB SA2 described how their community college experience will open transfer opportunities.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) in the men's basketball student-athlete participant group: "Play Professionally". The men's basketball student-athletes recognized the value of NIL remuneration, but placed more value on transferring to compete at a NCAA Division I institution and remuneration from professional playing contracts.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) in the men's basketball student-athlete peer participant group: "Recognition". The men's basketball student-athlete participants acknowledged the value of NIL policy, but as recognition of their passion for the sport and visibility for their basketball talent than a source of compensation at their rural community colleges.

Women's Basketball Student-Athlete Peer Participant Group Theme(s)

The first women's basketball student-athlete (WBB SA1) described a motivation for wanting to play at a community college differently from her male peers.

In high school, you know, I loved sports. I didn't really want to give it up but didn't know if I wanted to go to the next level. So, I had a coach reach out to me, the head coach we had last year. And so, I just thought I couldn't turn down this opportunity so I took it. And it ended up being the best decision of my life because who knows where I'd be right now if I wasn't playing? So that was really my motivation.

In summary, while her motivation is similar in the sense that she loved the game and wanted an opportunity to continue playing, she didn't mention an opportunity to play at the highest collegiate levels or professionally. Her motivation was not aspirational in the sense that she didn't know if she really wanted to play. In her situation, she most likely would not have if a coach had not reached out with an opportunity as she was not actively seeking them.

The second women's basketball student-athlete (WBB SA2) travelled to the Midwest from the West Coast for her opportunity to play at a community college after not receiving the offers she wanted out of high school. Different from WBB SA1, her goals and motivation were more closely aligned with male student-athletes in trying to turn a community college playing opportunity into an opportunity to compete at the NCAA Division I level.

I didn't have the offers that I wanted coming out of high school and my sister actually went here the year before I did. She loved it so much here and she was able to open the door to a lot more opportunities after transferring. So, I knew the coach and I knew he was going to take care of me and get me where I wanted to be. My goal was always to get to Division 1 and out of high school I had some D2 offers and a couple of NAIA offers. Covid-19 was still a thing and schools were running out of scholarships. I talked to a lot of Division 1 coaches who just didn't have the scholarships and spots left on their roster. So, it was unfortunate that was the situation, but honestly, I think that in the end that this community college was where I needed to be.

In summary, WBB SA2 aspired to play at the NCAA level out of high school, but didn't get an opportunity. She contributed this to a combination of factors, personally she needed more development and the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic limited roster spot availability since current college student-athletes were granted a grace year of eligibility, creating a bottle neck in

the pipeline of players exiting high school and those currently enrolled at a college.

The third women's basketball student-athlete (WBB SA3) was from outside the state, calling another Midwest state home. She completed her community college eligibility this season and is transferring to play at a NCAA Division I institution in the summer. She described the following perception for participation at a rural community college:

I feel like it's either because they didn't get the offer they wanted, it was their grades, or it was their best offer. Most students that take that opportunity are just trying to get to the next level, go D1 or D2 if they have to. I wanted to be a college basketball player because basketball was the first sport I ever played. I've been playing since I was 5 or 6. I don't know, it just has always been my go-to sport and I just always wanted to do it.

In summary, WBB SA3 noted that some sort of remediation, either skill development or academic improvement, is the reason student-athletes choose to compete in community college. She also believes that a majority of community college student-athletes do so with the intent of transferring to a higher level. Also, similar to other student-athlete participants, underpinned as a foundation of her motivation was a passion to play the game.

Table 5.6. Women’s Basketball Student-Athletic Peer Participant Group

| Participant | Theme(s) |
|---|---|
| Women’s Basketball Student-Athlete 1 (WBB SA1) | Play at a Higher Level |
| Women’s Basketball Student-Athlete 2 (WBB SA2) | Skill Development Bridge the Gap for Transfer |
| Women’s Basketball Student-Athlete 3 (WBB SA3) | Academic Remediation Bridge the Gap for Transfer Pursue Passion |

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) in the women’s basketball student-athlete peer participant group: “Bridge the Gap”.

Similar to the men’s basketball student-athlete participants, the women’s basketball student-athlete participants described that rural community colleges provide student-athletes with a pathway to compete at a higher level. However, the women’s basketball student-athletes did not describe professional playing aspirations. WBB SA1 described she was unsure if she wanted to compete beyond high school, but was encouraged to play. WBB SA2 described how Covid-19 caused disruptions at the NCAA level and a community college opened the door for her to

continue pursuing a transfer opportunity. WBB SA3 described how she always wanted to play college basketball and a community college allowed her to realize her dream.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) in the women's basketball student-athlete participant group: "Pursue Passion". The women's basketball student-athletes understood the value of NIL remuneration at NCAA institutions, but placed more value on pursuing their passions and transferring to compete at a NCAA Division I institution.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) in the women's basketball student-athlete peer participant group: "Lack of Knowledge". The women's basketball student-athlete participants did not place much value on NIL policy for rural community colleges. For the purposes of the study, more background needed to be provided for these participants than participants in other peer groups.

