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An Examination of the Relationship Between Sports Participation and Financial Accessibility for First-Generation African-American Students at Selected Mississippi Colleges and Universities

Theresa Rash

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPORTS
PARTICIPATION AND FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY FOR FIRST-GENERATION
AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS AT SELECTED MISSISSIPPI COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES

by

Theresa V. Rash

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School,
the College of Education and Human Sciences
and the School of Education
at The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

First-generation students, and particularly African Americans, are historically underserved in terms of college access and success. During college, they often carry greater financial responsibilities and remain less likely to be engaged in activities, both academic and social, that promote academic success. Becoming a collegiate athlete may increase a student's financial capacity to successfully complete college.

This study examined whether being a collegiate athlete was related to greater college financial accessibility, particularly for first-generation students. The study included 537 undergraduate African-American students from 5 Mississippi colleges and universities. I hypothesized that (1) athletic status is related to college financial accessibility for first-generation students; (2) generation status is related to academic success for student athletes; and (3) generation status is related to graduation and professional expectations for student athletes.

Data were collected via web-based and in-person self-reported student surveys. Rational Choice Theory was used to guide survey question selection and analyses. Spearman correlations, chi-square tests, ANOVA, and logistic regression were used for the statistical analyses. A total of 225 (41.9%) were first generation students, 167 (31.1%) were athletes; and 64 (28.4%) were first-generation and student athletes.

Fewer first-generation athletes than non-athletes received Pell grants ($p = .011$) or loans ($p = <.001$). Among athletes, first-generation students committed more time to academics than sports ($p = .026$). When compared to non-first generation students, first-generation student athletes had higher odds of committing more time to academics than

sports (log-odds ratio=0.819, SE=0.352, $p=.020$). Similar proportions of the first-generation student-athletes (63.3%) and non-first-generation athletes (50.0%) planned to pursue sports as a professional career ($p = .115$). Regardless of generation, athletes most often free-associated “college” with “success”, then “future”, “everything”, “employment” and “knowledge” in an open-ended question.

Participation in collegiate sports can enhance access to college for underserved students. Across generational status, pursuing professional careers were important outcomes. First-generation students may receive fewer financial supports than later-generation students but may be increasing access for future generations within their families. Non-first-generation athletes may be more aware of financial and academic support resources they can access as athletes.

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This research could not have been possible without the Institutional Review Board approval of the various selected institutions: The University of Southern Mississippi, Mississippi Valley State University, Delta State University, Jackson State University, Alcorn State University, Belhaven University, Tougaloo College, and Mississippi College.

I am appreciative to the Clergy and entire congregations of St. Peter's Rock Missionary Baptist Church and United Baptist Church. Your unconditional love, support, and encouraging words allowed me to stay focused and keep my faith in God.

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DEDICATION

The opportunity to attain a doctoral degree while balancing the roles of wife, mother, first-lady, employee, daughter, friend, and sorority member would not have been possible without the many personal sacrifices made by people who believe in me and invested their time and resources in me, my family. I would like to dedicate the completion of this research to my family but most specifically my husband, Terrence L. Rash and three daughters, Tyla, Terin, and Taylor Rash. I would also like to dedicate this research to my deceased mother, Mrs. Annie Pearl Perry, and deceased mother-in-law, Mrs. Lois G. Rash, as well as my siblings, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

To my husband, Terrence, you are my rock. You are the pivotal force in my life and you inspire me to do my very best and never give up. You provide for me what God ordained the husband to do for the wife: protection, guidance, and support. You love your children and you are the model father that they will emulate in choosing their own husbands. I thank you for that too. You play the most important role in my education and professional growth because you allow me to fulfill my dreams through your countless hours of processing, listening, and encouraging me. Together, we have made triumphant victories in our marriage, as parents, as children, and with our church family and now we have earned a doctoral degree. Thank you, my forever best friend. There are no words to describe the love and admiration that I have for you and that I will always have for you.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>USM</i>	The University of Southern Mississippi
<i>MVSU</i>	Mississippi Valley State University
<i>JSU</i>	Jackson State University
<i>DSU</i>	Delta State University
<i>ASU</i>	Alcorn State University
<i>BC</i>	Belhaven College
<i>TC</i>	Tougaloo College
<i>MC</i>	Mississippi College

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

For some people, attending college is a privilege that sometimes seems unattainable, unreachable, and almost an afterthought when faced with the reality of the financial resources required. Bergerson (2009) contended that disparities in higher education for students of color have persisted even though there has been growth in the racial/ethnic diversity of college attendants. Aronson (2008) goes as far as to conclude that the choice to attend college is a “class based” process. She further notes that college pathways, particularly in examining class differences, are shaped by a “funnel that disadvantages and filters out” (p. 42) less advantaged student populations in postsecondary education process.

Smith (2008) asserts that the lack of financial resources has been and still proves itself as the most prevalent and detrimental barrier to an increase in educational advancement for the poor. The lack of readily available financial resources not only stagnates accessibility, but in most cases prevents it altogether. There is a growing body of literature that indicates the educational gap between African-Americans and their counterparts has increased (Jez, 2014; Smith, 2008). Seemingly, African-American females and males are exposed to similar barriers that are detrimental to their educational attainment, yet African-American males still fall overwhelmingly behind their female counterparts in terms of educational successes (McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchman, & Shwed, 2011). Further, income plays a major role in educational advancement. According to Choy & Bobbit (2000), 78% of high school graduates from high-income families enroll in college compared to 55% of high school graduates from low-income families.

First-generation students have been historically underserved in relation to educational access and success and they face multiple barriers in terms of accessibility to college (Corrigan, 2003). There have been multiple definitions used to describe the first-generation student. For instance, Kutty (2014) described first-generation students as “a population of students first in their families to attend a university or with parents who have not obtained any post-secondary qualifications” (p. 49). However, for the purposes of this research, the definition of first-generation student used will be the same definition used by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (2016) as “those students whose parents’ highest level of education is a high school diploma.”

Frogge and Woods (2018) defined first-generation students as “those whose parents or guardian never attended college or a university” (p. 3) and second-generation students as “those whose parent or guardian attended a college or university and earned at least one baccalaureate degree” (p. 7). Everette (2015) defined a first-generation student as “one whose parents had not obtained a postsecondary degree” (p. 52). However, some scholars define the first-generation student as one whose parents have not attended a postsecondary institution. Non-first-generation students can depend on the social capital of their parents, using their parents’ experiences to support enrollment and college completion.

According to the NCAA, there were nearly eight million students who played high school sports the previous year, but only 170,000 (almost 2%) received a sports scholarship (Wolverton, 2016). Throughout his research, Wolverton (2016) asserts that when high school athletes receive college scholarships, particularly football and basketball players, they receive full sports-based college scholarship. However, the

author notes that the NCAA provides scholarships to those athletes with the most value to the college. Although football and basketball bring in the most revenue to colleges and universities, they rarely receive full scholarships to cover the entire cost of college. Specifically, in all but six sports, football, men's basketball, women's basketball, women's gymnastics, women's tennis, and women's volleyball, there are limits for Division I colleges dispensing money as a result of the restrictions placed more than 40 years ago by the NCAA. College coaches are charged to secure key players for the college or university for the least amount of money possible. When compared to academic scholarships, athletic scholarships are not transparent to even key players at the onset (Wolverton, 2016). This study acknowledged the restrictions placed on colleges by the NCAA regarding the distribution of scholarships.

Studies of first-generation students have shown that they are underprepared academically and psychologically and therefore struggle in college. First generation students are two times as likely to drop out of four-year institutions in their second year and those from lower socioeconomic status families are four times as likely to drop out after their first year compared to their generational and socioeconomic counterparts (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2016; Callanta & Ortiz, 2009; Corrigan, 2003; Horton, 2015). Additionally, research from the works of Ormrod (2012) and Pascarella et.al. (2004) indicate that first-generation students are less likely to graduate, showed significantly less academic motivation and self-efficacy, are less likely to live on campus dorms, less likely to have lasting relationships with faculty members, and work more hours off campus. They also have difficulty acclimating to college culture, participating in orientations or workshops, developing lasting faculty and peer relationships, and joining academic clubs

and organizations (Bjornsen & Dinkel, 2016; Callanta & Ortiz, 2009; Corrigan, 2003; Horton, 2015).

Frogge and Woods (2018) compared and contrasted the specific categories of students' preferred method of instruction, enrollment status, the number of hours studied outside of the classroom weekly, the number of hours worked off campus weekly, and their grade point average. In addition, Frogge and Woods (2018) indicated that first-generation students have lower GPAs, are part-time students, and study less outside of the classroom. These factors contribute to lower retention and graduation rates. On the other hand, second-generation students have higher retention and graduation rates. They have a better overall college experience than their first-generation student counterpart. Second-generation students have higher educational goals and reported greater satisfaction and involvement in their campus environment.

When pertaining to generational status among athletes, Bandre (2011) provided an in-depth review of the influence of student aid on student athlete enrollment and retention. The author positions that when referring to access by generational status the recruitment of athletes is a common need among colleges and universities in relation to the success of intercollegiate athletic programs. Bandre (2011) also asserts that for first-generation students, athletics, financial aid, and other issues impact college choice but most profound and impactful regarding accessibility is financial aid. Additionally, state and federal aid alone does not cover the full range of expenses for the traditional first-generational student. Therefore, in terms of accessibility, it is ideal to consider athleticism as an avenue for college accessibility when regarding generational status. In the view of the relationship between educational attainment and success is the need to

examine accessibility of college by alternative means other than academics or state and federal financial aid in the absence of the availability of parental financial support for first-generational students. Financial accessibility, in this study, is defined as the opportunity to make available the entrance into higher education institutions by economic means and resources. Previous research studies have found that academic success can be measured in the forms of academic achievement, i.e., grades, accomplishment of learning objectives, and acquisition of skills were most frequently used as measurements of academic success (York, Gibson, & Rankin, 2015).

According to Ward, Siegel, and Davenport (2012) first-generation students are a complex population that has become almost invisible on college campuses until they either announce themselves or are identified from a survey. The authors assert that these students have typically been characterized as being primarily African-American or minority or low-income. Corrigan (2003) acknowledged that while low-income serves as one barrier to college attendance, family structure, attendance status, and residence may also pose as barriers for low-income students when seeking financial assistance. African-American first-generation students are regarded as a historically underserved student population that is steadily growing (Stebbleton & Soria, 2012).

According to Stebleton and Soria (2012) first-generation students have specific characteristics when compared to non-first-generation students that act as disadvantages as they pursue their education which includes accessibility. In the same fashion, Ward, Siegel, and Davenport (2012) also highlighted the distinguishing characteristics of first-generations students in regard to their entering qualifications, aspirations, engagement in learning and campus life, academic achievement, personal growth, persistence, and

graduation from college from their non-first-generation student counterparts. Kutty (2014) affirmed that first- generation students face particular challenges in their academic pathways. First, they are more likely than their non-first-generation counterparts to come from minority backgrounds, be older, and have a disability. These students have typically been characterized as being primarily African-American or minority and low-income. Additionally, they often were raised in single-parent home and are often financially independent from their parents. First-generation students tend to have lower levels of academic preparation than their peers and frequently need to maintain employment to assist in paying for their educational expenses (Stebbleton & Soria, 2012). After entering college, first- generation students tend to have lower graduation rates than their non-first-generation peers. This could be due to the additional financial responsibilities that first-generation students experience when trying to access and remain in college.

Because of their additional responsibilities, Stebleton and Soria (2012) found that “first-generation students are less likely to be engaged in the academic and social experiences that foster success in college, such as studying in groups, interacting with faculty and other students, participating in extracurricular activities, and using support services” (p. 13). Other barriers for first-generation students that hinder their success once they attend college include their inability to bridge two cultures such as home and college and the feeling they do not belong in either one. Family, social, cultural, and academic transitions may also lead to feelings of depression and loneliness in the college setting (Stebbleton & Soria, 2012). The authors also found that first- generation students have poorer self-images of their academic ability than other students.