Peer Participant Cross-Group Analysis

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme(s)

In cross-group analysis of sub-question 1 (SQ1), the president peer participant group and the athletic director peer participant group had similar perceptions for development in that student-athletes develop as an individual and through this personal growth have opportunities to further their journey as a student-athlete. The men's and women's basketball coach peer

participant groups shared a similar perception of the president's and athletic director's peer participant groups for development, but emphasized academic credentialing, which in some cases includes remediation. Lastly, the men's and women's basketball student-athlete peer participant groups aligned with the perceptions of the president, athletic director, men's basketball coach, and women's basketball coach peer participant groups for student-athlete growth and development, but viewed the student-athlete experience at a rural community college as a way to step between their secondary educational experience to a higher competitive level. They recognized this step may be necessary for a variety of reasons from needing academic remediation, skill development, or not receiving an opportunity that aligned with their goals out of high school.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

In cross-group analysis of sub-question 2 (SQ2), the president, athletic director, men's basketball coach, and women's basketball coach peer participant groups expressed a similar perception that students are amateurs and academic achievement provides the most value to the student-athlete experience at a rural community college. As it relates to subjective theory of value, this achievement creates a lifetime of value in earning a sustainable living wage. In contrast, the men's basketball student-athlete participants placed a higher or equal value on the opportunity to play professionally and the women's basketball student-athlete peer participant group placed a higher or equal value on pursuing their passion.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

In cross-group analysis of the guiding research question (GRQ), the president, athletic director, men's basketball coach, and women's basketball coach peer participant groups similarly described how they recognize that the business of intercollegiate athletics is changing due to NIL

policy, but at this point, it is a low priority for rural community colleges. They anticipate the effect of remuneration from NIL to be negligible and will adapt accordingly as needed. The men's and women's basketball student-athlete peer participant groups described different perceptions from each other and the president, athletic director, men's basketball coach, and women's basketball coach peer participant groups. The men's basketball student-athlete peer participant group placed value on how NIL policy recognizes their talent and achievements as student-athletes. Lastly, the women's basketball student-athlete participant group expressed interest and a perception that NIL could be beneficial to the rural community college student-athlete experience.

Summary

In closing, individuals were interviewed from the following six peer participant groups at three community college institutions in a Midwestern community college athletic conference for this multiple case study: presidents, athletic directors, men's and women's basketball coaches, and men's and women's basketball student-athletes. For data collection, unstructured interviews, archive documents, and notes from memoing were analyzed for emerging themes and in answering the research questions. From the president peer participant group, the themes of "Personal Growth", "Academic Credentials", and "Low Priority" emerged in answering the research questions. Secondly, the themes of "Springboard Development", "Academic Success", and "Low Priority" emerged in answering the research questions in the athletic director peer participant group. The men's basketball coach peer participant group produced the themes of "Academic Credentialing", "Student First", and "Changing Business Model" in answering the research questions. In the women's basketball coach participant group, the themes of "Academics and Development", "Amateurism", and "Not a Priority" emerged in answering the

research questions. The men's basketball student-athlete participant group developed the themes of "Bridge the Gap", "Play Professionally", and "Recognition" in answering the research questions. Lastly, from the women's basketball student-athlete peer participant group, the themes of "Bridge the Gap", "Pursue Passion", and "Lack of Knowledge" emerged in answering the research questions.

Chapter 6 - ANALYSIS, RECOMMENDATIONS, & CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The following chapter covers: a cross case analysis of member institutions and peer participant groups, a discussion of analysis and conclusions through the theoretical framework for subjective theory of value, implications for community college athletics at rural community colleges, recommendations for future research, and limitations of this multiple case study are presented. From a triangulation of data analysis between thematic data analysis, archive document review, memoing and the researcher's breadth of direct work experience within community college athletics, the following five conclusions are discussed as they relate to current literature: (1) intercollegiate athletics at community colleges is a benevolent and amateur activity, (2) opportunities for Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) compensation will effect community college student-athletes on a smaller scale, (3) it is anticipated that NIL remuneration will be negligible, (4) athletics at rural community colleges creates a culturally diverse student experience across campus and (5) community college athletics is an active engagement effort to meet the modern mission of community colleges. In addition to the conclusions of this study, recommendations for practice within community college athletics are outlined: (1) determine a level of institutional commitment to financial benevolence (2) develop NIL acceptable practices and procedures for rural community colleges and (3) establish transfer regulations and guidelines for rural community college institutions and student-athletes with NIL opportunities. Lastly, the chapter closes with a discussion on recommendations for future research and limitations of the study.

Cross-Case Analysis of Member Institution Cases and Peer Participant Groups

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience. The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) in a cross-case analysis of member institutions and peer participants groups: “student-athlete development”.

From the president peer participant group, this included opportunities for higher level competition, recruitment, life preparation, mentoring, campus engagement, academic credentials, and sharing common experiences in a diverse environment of thought and culture. The athletic director peer participant group identified opportunities for student-athletes to experience life lessons, be a member of a team, overcome adversity, develop leadership skills, experience success academically and in competition, pursue aspirations and dreams, and springboard to a higher level. From the coach’s peer participant group, the men’s basketball coach participants identified opportunities to break-down academic barriers to earn credentials, transfer, develop skills, and prepare for life. From the women’s basketball coach participants, opportunities for academic credentials, paid travel, subsidized education, free meals, academic support, character building, being a member of a team, and sharing experiences in a diverse environment were identified. From the student-athlete peer participant groups, the men’s basketball student-athlete participants identified the following opportunities: earn academic credentials, play professionally, bridge the gap for transfer, skill development, and pursue passion. Lastly, the

following opportunities were identified from the women's basketball student-athlete participants: play at a higher level, skill development, bridge the gap for transfer, academic remediation, and pursue passion. From these range of opportunities, it is clear that these will continue to be the benefits that student-athletes will derive from their experience at rural community colleges when cross-analyzed with the member-institution cases in which themes for “fewer resources”, “inequity is the norm”, and “unrealistic expectations” were discovered. In other words, a market for generating revenue does not exist for intercollegiate athletics at rural community colleges and an amateurism model provides a pathway for student-athletes to benefit from their experiences.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme(s)

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) in a cross-case analysis of member institutions and peer participant groups: “one-way benevolent investment”.

Across the themes that developed from member-institution cases and peer participant groups, the anticipated effect of remuneration from NIL compensation is anticipated to be negligible. Rural community colleges will continue to operate athletic programs with fewer resources and in a model of inequity, even amongst peer rural community colleges.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), & California Community College Athletic Association (CCCCAA), have defined amateurism as their current model for participation and is identified as “someone who participates, and always has participated, in sports for pleasure and for the physical, mental, or social benefits” (Schott, 1996, p. 31). Situating findings from this study through the theoretical

lens for subjective theory of value, intercollegiate athletics participation in men's and women's basketball at the community college level epitomizes this intent.