Participation in College Sports

Because college access for first-generation African-American students is often restricted by their limited financial resources, participating in sports can serve as a method for financing college due to availability of athletic scholarships for those qualified and financial assistance provided by the level of success garnered from participating in the sport. There is a historical relationship between athleticism and education (Vanover & DeBowes, 2013). Most research has sought to recognize, assess, and utilize this relationship to determine educational outcomes and success specifically for the African-American population. However, there have been very few, if any studies, acknowledging how sports participation can serve as a vehicle for college accessibility for first-generation students. The college experience differs for people of different social classes, gender, age, ethnicity, family backgrounds, and parents' educational level (Kutty, 2014).

On the other hand, the provision of financial accessibility to college through sports participation also induces a stigmatization for these students. Previous studies such as that of Vanover and DeBowes (2013) have revealed that college athletes are viewed as "less intelligent, motivated, or prepared for college courses compared to traditional students who do not play sports" (p. 52). Therefore, Stone, Harrison, and Mottley (2012) argue that characterization as a college athlete on the college campus can potentially induce stereotype threat processes, meaning the fear that participation in sports may confirm existing stereotypes about their demographic group if they do not excel in academics when compared to their counterparts. However, the influence of this stereotypical threat also depends on the individual's personal desire to succeed in the classroom and on the campus as well. Additionally, not only does participating in sports

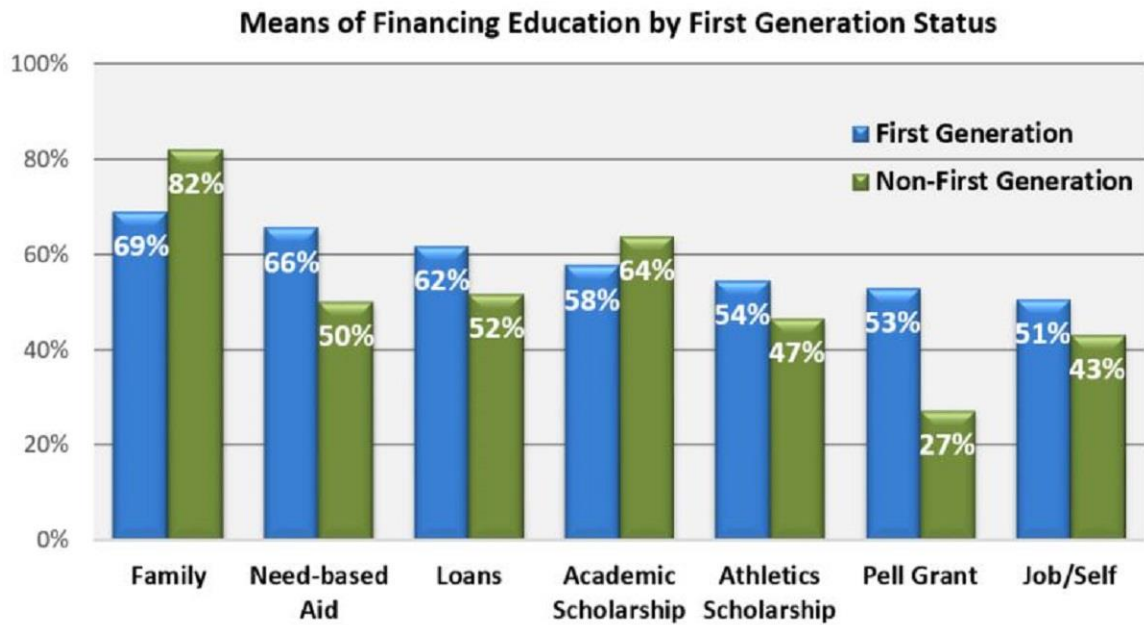
provide the financial resources needed for first-generation students, but colleges provide academic, emotional, and mental support for athletes, which is of benefit to the first-generation student (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2019).

Stone, Harrison, and Mottley (2012) support the position that through the supportive relationship provided through participating in sports, individuals are relieved of the feelings identified with being first-generation students. By having and maintaining a support system, students are more apt to complete college and obtain the degree pursued. Also, they will have more positive and meaningful experiences during their college years. As a result, of establishing and maintaining successful relationships in the college setting, first-generation students will develop a lasting network of support that continues throughout the college experience.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (2016) is divided into three divisions. Division I schools offer 14 sports equally divided between male and females with two team sports for each. These schools offer some athletic scholarships; however, students must maintain a minimum grade point average and take a minimum of 16 core courses to be eligible for scholarships. Division I schools can guarantee a certain number of supporters during their games. Division II schools are similar to Division I schools; however, they offer ten sports, equally divided between males and females with two team sports each. These students must maintain a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average and also take 16 core courses. Division III schools also offer ten sports divided equally between males and females with two for each. However, Division III schools do not offer scholarships.

In the most recent NCAA GOALS study (2019), 16% of student-athletes were first-generation college students (neither parent attended college). The first-generation students of their study were most commonly at Division II schools (20%) compared to Division I (14%) or Division III (15%), and most often wrestling (23%) and football (25%) student-athletes. Racial/ethnic minorities were more than twice (26%) as likely to be first-generation as White-American participants (12%). Being an athlete encouraged 47% of first-generation and 62% of non-first-generation student-athletes to attend a four-year college, though they did not see themselves earning graduate degrees (58%) as other student athletes (68%). Graduation was important to 93% of the first-generation student-athletes. While 56% of first-generation student-athletes were concerned finances could affect their ability to finish their bachelor's degree, only 39% of those with a parent attending college felt the same way (NCAA Statistics, 2014). Additionally, how these students finance their education differed from their non-first-generation peers. According to Figure I, the most recent data from the NCAA GOALS report indicated that 54% of first-generation students finance their college education with athletic scholarships.

Figure 1. Means of Financing Education by First-Generation Status (NCAA, 2019).



College athletes face many obstacles on the college campus. Vanover and DeBowes (2013) contend that the relationship between academics and athleticism at the college level has always been a point of contention. They include arguments regarding the “commercialization, exploitation, and distractions that have grown out of intercollegiate athletics are detrimental to higher education” (p. 44). According to Maloney and McCormick (1993), athletes perform three-tenths of a grade point lower than regular students in three out of ten classes. Additionally, athletes in revenue sports, those sporting activities that garner actual dollars for the college and/or university are lagging behind their peers in part because these sports limit student effort for non-athletic activities. There have been arguments that student athletes act as employees of the athletic apartment. Harrison et. al. (2009) affirms and furthers the position of Maloney and McCormick (1993) with the acknowledgement in their research when using GPA as

a measurement, college athletes tend to perform lower than their non-athlete counterparts. Because of the issues faced by college athletes, most universities have enacted academic support services departments. Research has found that competing at the collegiate level results in a large amount of time missed from class instruction (Maloney & McCormick, 1993; Miller & Kerr, 2002). As a result of missing class times, athletes are experiencing failing grades and lack of preparation for other academic successes.

Problem Statement

The most common issue regarding the lack of educational attainment for African-Americans has been financial accessibility, especially for first-generation students. Accessibility, according to Bragg (2006), refers the contextual factors that “either facilitate and encourage or prohibit and discourage a person from attending college” (p. 12). Accessibility may be restricted for various reasons such as costs of college, discrimination, and precollege academic preparation. Additionally, according to Bragg (2006) accessibility refers to five distinct and specific categories: financial accessibility, geographic accessibility, programmatic accessibility, academic accessibility, and cultural/social/physical accessibility. In the absence of financial accessibility to college, at the minimum, there is not even the opportunity of the potential of accessing college. Furthermore, in regard to accessibility or the lack thereof, the African-American community has been negatively affected and adversely affects society as a whole (Corrigan, 2003; Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009; Jez, 2012; Smith, 2008). This lack of educational attainment has resulted in low college attendance among college-aged African-Americans that has inadvertently diminished the quality of life for the African-American community as a whole.

There is a proven correlation between education and income. Cabrera and LaNasa (2000) distinguish the relationship between education and income as they sought to understand the variations of the college choice process of disadvantaged students and advantaged students. Even during the process of selecting colleges, income plays a vital role in the decision whether to attend college or pursue other avenues to sustain livelihood for the disadvantaged. Therefore, this persistent socioeconomic disadvantage has a negative impact on the quality of life and outcomes for African-Americans. Cho et al. (2008) extended this position in their attempt to examine gender, race, and SES in the college choice process by generation status. These authors also found a substantial correlation between education and income for the initial college choice process. Those students from families with disposable incomes who were primarily non-first generation were found to be at an advantage in the college choice process compared to their first-generation counterparts.

To further complicate the issue, lower socioeconomic status and its correlate lower education ultimately affects society through the inequities in wealth and resource distribution in society that consistently widens and deepens the gaps in socioeconomic status. With equal access to college for everyone, these disparities can be diminished, if not alleviated, at both the individual and societal levels. A substantial body of research reveals the low educational attainment of first-generation African-American students as resulting from a lack of accessibility (Eichelberger, Mattioli, & Foxhoven, 2017; Goldrick-Rab, Kelchen, Harris, & Benson, 2016; Wilbur & Roscigno, 2016). However, there has been no examination of the relationship of sports participation as a vehicle of financial accessibility for these students. Therefore, with the acknowledgement of

barriers related to financial accessibility to college attendance and retention for first-generation African-American students there is the need to examine alternative methods of financial accessibility for this population; i.e., sports participation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to increase the understanding of how participating in sports affects the financial accessibility to college for first-generation African-American college students in selected colleges and universities in the state of Mississippi. Previous studies have identified affordability and accessibility to higher education for first-generation African-American students as being of great concern. Mississippi has one of the highest ratios of college prices to family income and is ranked among the lowest in the country in providing financial aid. Rising tuition costs have also hampered access and affordability to college attendance in the state (Phipps, Keselman, & Merisotis, 2006).

No studies were identified that contributed to the body of knowledge concerning the relationship between sports participation and college access for first-generation African-American students in the state of Mississippi in response to the lack of affordability and accessibility to higher education. Therefore, this study will examine the extent of financial assistance that is provided for college attendance in Mississippi, specifically for first-generation African-American students. It will also examine the experiences of first-generation African-American athletes in college compared to their non-athletic counterparts. This research will seek to investigate how the college experience differs for first-generation African-American athletes by gender, age, and academic discipline.

Research Questions

This study will employ a quantitative methodology using a logistic regression approach. This study focuses on African-American first-generation students attending selected colleges and universities in the state of Mississippi. This research will examine the influence of sports participation on the financial accessibility of college for first-generation African-American students. This research seeks to address the following the research questions:

1. Among first-generation African-American college students, does college athlete status create better college financial accessibility?
2. Are reports of success higher for first-generation compared to non-first-generation African-American student athletes?
3. Are self-reported graduation and professional expectations higher for first-generation compared to non-first-generation African-American student athletes?

Definitions

The definition for the following terms are characterized by information derived from the National Center for Education Statistics and the NCAA.

Athletic Scholarships - An athletic scholarship is financial assistance provided to student athletes to fully or assist in covering tuition and fees, room and board, and course related books.

College access - The provision of equal and equitable opportunities for students to have entrance into college.

Cultural capital - The knowledge students and their families have about the variables involved in accessing and transitioning into college.

Financial need - The difference between the price of attending a postsecondary institution and what the student is able to pay based on the family's financial circumstances.

Financial accessibility - When referring to the college choice process and considering finance regarding access to college, financial accessibility refers to the available monies, scholarships, donations, opportunities to attain financial resources such as loans of the first-generation student's family.

First-generation students - Those students whose parents' highest level of education is a high school diploma or less.