While the amount of time, energy, effort, and dedication a community college athlete expends in participation is equal to the labor of their NCAA peers, community college athletics is not a revenue producing industry. This is in contrast by comparison with institutions of higher education in Power 5 Conferences where the labor of student-athletes is producing millions of dollars in revenue for the institutions. This revenue has been remunerated to coaches and administrators in multi-year, multi-million-dollar contracts, but not to student-athletes due to amateurism bylaw restrictions prior to the implementation of NIL policy. Therefore, while NCAA student-athletes most likely experience some of the same benefits beyond compensation that community college student-athletes do, the result of their labor has greatly improved the value of their institutions brand for generating revenue. Due to creating a marketable brand value comparable to corporate business brand value that generates revenue, a two-way relationship for revenue sharing now exists between student-athletes and Power 5 Conference institutions for allowing compensation through Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) policy. Conversely, for rural community college institutions, only a one-way relationship has been established for investing in athletic programs as there is no return on investment in the form of revenue or significant institutional brand value.

For example, from document analysis, member institution 1 reported a net revenue of approximately \$28,000 from their 2022 Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) survey. This is the difference of approximately \$2,187,000 in total net revenue and \$2,159,000 in total expenses. Member institution 3 reported a net revenue of approximately \$4,000 on their 2022 Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) survey. This is the difference of approximately

\$1,936,000 collected in total revenue and \$1,932,000 paid in total expenses. Furthermore, they also reported an average salary for men's team coaches at approximately \$33,000 per year and \$28,000 per year for women's team coaches. However, member institution 2 reported approximately \$400,000 of net revenue as a result of collecting approximately \$5,010,000 in total revenue and paying approximately \$4,610,000 in total operating expenses from their 2022 Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) survey.

While as a lump sum, \$400,000 is a significant amount of money, distributed equally across student-athletes at member institution 2, student-athletes could potentially receive approximately \$1,000 each year. This amount would only subsidize a fraction of the total cost of attendance rather than a remuneration of revenue sharing. For example, only enough funds to cover the cost of textbooks or some fees. Furthermore, being able to generate this amount of revenue at the community college level doesn't necessarily mean the business of community athletics has become a profitable business, it is more likely an indicator of benevolent donations by local boosters. For example, instead of having to spend most of their revenue paying for student-athlete scholarships, fundraising efforts have off-set operational expenses allowing for an enhanced student-athlete experience and increasing the likelihood of long-term student-athlete success. Furthermore, in comparing the revenue of these two institutions and considering that a member institution has more benevolent financial support than another, the perceived concern from participants that if NIL compensation scales up in significance beyond a negligible amount for community colleges, a greater divide in the "Have's and Have Not's" will be realized.

According to Kagan and Howard (2020), the phenomenon in which this new two-way financial relationship exists at the NCAA level and a historical one-way benevolent financial relationship exists at the community college level, would be attributed as a variable of the

subjective theory of value in that the value of something is determined from how scarce and useful an item is rather than how many hours went into production. However, while community college student-athletes are not competing in an environment saturated with revenue, they gain tremendous value from participation. For example, intercollegiate athletics brings together and establishes lifelong relationships among people in a way that crosses relational barriers of culture, race, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Once these individuals are assembled on a campus to compete for a common goal by fighting through adversity, they establish relationships that cannot be obtained within other common institutional experiences in society such as government, religion, or education.

Furthermore, by comparison, the coaches who lead these student-athletes expend the same amount of labor and in some cases, more than their NCAA peers by needing to wear multiple hats, but do so on a teacher's salary. In other words, they are not receiving a level of compensation that would be considered inequitable and create the potential for exploitation as Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas noted about NCAA institutions by stating: "it strikes me as odd that coaches' salaries have ballooned and they are in the amateur ranks, as are the players" (Kirshner, 2021, p. 2). Therefore, an alternative point of view could be community college institutions are exploiting the compensation of community college coaches with low wages, but the same high expectations for labor input as during competition seasons, it is expected that coaches expend 60-80 hours of work each week with no overtime pay.

Additionally, only a fraction of community college student-athlete participants arrive on campus with a full athletic grant-in-aid package and if NIL compensation becomes a possibility, a negligible effect will not change this. This is a standard practice for community college student-athletes as it is rare that financial aid assistance is not needed to subsidize the cost of

attendance. Therefore, in the absence of personal financial gain and motivated primarily by aspiration to pursue opportunity through individual growth, athletic participation in community colleges is an amateur activity. While the need for financial aid assistance is not limited to student-athletes, the assumption is that student-athletes pursue intercollegiate athletics participation for financial incentives. Compared to their NCAA peers, the financial rewards and perks of participation are far less. However, the altruistic culture of community college athletics in parallel with the definition for student-athlete amateurism results in lifelong benefits and creates a deep-seated passion that coaches and athletic directors most likely experienced as a student-athlete and is a motivation for pursuing their profession today. In other words, while community college student-athletes and coaches are not motivated to participate by financial gain, they have a choice, and choose to participate with the same level of commitment as their NCAA peers because of other variables they value and that make their experience valuable. For the rural community college institution, they derive value in other areas. For example, by creating a benevolent relationship between the institution and the local community and generating institutional revenue from student-athlete credit hour enrollment and on-campus housing.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme(s)

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) in a cross-case analysis of member institutions and peer participant groups: “Low or Not a Priority”.

From cross-case analysis of member institutions and peer participant groups, it is anticipated that policy for NIL compensation will eventually need to be established at rural

community college institutions. To date, these member institutions have not addressed policy for their institutions and have relied on policy created by the NJCAA, their national governing organization. However, the new landscape of business practices within intercollegiate athletics is shifting and participants described this as being in the “early stages” and will “trickle or flow down” to the community college level. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the NIL compensation opportunities for rural community college student-athletes will be one-time or complimentary and policy will most likely reflect this in comparison to NIL policy for student-athletes at Power 5 Conference member institutions.