Low-income students - Those whose family income was below 125% of the federally established poverty level for their family size when compared to the general population.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical premise supporting this research is Rational Choice Theory. The Rational Choice theoretical framework posits that a choice is based on reasons that the individual has for making a particular choice, namely, "the rational agent is someone who acts on the basis of reasons and therefore acts to satisfy his or her desires in accordance with his or her beliefs" (Dietrich & List, 2013, p. 110). Dietrich and List (2013) identified Rational Choice Theory as a framework for understanding the social and economic behavior of an individual. Participation in sports for the first-generation student has both social and economic benefits to all stakeholders involved in the college choice process; however, it is most beneficial to the first-generation student. First, it provides an opportunity for networking for the greater societal gains and benefits and opportunities for financial accessibility to college. Therefore, Rational Choice Theory is appropriate as the theoretical framework for this study in that it assumes that individuals are motivated

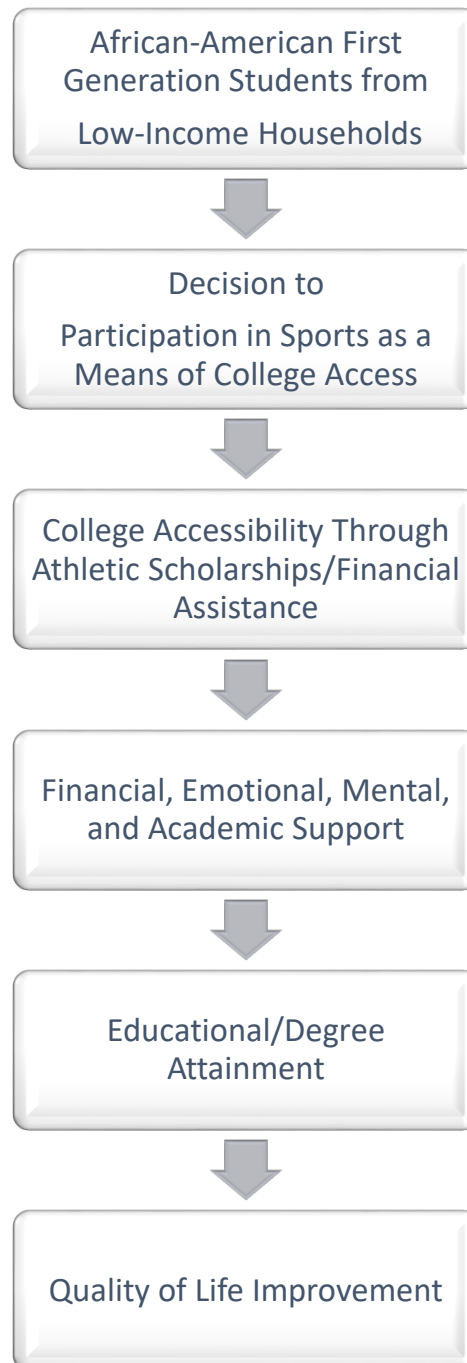
to make decisions intentionally and rationally. The term “rational” in this theoretical framework is embedded in the notion that the decision is goal oriented, reflective, and consistent in nature for the individual. This research suggests that sports participation for first-generation African-American students is a rational choice in that individuals acknowledge its benefits to their overall quality of life especially when entering the college choice process.

Perna (2006) noted that the choice to attend college is comprised of a comparison of benefits and costs; however, assessments of these costs and benefits are shaped by the individual’s ability to pay the costs. She further adds that the college choice process has multiple layers and incorporates the perspectives of five major stakeholders: students, parents, K-12 institutions, higher education institutions, and public policy makers. For the first-generation student, college choice hinges on financial accessibility. Therefore, the theoretical framework for this research stems from the conscious choice to participate in sports with the intention of using the participation as a means for financial accessibility to college.

The conceptualization of this study can be viewed in terms of a process between the relationship of sports participation and college accessibility for first-generation African-American students (Figure II). This process first begins with a choice. The first-generation African-American student is characterized by a low-income background and parents with no higher educational attainment. Therefore, the choice of the first-generation, African-American student to participate in sports (regardless of what level) is a conscious decision and it is made with the intention to elevate the individual’s quality of life through access to college. Through sports participation, the first-generation,

African-American student is provided with financial opportunities such as scholarships and financial assistance provided that they are successful in their sport. The opportunity to participate in the college choice process is established by the provision of the financial assistance. By participating in sports at the collegiate level, relationships are formed and alliances are made and therefore a support system and network of individuals become a constant and consistent presence in the first-generation student's college career, thereby resulting in their success (with success being measured in terms of academics and graduation rates). As a result of their success, these students are able to improve their quality of life and thus enhance their overall well-being of the African-American population and society.

Figure 2. The Conceptualization of the Relationship between Sports Participation and College Accessibility for First-Generation African-American Students



Significance of the Study

By examining the influence of sports participation on financial accessibility for first-generation African-American students, this research may be useful in spurring discourse about alternative methods of financing college for first-generation and low-income African-American students. Public policy makers and government makers place responsibility on public policies to address societal issues that deter first-generation students from accessing college as well as how the participation in sports can alleviate the financial burden associated with college access and success (Smith, 2008).

The conclusions from this research may have implications for better understanding the disproportionate low college attendance of African-American first-generation students as well as the barriers that prohibit their success once matriculating through college. This study may contribute to research related to college choice and first-generation African American students. While there are various studies that examine the college choice process of first-generation students, this study will explore the role of sports participation as a method of promoting accessibility to the college-choice process for first-generation African American students.

By determining whether there is a relationship between sports participation and college access for first-generation African-American students, this research may allow the stakeholders in higher education to focus attention on how sports participation is beneficial to the college choice process for all students facing financial constraints concerned with college accessibility. This research also begins a discussion on the role of sports and athletic support programs in maintaining first-generation students in college from admission to graduation. Most importantly, this research may make a contribution

to a body of knowledge concerning African-Americans that can be used for public policy reformation at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels.

Delimitations

This study will be delimited to first-generation, African-American students who have accessed higher education opportunities via sports participation, specifically at the Division I and II levels in which financial, academic, and social support are provided.

The study will be delimited to Mississippi due to the large population of African-Americans, high rates of poverty, and a history of unequal access to education.

According to the United States Census Bureau (2017), an estimated 37.7% of individuals who identify as Black or African-American reside in the state of Mississippi, the highest percentage of any state that accounts for a third of the working-age population between 25 to 64 years old. In Mississippi, 2018 Census population estimates show 19.7% of the population is living in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). From the time period of 2012-2016, only 21% of the entire population in the state of Mississippi had a bachelor's degree or higher.

Limitations of the Study

As with any study, there is the expectation of limitations. Specific limitations of this study are the identification of the sample, first-generation students. This study will rely on self-identification to determine the sample that will inadvertently determine the sample size. Selecting the sample from only one state, Mississippi, represents another limitation in that the results may not be generalizable to other states.

Summary

Chapter One of this study provides background and history of the relevance of sports participation as a resource for college accessibility for first-generation African-American students. It introduces the problem statement while describing the specific problem of college access and opportunities for first-generation African-American students. It also introduces the research questions, conceptual and theoretical frameworks, justification, purpose of the study, and definitions of terminology. Chapter Two presents an in-depth review of literature and relevant research associated with first-generation students, sports participation, accessibility, and opportunities for first-generation African-American students.

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The historical significance of the relationship between African-Americans and success has been embedded in their plight for the freedom, equality, and attainment of educational opportunities that were systematically and institutionally withheld from this population solely because of the color of their skin. Before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the governor of Alabama, George Wallace in 1963 shared his sentiments regarding racial segregation in the statement, “Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever” (p. 384). Astoundingly, most leaders in and throughout the South shared his perspective. In terms of higher education, the role of African-American college students was of little to no importance before the civil rights movement (Thelin, 2011). It was not until May of 1954 that *Brown v. Board of Education*, the legal case decided by the Supreme Court of the United States, ruled that “separate but equal” schools were unconstitutional.

The role of education as the pathway to success has been very clear for African-Americans. However, the opportunity to travel that path has not been readily or easily accessible. There have been historical systematic, institutional, economic, and social deterrents. As a result, in the American society, there has been overwhelmingly and alarmingly underrepresentation and disproportion of African American males and females pursuing higher education when compared to their White-Americans counterparts. The disproportion of African-Americans in higher education has resulted in the questioning of accessibility for African-American students when compared with students of other races and/or nationalities.

Accessibility to higher education in terms of finances is a cause for concern for everyone in society. However, when financial accessibility is overwhelmingly limited for specific individuals, it is even more alarming. In general, African-Americans have always been faced with hindrances as it relates to educational attainment. It is no secret that the plight of African-Americans in integrating American education institutions was met with a violent and harsh reality characterized by racism and discrimination. This literature review examines the historical context of African-Americans in higher education followed by an in-depth overview of first-generation students, and the college choice process. Additionally, an overview of sports participation as an opportunity for accessibility and the theoretical framework will be reviewed. The chapter will conclude with suggested policy implications for higher education and administration in regard to the relationship between sports participation and financial accessibility for first-generation African-American students in the state of Mississippi.

Historical Overview of Higher Education

The history of higher education in America is complex. The American higher educational system was established during colonial times with emphasis being placed on two primary functions: training a literate clergy and training men to enter public professions other than the ministry. The purpose of higher education institutions was to preserve social class and not to support educational, economic, or social upheaval. In 1823, when African-Americans in higher education had access to education, Alexander Lucius Twilight completed his studies and earned a degree at Middlebury College in Vermont (Bennett, 1988; Ranbom & Lynch, 1988). Following Alexander Lucius Twilight's accomplishment, two other African-Americans graduated from Amherst and

Bowdoin. During the period when there were no federal policies mandating access, Oberlin College was the first to admit African-Americans (Brazzell, 1996; Roebuck & Murty, 1993). The reluctance of state and federal governments to admit freed slaves who were otherwise noted as African-Americans to colleges and universities resulted in the establishment of Historically Black Colleges and Universities with Cheyney State Training School, now Cheyney University, established in 1837 claiming to be the first HBCU (Bennett, 1988). However, Ashmun Institute, now Lincoln University, was the first African-American institution to remain in its original location, award baccalaureate degrees, and develop completely into a degree-granting college (Roebuck & Murty, 1988). It was these three universities that ignited a major accessibility movement to higher education for African-Americans with the establishment of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

In the 19th century, the state and new federal government provided land as grants to new states; hence, 'land-grant universities' were initiated. The Morrill Land-Grant Act was passed in 1862 that allowed for the provision of federal money and land to states for a state institution (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). For African-Americans, Alcorn College (now Alcorn University) was the first land-grant institution established for African-Americans in the United States. With the passing of this act, more opportunities for higher educational attainment were afforded to individuals regardless of social class; however, the purpose of these institutions was to educate both students and the community on agriculture and engineering through research, teaching, and extension services. With the passing of the Thirteenth Constitution Amendment in 1865, there was still more that needed to be done to increase accessibility to higher education for African-

Americans and as a result Virginia Union and Shaw were established. In the South, northern churches and White-Americans missionary groups aided the development of 200 private institutions for African-Americans (Gasman, 2007). Among these groups were the American Baptist Home Mission Society, the Freedman's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the American Missionary Association.

It was not until the second Morrill Land-Grant Act passed in 1890 when women, African-Americans, and Native Americans gained some access to higher education institutions (Dungy & Gordon, 2011). While this act mandated that funds be distributed annually on a "just and equitable" basis it also legalized the segregation of Black and White Americans public institutions and emphasized a curricular focus on mechanics, agriculture, and the industrial arts for institutions serving African-Americans (p. 71). Alarming, this model promoted the idea that African-Americans were intellectually less capable than their White-Americans counterparts and should receive or minimally be offered a separate and lower-caliber education (Anderson, 1988). Additionally, the enactment of this act allowed 16 states to create separate Land-Grant institutions for minorities to study agriculture and engineering. The Southern states refused to enroll African-Americans in their higher education institutions and as a result, the federal government halted their funding until they offered education to this population.

The *Plessy v. Ferguson* court case of 1896 ruled that states could continue the school-based racial segregation if they provided comparable accommodations and facilities (Anderson, 1988). Even after this ruling, African-American land-grant universities remained disproportionately underfunded. Then in 1954, in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the United States Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation, including the

operation of “separate, but equal” facilities in public education would no longer be legal. However, it was not until President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, one decade later that mandated desegregation. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provided that “no person in the United States, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance” (Malaney, 1987, p. 17). Additionally, it also restricted the distribution of federal funds to segregated schools.