In other words, time will be a determining factor for if student-athletes could benefit from NIL opportunities beyond a negligible effect at rural community colleges. The limit of possibilities are bound only by the ingenuity and imagination of those operating in the NIL space. As institutions, student-athletes, constituents, and third parties continue to navigate this environment though, the need for training will evolve as well as regulations and oversight. It is unlikely that NIL opportunities will grow in the rural community college market to the capacity of the NCAA and it is anticipated that financial remuneration from NIL will be negligible. With fewer participating institutions, fewer media resources, and approximately one-fifth the number of student-athlete participants each year combined in the CCCAA and NJCAA, community college athletics in rural areas is not a revenue producing industry. However, as rural community colleges adapt to the new landscape of NIL, the original intent for the SQ1 theme of “student-athlete development” will continue to be life enrichment experiences that would not otherwise have been possible. These common core experiences in community college athletics bring people together in a way that institutions in our society cannot, crossing the boundaries of culture and race to establish lifelong relationships amongst diverse populations. Therefore, for

rural community colleges, supporting intercollegiate athletic programs will continue to be a primary source of engagement for creating a diverse campus culture of thought and experiences and developing relationships within rural communities with diverse populations in order to meet the modern community college mission.

Community College Amateurism and Subjective Theory of Value

From this study, participants anticipate principles of the model for amateurism in current literature as identified by Schott (1996) will continue as the philosophy for intercollegiate competition at the rural community college level. This determination is based on the perception that remuneration for community college student-athletes from NIL compensation will be negligible. Rural community college student-athletes will continue to experience the educational, physical, mental, and social benefits derived from amateur participation. Participants identified these benefits in part as being a member of a team, earning academic credentials, competing at a higher level, receiving free meals and travel, academic support services, and sharing common experiences in a diverse environment. Furthermore, this study discovered that the financial relationship between rural community college institutions and student-athletes is benevolent. In other words, the investment in community college student-athletes by community colleges in rural locations is a gift. It is not equivalent to the business partnership that is experienced by student-athletes competing at institutions in Power 5 Conferences in which revenue is also created from the value derived from usefulness and scarcity as identified by Kagan and Howard (2020) and is shared from the labor of student-athletes, coaches, and others.

For example, grant-in-aid distributed to student-athletes is not from revenue that is shared from the monetary value of a community college student-athletes labor or derived value of

usefulness and scarcity, but a subsidy from an institution's operating funds or government source in off-setting the cost of attendance as identified in the CCCAA 2021-2022 Constitution and Bylaws for Scholarships and Grants (CCCAA, 2022). Therefore, student-athletes are not engaged in the two-way financial revenue sharing relationship that their NCAA peers are from producing a marketable brand, but rather are being invested in by community college institutions for their own edification. The rewards from the return on investment in this relationship is primarily reaped by the student-athletes as the institutions only experience a modest, if any, financial gain compared to NCAA intercollegiate athletics.

The distinction between the industries for producing revenue in the NCAA market and the community college market are identifiable in other areas of consumer interest such as media and merchandising. As previously identified by Highsmith (2019), "the Collegiate Licensing Company who happens to be the primary partner of the NCAA owns 85% of the college licensing market" (p. 26). Furthermore, institutions that compete in Power 5 Conferences continue to re-negotiate multi-million-dollar media contracts within each conference that distribute tens of millions of dollars to each institution on an annual basis. This contrasts with broadcasting and merchandising industry revenue for community college athletics in which contests may be livestreamed for no cost or merchandising that is only sold in the campus bookstore.

Even though the Knight Commission C.A.R.E. report (2021) stated "college sports in Division I, most notably in the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), are in the midst of a runaway financial race that threatens to upend and undermine the educational model of athletics" (p. 2), the subjective theory of value would stipulate that this is an indication of economic value. Due to this revenue generation, NCAA athletics is a valuable economic entity of the United States

economy. Full-time and part-time employment is created and funded from this revenue in industries such as broadcasting, merchandising, licensing, marketing, social media, administration, video games, compliance, finance, accounting, and human resources. This occupational support funnels into communities through employees from taxpayer funds and indicates that NCAA athletics is an economic driver and a viability assessment for economic well-being would be an economic indicator.

As the subjective theory of value relates to NIL policy adopted by institutions of higher education, including rural community colleges, institutions are justified in producing policy and restrictions on the type of businesses and industries that student-athletes can partner with. Even though student-athlete labor drives the revenue generated from brand value through NCAA athletics, institutions of higher education make this opportunity possible, and an institutional brand is only as valuable as its integrity. Therefore, while compensation earned from NIL is individualized as income, institutions of higher education, including rural community colleges, need to be proactive in setting policy for appropriate NIL activities. Some guidelines and restrictions are already in place such as identified by Kansas State University NIL Policy (2021) for the use of its logo and facilities as well as prohibiting commercial products and services that conflict with NCAA, university, or athletic department policy. For example, industries that sell or promote pornography, illicit substances, weapons, or gambling. These types of guidelines and restrictions ensure the integrity of the institutional brand and protect student-athletes from exploitation at a times in their lives where it is reasonable to assume they would not have much industry experience to draw upon to navigate this new enterprise. Furthermore, due to this inexperience it is necessary for athletic departments to invest in NIL programming to provide guidance and support for industry-related decision-making.

Lastly, participants of this study see tremendous value in the model for amateurism as some lamented the implementation of NIL policy and believe that student-athletes should not be compensated on potential value, but only when the labor of student-athletes has produced sharable revenue. Furthermore, this is evident in the compensation of coaches compared to their labor input as intrinsic value is derived in the absence of overtime pay and personal sacrifice. In other words, community college administrators and coaches believe in the educational value of community college athletics and invest their time to participate in an amateur model for the benefit of developing people beyond their ability to create revenue sharing. This framework for an amateur model aligns with the subjective theory of value as according to Perry (1926) as cited by Hull (1932), “value is very closely linked to our motor-affective life” (p. 17). Therefore, making a benevolent investment in athletics at rural community colleges would be a strategic effort by administrators in meeting the modern community college mission as the community college mission has shifted from scaling up to provide access to focusing on students completing academic credentials in a diverse campus culture.

Recommended Practices for Community Colleges

While it is not clear from this study how NIL compensation will be experienced by rural community college student-athletes, it is clear these community colleges believe as NCAA opportunities grow, they will trickle down to their level on a smaller scale and their effect will be negligible. It is anticipated that these opportunities will be in the form of one-time payments or complimentary services such as free meals at a local fast-food restaurant. Furthermore, due to the perception that NIL is unlikely to have much of a financial impact at the community college level for the institutions in this study, it is also unlikely that financial issues such as “dead money” as identified by Schlach (2021) and exorbitant coaching salaries will exist. In other

words, each level from the NCAA to the NJCAA and CCCAA will have a unique set of challenges and opportunities related to NIL that will not necessarily exist at other levels of intercollegiate competition.

Further situating this study in existing literature, even though it is anticipated that NIL compensation will be negligible for community college student-athletes, several of the student-athletes in this study indicated that financial gain was not a source of primary motivation in participating and that they simply love to play the game of basketball. A potential concern though is in an environment where resources are lacking, student-athletes could be taken advantage of within the private sector as in the case of Stevin Smith and Isaac Burton (Bad Sport, 2021). At the rural community college level, placing gambling wagers on athletic contests has not been documented as a commonplace occurrence, but community colleges still need to heed the advice of the Knight Commission C.A.R.E (2021) report. As visibility from livestreaming and the ability to place wagers on nearly any sport through readily accessible online gambling sites, it is entirely possible that community college student-athletes could find themselves in these scenarios, potentially jeopardizing their future ability to compete as a transfer. Community colleges also need to provide student-athletes with guidance on appropriate NIL activities so they do not fall into scenarios where they could be exploited by private sector businesses conducting illicit or illegal activities such as pornography or banned substances.

Therefore, to maintain a benevolent financial relationship and improve the experience of community student-athletes in an amateurism model for participation, the following recommendations are submitted for consideration in establishing a sustainable student-athlete experience. First, rural community college institutions need to determine what intercollegiate sporting activities will be supported by their local and regional communities. To do so,

community colleges need to seek feedback from their constituents through surveys and open forums. For example, some rural community colleges currently support rodeo or wrestling teams while other rural community colleges do not have local or regional interest in supporting these activities. Secondly, community college institutions need to establish a financial investment strategy that supports their level of commitment for a benevolent financial relationship with the student-athlete that is sustainable. Community college institutions need to stop relying on a subsidized financial support model such as the combination of financial aid in a Pell Grant or student loans and athletic grant-in-aid to subsidize a student-athletes cost of attendance. To be benevolently secure financially, institutions need to determine the total cost of attendance and for example, establish an athletic endowment that will generate enough investment funds to annually cover full cost of attendance scholarships for every student-athlete listed on a roster. This would alleviate many situations in which student-athletes suffer food insecurity such as described by Smith and Burton (Bad Sport, 2021).

Also, in heeding the advice of the Knight Commission (2021) report for health and safety, community colleges need to establish a secure stream of funding that fully covers the cost of any medical related issues stemming from participation. Often, the student-athlete is responsible first to cover the cost from healthcare providers and community colleges only carry supplemental coverages. Establishing full health-care coverage would address a concern identified by Josie (2018) for student-athlete unionization. As a final recommendation, community colleges need to equitably compensate and provide access to coaches and support services such as academic support that support student-athletes at an equitable level that mirrors their commitment. Even though this level of financial commitment would unlikely increase the institution's brand value for revenue, community colleges are not intended to be revenue

producing entities and they must insure the safety and well-being of community college student-athletes to reduce student-athlete distrust and support student-athletes in completing academic credentials to reduce incidents of stopping-out, issues identified by Highsmith (2019).

For student-athletes, if NIL opportunities exist, they could be pursued as a nominal income. Even for those student-athletes who are currently awarded a full scholarship, the cost of attendance goes beyond the institution for activities such as travel to and from campus, classroom and living supplies, technology, and clothing. Also, community college residence halls are closed following finals week and do not re-open for three, four, or five weeks, prior to the start of the spring semester. During this time however, basketball season goes on and teams are forced to find meals for student-athletes outside of the on-campus cafeteria. Often, institutions will rely on programs such as a food pantry to support student-athletes during this time. Therefore, a possible opportunity could be for local restaurants to provide free meals in exchange for student-athletes promoting their business, or local boosters to pay a one-time fee for a student-athlete to make an appearance at a local event such as a birthday party or provide instruction for a youth team. Even though the compensation would be negligible, it provides an opportunity to earn a nominal amount of money when the student-athlete time commitment doesn't permit for on or off campus employment like their peers.

Implications of NIL Policy

Policy permitting student-athletes the ability to earn compensation from the use of their NIL is an emerging opportunity and from this study, it is apparent these rural community college institutions are not ready to address NIL through policy, but realize the responsibility is on the horizon. Therefore, one implication for community college athletics is to establish educational programming and NIL training at the national level. As of this study, the CCCAA

and NJCAA have general policy in their by-laws, but inconsistencies exist. For example, the CCCAA (2021) policy states “student-athletes are required to disclose compensated NIL agreements/activity to their institution’s athletic director no later than 72 hours of the agreement or activity occurring. Student-athletes are encouraged to disclose, where possible, such agreements prior to entering into them” (p.58), but the NJCAA policy does not have a timestamped reporting requirement. Furthermore, the CCCAA (2021) states student-athletes may “sell their personal team-related merchandise (equipment/apparel/shoes) provided to them by their institution if such merchandise is normally retained by the student-athlete and not to be reused by the institution” (p. 58-59), but NJCAA policy does not mention this as permitted or banned. Adding complexity to these by-laws is the existence of piecemeal NIL legislation at the state level as not all states have implemented law for NIL. Furthermore, for the states who have adopted legislation, variations in state laws for what is permissible and what is not only adds more confusion. Therefore, in an environment where policy is inconsistent and a need to protect student-athletes from exploitation exists, educational programming and training is needed to guide community college institutions in determining conference policy and institutional practices.