According to Thelin and Gasman (2011), junior colleges emerged at the beginning of World War I. However, entrance exams were used to exclude particular students based on their “race, ethnicity, gender or other criteria unrelated to academic merit” (Thelin & Gasman, 2011, p. 12). In 1947, President Truman expanded access and affordability to higher education with the creation of his proposition that ultimately resulted in the formation of “higher education’s Golden Age” (Thelin & Gasman, 2011, p. 13). With the passing of the GI Bill of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act, there was the provision of funding for returning veterans and hence that increased enrollment across various socioeconomic backgrounds.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 was instrumental in expanding access to higher education across the varying socioeconomic lines. This act provided need-based financial aid to people of all social statuses (Brock, 2010). Through the provision of Pell Grants and Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grants, the federal government subsidized the costs of attendance. However, it was during these times that Title IX was also enacted to increase enrollment for women and minorities. This act prohibited

discrimination in educational programs. Most important, the Higher Education Act of 1965, Title III of the Act, Strengthening Developing Institutions, provided certain subsidies for sustaining HBCUs. Funds were provided to these institutions for faculty and curriculum improvement, student services, exchange programs for faculty and students, and administrative improvements. Another pivotal piece of legislation that inadvertently increased accessibility to higher education for African-Americans was that signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965 with the Executive Order 11246. This order required federal contractors to increase the number of minority employees as an “affirmative step” toward remedying years of exclusion for minority workers (Brock, 2010, p. 119). Under this new legislation, minorities were afforded opportunities of higher education accessibility that had been historically and systematically withheld.

In 1990, the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, Section 504 was passed to fully include students with disabilities in higher education (Thelin & Gasman, 2011). According to Thelin and Gasman (2011), the cost of attendance for college continues to perpetuate a divide among those who desire and those who actually attend colleges and universities. The authors further noted that between 1990 and 2010, women became the majority of students attending college, and data from the National Center for Education Statistics shows this trend has continued through at least 2017 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

Because this research focuses primarily on the state of Mississippi, it is essential that the history of higher education for African-Americans be considered within the context of the state. The Civil Rights Movement in the State of Mississippi enabled African-Americans with the courage to tackle issues of segregation and discrimination in

education. For these individuals, it was not about the mere attendance at a Predominantly White-Americans Institution (PWI). Instead, it was about breaking down barriers in an effort to gain accessibility into these institutions as American, tax paying, law-abiding citizens. It was about having equality as human beings and being regarded as such. It was about the freedom of rights and the responsibility of the American society to treat all individuals equally and fair. The neglect of accessibility to PWIs for African-Americans was supported by both formal and informal institutions of government in society (Anderson, 2002; Brown & Davis, 2001; Brown, Ricard, & Donahoo, 2004).

With segregation having been abolished, the role of all institutions would change drastically. Racial integration would change higher education in the United States-student diversity would transform the landscape of higher education institutions and how they influence the communities in which they reside. Franklin (2013) contended that diversity is typically measured by race and ethnicity in the United States and is increasingly viewed as an a key advantage in business, government, and education. The author further noted that diversity contributes to classroom learning thus resulting in workforce diversity. Workforce diversity, in turn results in greater innovation and creativity. Communities and societies alike, whether small or large, with an increasingly ethnic or culturally diverse population convey an economic advantage in terms of better economic growth (Franklin, 2013).

In terms of higher education, the role of African-American college students was of little to no importance before the civil rights movement (Thelin, 2011). Additionally, Thelin (2011) argued that segregation of African-American students from PWIs in the South provided opportunities for them to pursue graduate degrees at prestigious

universities in the North. This occurred as a result of scholarships for graduate degrees outside of the segregated states that were established by state governments in the South as an attempt to comply with the “separate but equal” dictum. Racial exclusion in higher education was hence a national phenomenon. The landscape of equality for African-Americans was inevitable. One vehicle that served to contribute to the change was the Civil Rights Movement that was formalized through the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Aiken, Salmon, and Hanges (2013) acknowledged that the Civil Rights Act shifted fundamentally the treatment of individuals from a racial and gender standpoint. Additionally, it provided an avenue for change for other social issues such as affirmative action, prevention of discrimination of pregnant women, and prevention of sexual harassment (Aiken, Salmon, & Hanges, 2013). Most importantly, without the Civil Rights Act of 1964, African-Americans would continue to be stagnated in their plight for success through upward mobility in society. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, according to Aiken, Salmon, and Hanges (2013) basically “outlawed the systematic, far-reaching, and in some cases, legally sanctioned discrimination that had prevailed for decades across a number of areas of American society” (p. 383). However, the passage of the act was a result of numerous events having occurred in society that are viewed as historical events, social movements, and state and federal legislation; however, it is a defining moment that irrevocably changed the future of American society. Further, it changed the future of higher education institutions from a multitude of perspectives.

Warde (2014) noted that African-Americans have made significant progress educationally. One cannot neglect to acknowledge that the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 afforded them the opportunity to progress in higher education. According to

the U.S. Census, the number of African-Americans 25 years of age and older holding a bachelor's degree increased by 48% between 2000 and 2010. However, disparities still exist between African American females and males who attend college. Warde (2014) found that African-American women attend college at twice the rate of African-American men and at higher rates than White-American women and men.

First-Generation Students

A first-generation college student is a student whose "parent's highest level of education is a high school diploma or less" (NCAA, 2016). According to Wolfert (2016), in the past ten to 15 years, there has been an increase in the number of first-generation students attending college. However, because of barriers related to finances they are not graduating. More than 41% of Black or African-American 15 to 17 year olds reported that neither parent had ever attended and/or graduated from college (NCES, 2015). There has been extensive research regarding first-generation students; however, none of it specifically investigates sports participation as a means of financial accessibility to higher education even though a lack of finances is almost always identified as a barrier for this population.