Also, it is evident from this study that transfer regulations and guidelines need to be developed for community colleges addressing NIL opportunities during student-athlete transfer. Community colleges are a conduit and a steppingstone to another opportunity as identified by multiple participants in the study. Community college student-athletes regularly transfer between community college institutions, from community colleges to NCAA institutions and student-athletes transfer each year from NCAA institutions to community colleges then back to the NCAA level as 4-2-4 transfers. The volume of transferring student-athletes in collegiate

basketball has increased rapidly since the implementation of the transfer portal and relaxed restrictions on transfer rules due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These scenarios combined with a waiver for an additional year of eligibility have created a surplus of student-athletes and roster logjams. Some student-athletes are now attending two, three, or four institutions and staying within the system of higher education as a student-athlete for up to seven years. Therefore, a number of possibilities exist for how NIL could be involved in a transfer process and how community college student-athletes could benefit from NIL opportunities has not been defined during transfer.

Further situating this study in existing literature, clear definitions of what a professional contract is and is not, are necessary. Will student-athletes forgo their college eligibility only in the case that compensation is provided for pay-for-play as in the case of the newly established Overtime Elite (OTE) league? According to this league, while their student-athletes are being paid a salary, they are still able to earn college credit as an athlete following their high school career. Could this type of compensation be considered NIL in a different framework? If so, could these individuals pursue academic credentials as a community college student-athlete if needed? Will more leagues be developed that establish alternative playing opportunities for student-athletes following high school that are not affiliated with institutions of higher education, particularly community colleges?

Furthermore, policies for being deemed a professional and remaining an amateur will need to be modified. For example, the CCCAA (2021) has bylaw policy that would limit an amateur athlete in being able to be represented by an agent for the marketing of his/her athletic ability other than through a scouting service in section e. Following in section f, a student-athlete would be deemed ineligible if they have accepted compensation for the use of their name,

image, or likeness prior to entering college. In such a rapidly evolving landscape with little oversight and governance for NIL, community college policy for amateurism is becoming quickly antiquated and needs to be modified or institutions risk unintentionally alienating prospective student-athletes. For the community colleges in this study, a sharp decrease in enrollment from the loss of student-athletes would have major implications on the overall financial solvency and well-being of the institution.

Lastly, an area of concern that emerged in unstructured interviews as occurring in an unregulated environment at the NCAA level is that a culture of “free agency” is being created when NIL opportunities are combined with transfer opportunities. For example, when a student-athlete enters the transfer portal; their status has returned to prospective student-athlete and any institution can now see who is available for transfer. The assumption is that these student-athletes will pursue their next playing opportunity based on the highest bidder with NIL compensation. Unintentionally, this could become a recruiting strategy for roster management in which student-athletes become vulnerable to exploitation. This is evident in the following participant comments:

Men’s Basketball Coaches

MBB C1: But players are able to advocate for themselves and look for better options.

And they’re also able to leave good options because they’re not getting what they want, which is, you know, that’s American business, right? Like, you’re able to quit your job, find another one.

MBB C3: I mean, it’s great for the kids. I don’t – it’s kind of nuts how they seem to be trying to control it, but they’re really not. It’s basically turned into free agency. No salary cap.

Women's Basketball Coach

WBB C2: But now with the transfer rule and NIL, believe it or not, in my opinion it's tied together. That's one of the biggest mistakes I think in the history of sports that the NCAA has made, is coming out with those at the same time. Because now, if you're a pretty good player, jump in the transfer portal and see what big NIL you can get. It's free agency. And now it's become, you know, it's full bore the Wild Wild West in recruiting.

President

President 2: But conference bylaws that we have to follow as well that would be potentially different from where that student-athlete is coming from.

Therefore, while the intent of NIL policy is to restrict the opportunity as a pay-for-play strategy in recruiting practices, guidelines need to be established with a clear process for enforcement oversight to preserve an amateurism model within rural community colleges. In an evolving environment, community colleges are in a unique position to address this issue prior to institutional incidents or missteps because as NIL scenarios play out at the NCAA level, policymakers and administrators can review these cases for what is working and developing concerns. In other words, community colleges are in a rare position to be a leader in developing solutions for an intercollegiate athletic issue rather than a position of compliance for policy already established.

Future Research Recommendations

From this study, in addition to themes that developed from member institution cases and peer participant group analysis, a possible concern was identified that an unintended consequence of NIL policy is that Title IX issues will emerge. For example, Title IX legislation was established to ensure equitable educational opportunities.

President

President 3: Because if you're looking at like an EADA [Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act] survey into equity in athletics, how are you going to account for that? Because there's also going to be Title IX issues that arise out of this. Because again, I'm just waiting for the situation where you say, "Well, this individual received this, but his female counterpart didn't." What responsibility does that lie on the school? I don't know.

Women's Basketball Coach

WBB C2: This is horrible because I couldn't say this publicly because I'm a female coach. But you know, again, at the end of the day, Title IX for example.

At the time of this study, it is not clear if this will become an issue for rural community colleges as at the NCAA level, female student-athletes have been receiving significant NIL opportunities similar to the remuneration male student-athletes have received. Some of these approaching and exceeding seven figures. While it is not anticipated that rural community college student-athletes will benefit in the same capacity, how opportunities exist between genders needs to align with policy for equitable educational opportunities. Therefore, future research needs to examine the variance of how NIL could affect female and male student-athletes at the community college level through the lens of Title IX policy. For example, through the subjective theory of value, the impact of NIL opportunities may be equitable in the amount of compensation, but could be more valuable for female student-athletes than male student-athlete participants because of limited professional playing opportunities for women.

Secondly, it is evident that it will be several years before a study could be conducted examining how NIL compensation is being experienced by student-athletes at rural community

colleges. Across all member institution cases and peer participant groups, it was confirmed that for these Midwestern institutions, they have not begun to address NIL through policy. Once this has been established, how policy is put into practice will begin to filter into the student-athlete experience. Therefore, another future recommendation is to replicate the study once a breadth of NIL compensation transactions exist. A final research recommendation is to examine how NIL could affect the student-athlete experience at urban community colleges with student enrollments greater than 10,000.

Limitations of the Study

Considering the number of student-athlete participants each year on college campuses at NJCAA Division I, II, and III institutions and the length of competitive basketball seasons, access to participants was limited. Secondly, since current NIL compensation policy is in a draft status within the NJCAA, institutional administrations and coaches may have been hesitant to allow student-athlete involvement as research participants or release historical documentation related to grant-in-aid athletic scholarships. Thirdly, due to COVID-19 protocols or scheduling conflicts, some interviews were hosted synchronously via Zoom video or phone conferencing. Lastly, despite requesting archive documents from the conference office of these Midwestern community colleges, no documents for review were attained.

Another limitation of this study was only involving student-athlete participants from men's and women's basketball. As an intercollegiate sport, basketball has a high participation rate amongst community colleges. This is most likely due to lower costs for participation and the popularity of the sport. However, according to the NJCAA (2022), community colleges host competitions in the following sports: football, volleyball, soccer, baseball, softball, wrestling, bowling, cross country, track and field, golf, lacrosse, swimming and diving, and tennis. The

opportunity to benefit from NIL policy is not limited to specific sports and how this could affect the student-athlete experience beyond men's and women's basketball needs to be researched at community colleges, particularly in sports with high consumer interest levels such as football. Also, a limitation of the study was that member institution participation only included smaller, rural community colleges with student enrollments of less than 10,000 and on-site visits were only made for two of the three participant member institutions. While the researcher has previously visited the community college site not traveled to in this study and toured the campus virtually, it is reasonable to assume that further insight could have been gained outside of unstructured virtual interviews.

Finally, the case-study results are not generalizable, and the study can be difficult to replicate because case studies aim to discover uniqueness and allow readers to determine their own generalizations. Also, multiple case study research can be time consuming and due to the rapidly evolving environment for NIL opportunities, the perceptions of participants may have been based on limited background knowledge.

Summary

In summary, from the triangulation of interview transcripts, archive, and memoing document analysis, the following themes were discovered from cross-analysis of member institution cases and peer participant groups as they relate to each research question through the theoretical framework for subjective theory of value.

First Sub-Question (SQ1) Theme

The first sub-question is: in what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience.

The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the first sub-question (SQ1) in a cross-case analysis of member institutions and peer participant groups: “student-athlete development”.

In other words, in a model of inequity with few resources, the benefits to be derived from participation will be in the individual growth of student-athletes as amateurs. This development could include academic improvement or athletic skill development in preparing for the next step of transferring. It was perceived that earning academic credentials and growing as an individual to further a student-athletes playing career was more valuable at the rural community college level than any value that could be remunerated from NIL.

Second Sub-Question (SQ2) Theme

The second sub-question (SQ2) is: how are community colleges responding to NIL policies? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of value lens from the second sub-question (SQ2) in a cross-case analysis of member institutions and peer participant groups: “one-way benevolent investment”.

A new two-way financial relationship for revenue sharing exists at the NCAA level for NIL compensation. However, for rural community colleges, it is perceived that the effect of NIL compensation will be negligible. Therefore, the historical one-way benevolent financial relationship between community colleges and student-athletes will continue within a model of amateurism.

Guiding Research Question (GRQ) Theme

The guiding research question (GRQ) of this study is: how are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? The following theme developed through a subjective theory of

value lens from the guiding research question (GRQ) in in a cross-case analysis of member institutions and peer participant groups: “Low or Not a Priority”.

In other words, for NIL policy, a neutral space has been created resting on the hyphen of the phrase student-athlete in which large variances will exist across levels of intercollegiate athletics for how NIL could be a benefit to the student-athlete experience. At the NCAA level, a two-way relationship now exists for revenue-sharing which could ultimately lead to a new model for the business of athletics in Power 5 Conferences. However, at the rural community college level, a benevolent relationship will continue to support student-athletes within a model for amateurism and rural community college administrators need to strategically plan for how intercollegiate athletics can meet the modern community college mission even though it is anticipated that NIL will minimally trickle down to their level.

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Appendix A - Volunteer Participant Interview Stimulus Questions & Discussion Prompts

1. Describe your experiences and/or background with intercollegiate athletics.
2. From your perspective, what is the philosophy for participation in intercollegiate athletics?
3. Describe your thoughts regarding the amateur status of student-athletes.
4. Are you familiar with emerging policy for Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) compensation?
5. How do you think policy permitting Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) compensation could affect or change the student-athlete experience?
6. What role do you think conference and member institution administrations hold in governing policy for NIL compensation?
7. Do you think NIL policy could benefit or enhance the student-athlete experience? If so, how?

8. Do you think NIL policy could burden the student-athlete athlete experience? If so, how?
9. What processes for NJCAA rules training does your institution follow for student-athletes? Has training been conducted for NIL policy?
10. Who is responsible for compliance oversight? Would a violation of NIL policy be considered a student code of conduct violation?
11. How do you think NIL opportunities could impact recruiting?
12. Could NIL create a celebrity culture for student-athletes on campus?
13. As student-athletes transfer, do you think NIL opportunities could create a culture of free agency?
14. Do you think NIL opportunities for local student-athletes may be greater or less than compared to their out-of-state teammates?

Appendix B - Research Question Alignment Table

Table B.1. Research Question Alignment Table

| Research Question | Stimulus Question or Discussion Prompt | Document Archives |
|---|---|---|
| How are community colleges addressing NIL through policy? | 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 | Athletic Department Handbooks, Conference Handbook, Conference Website, EADA Reports, Institutional Websites, Meeting Minutes |
| In what ways do stakeholders (community college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes) describe their perceptions of student-athlete compensation, and how this might affect community colleges and the student-athlete experience? | 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12, 13, 14 | |
| How are community colleges responding to NIL policies? | 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 | Athletic Department Handbooks, Conference Handbook, Conference Website, Institutional Websites, Meeting Minutes |

Appendix C - Pilot Study Verbal Consent Statement

By participating in this study, you agree that your participation is voluntary. You also agree that you understand by deciding to participate, you may withdraw your consent at any time and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which you may otherwise be entitled.

Do you understand the terms of volunteer participation, agree to participate as a volunteer in this pilot study, and agree for the interview to be recorded?

Do you have any questions about consent or volunteer participation?

Appendix D - IRB Approval Letter



TO: Jeffrey Zacharakis
Educational Leadership
Manhattan, KS 66506

Proposal Number: IRB-11132

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 04/01/2022

RE: Proposal Entitled, "Revenue Generation in Collegiate Athletics: An Exploratory Case Study of Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) Compensation for the Community College Student-Athlete."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects / Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that it is EXEMPT from further IRB review. This exemption applies only to the proposal - as written – and currently on file with the IRB. Any change potentially affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation and may disqualify the proposal from exemption.

Based upon information provided to the IRB, this activity is exempt under the criteria set forth in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, **45 CFR §104(d), category:Exempt Category 2 Subsection ii.**

Certain research is exempt from the requirements of HHS/OHRP regulations. A determination that research is exempt does not imply that investigators have no ethical responsibilities to subjects in such research; it means only that the regulatory requirements related to IRB review, informed consent, and assurance of compliance do not apply to the research.

Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, the University Research Compliance Office, and if the subjects are KSU students, to the Director of the Student Health Center.

Electronically signed by Rick Scheidt on 04/01/2022 2:21 PM ET

Appendix E - Informed Consent Form

PROJECT TITLE: Revenue Generation in Collegiate Athletics: An Exploratory Case Study of Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) Compensation for the Community College Student-Athlete

PROJECT APPROVAL DATE: February 4, 2022

EXPIRATION DATE: June 1, 2023

LENGTH OF STUDY: 12 months

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr. Jeffrey Zacharakis, Ed.D., Professor, Adult learning and Leadership, Educational Leadership Department

CO-INVESTIGATOR: Jonathan Craig, Doctoral dissertation research

CONTACT DETAILS FOR PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS: Dr. Jeffrey Zacharakis, jzachara@k-state.edu or (785) 532-5872

IRB CHAIR CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, (785) 532-3224
- Cheryl Doerr, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, (785) 532-3224

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH: The purpose of this research is to explore how Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) compensation could affect the experience of intercollegiate student-athlete participants in men's and women's basketball at smaller community college institutions with enrollments of less than 10,000 students.

PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED: Data collection will involve voluntary participation in unstructured interviews, review of archived documents, and memoing. During unstructured interviews, your responses will be video and/or audio recorded. You can opt-out at any time.

RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS ANTICIPATED: There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with this study.

BENEFITS ANTICIPATED: By participating in the study, you can gain knowledge of Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) policy and how NIL policy could affect the experience of community college student-athletes.

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY: All data collected during this study will be stored securely and will be only available to the researcher. Data stored on the computer is only

accessible to the researcher through password protection. Data stored in hard copy will be stored in a locked cabinet, which is only accessible by the researcher.

IS COMPENSATION OR MEDICAL TREATMENT AVAILABLE IF INJURY OCCURS? No

Terms of participation: I understand this study is research, and that my participation is voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time and stop participating at any time without explanation or penalty.

I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

PARTICIPANT NAME: _____ DATE: _____

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

WITNESS TO SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____
(PROJECT STAFF)

Appendix F - Volunteer Participant Recruitment Letter

Date: _____

Dear President _____ & Athletic Director _____

My name is Jonathan Craig and I am a doctoral student in the Community College Educational Leadership Program at Kansas State University. I am writing to invite volunteers from your institution to participate in my research study regarding Name, Image, & Likeness (NIL) compensation under the guidance of the principal investigator, Dr. Jeffrey Zacharakis. Your institution is eligible to participate in this study because the men's and women's basketball teams compete in a Midwest community college athletic conference. I obtained your contact information from your institutional website.

If your institution is willing to participate in the study, I am seeking volunteers from the following participant groups: President (1), Athletic Director (1), Men's Basketball Coach (1), Women's Basketball Coach (1), Men's Basketball Student-Athlete (1), and Women's Basketball Student-Athlete (1). The purpose of this research study is to explore how community colleges are responding to NIL policy and the perceptions of how this may affect the experience of community college student-athletes.

As a part of data collection, a site visit will be planned to your campus so each volunteer can participate in an unstructured interview for approximately 60 minutes. Each interview will be video and/or audio recorded. In the event a volunteer participant is unavailable during a site visit, an interview will be scheduled synchronously using the web platform, Zoom. The identity of each participant will be kept anonymous through the use of pseudonyms in data reporting and no identifying information will be reported.

Remember, this is completely voluntary. Volunteer participants can choose to be in the study or not. If volunteers from your institution are willing to participate or you have any questions about the study, please email or contact me at jpc7756@ksu.edu or 316-377-9585. Thank you very much for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Jonathan Craig