Most research on first-generation students focuses on either one of three categories: comparison to their non-first-generation counterparts in terms of demographic characteristics, preparation for college attendance, the college choice process, and college expectations (Pascarella et al., 2004). The second category of research according to Pascarella et al. (2004) is the attempt to describe and understand the transition from high school to college. The third common research category about first-generation students addresses their persistence in college completion and early

career employment. There is a gap, however, in research that investigates and examines alternative opportunities of financial accessibility for this population especially when financial accessibility has been deemed a pivotal barrier to college access and success for these students. Research is needed to investigate how alternative measures of financial resources can contribute to an increase in accessibility for this population; however, not in the absence of understanding the population in general.

Characteristics of First-Generation Students

First-generation students have experiences that differentiate their capacity to attend and succeed in college compared to their peers (Engle, 2007). In addition to the aforementioned characteristics, there are general and common characteristics that most first-generation students share. According to Engle (2007), first-generation students are disproportionately disadvantaged in accessibility to and success in college. Wolfert (2016) identifies the most common characteristic as the very nature of being the first person in the family to attend college. This characteristic itself alludes to a primary disadvantage regarding the lack of knowledge and available social capital needed for any student to have the adequate exposure to the opportunity of a higher education and the college choice and admission process. Oftentimes, these students come from low-income families, are minorities, females, older, and have dependent children.

Barriers that Affect College Accessibility for First-Generation Students

There are some general challenges that affect first-generation students accessing college. Of specific concern for this research is that of fewer resources to pay for college. Other barriers that affect students are less parental encouragement and support, less academic preparation and preparation for the college application process, and lower

educational aspirations, (Engle, 2007). Engle (2007) found first-generation students to be less prepared for college admission than their peers whose parents attended and/or graduated from an institution of higher learning. However, the author also included that parental encouragement and involvement can strengthen the preparation for these students (Engle, 2007). Additionally, Engle (2007) indicated that even as early as middle-school, first-generation students are reluctant to begin preparation for the “gateway courses” in high school even if they are qualified to do so. Some of these factors stem from availability of courses in their school districts and available resources. Astoundingly, Engle (2007) found that first-generation students “have lower expectations about the highest level of education they will receive by as early as the eighth grade” (p. 29). Consequently, these students have lower degree aspirations than their peers and are also less likely to enroll immediately in college after high school which inadvertently reduces the chances that they will ever go to college, let alone persist in college to graduate (Engle, 2007). However, one common factor that has been found to increase college aspiration is that of parental involvement in the college planning process regardless of the parents’ educational level. In terms of choosing colleges, Engle (2007) found that first-generation students limit themselves in the types of colleges they even consider by location, sector, and selectivity. In addition, first-generation students, even though they are qualified for more selective institutions, are more likely to enroll in two-year and four-year institutions. Previous research has found that factors such as financial aid, finishing in a short period of time, and being able to work while attending school are very important reasons for choosing their colleges.

Barriers to Success in College for First-Generation Students

Previous research findings show that the most pivotal barrier to success in college is the transition from high school to college and begins with first-generation students' viewpoint of college as not a continuation of the educational process but a disjunction in their life and that of their families (Engle, 2007; Jury et al., 2017). First-generation students usually have more obligations than their counterparts in terms of the academic, asocial, and cultural transitions they must make in their first year of college (Engle, 2007). The manner in which first-generation students navigate the transition from high school to college has a direct effect on whether or not they can and will be successful in college and persist to graduation. Theoretical speculations concerning whether or not first-generation students have the confidence to attend college are of great concern when related to barriers to success while in college. Engle (2007) noted in her research that parents who went to college and who had peers with the same level of high school preparation and achievement as them, first-generation students tend to lack the necessary confidence. The author provided a strong description regarding academic preparation in that first-generation students are less likely to take rigorous high school curricula and have lower scores on college entrance examinations (Engle, 2007). The first year of college for first-generation students is very difficult when considering the aforementioned factors. According to Engle (2007), they are more likely to "complete fewer credit hours and have lower grades; they are also more likely to withdraw from or repeat courses and to take remedial coursework even if they have the same level of preparation" (p. 34). Thus, these factors contribute to the success of their whole experience in college to include persistence through graduation.

The most notable research regarding barriers to success in college for first-generation students is that they spend less time interacting with other students and faculty both in and out of the classroom and school environment and they spend less time studying (Engle, 2007). As a result, they are less likely to develop and nurture the necessary relationships needed on college campuses that foster positive outcomes socially, emotionally, psychologically, and academically. The lack of social integration for first-generation students can be attributed to the specific characteristics that they commonly share such as having financial constraints that result in their need to attain employment common among lower income populations in addition to college matriculation and other family obligations not shared by their middle and upper-income counterparts.

The subject of cultural adaptation for first-generation students has also received attention. The crux of the matter is that first-generation students experience major discontinuities between their family and college campus cultures (Engle, 2007). She further noted that this barrier can be significantly affected by relationships at home and on campus and that is why it is imperative for these students to cultivate those college relationships on campuses. The most notable barrier faced by first-generation students is that of discrimination on college campuses where they are the minority as well as feelings of isolation and alienation (Engle, 2007). By establishing and maintaining relationships on the college campus while in college, the first-generation student develops a system familiar to the family that supports their even existence on the campus.

College Choice Process

The process of selecting a college is known as the college choice process. This process includes preparing an application, applying, and enrollment and is complex and to a large degree, governed by financial availability. While much research about the college choice process exists, significantly less scholarship has examined this process for first-generation students continue to lag behind in efforts. As college costs have risen, federal grant and support programs, including affirmative action efforts, have dwindled. Marginalized populations, such as first-generation or socioeconomically disadvantaged groups have had lowered access to higher education (Ramos, 2019; Rondini, Richards, & Simons, 2018; Smith, 2008). Cho et al. (2008) argued that student's personal satisfaction remains part of the choice process for first-generation students through graduation or leave, but financial aid is the most critical.

Another recurrent theme in the literature regarding the college choice process for first-generation students is parental involvement being a very instrumental factor. One of the most instrumental and historical research efforts revealed from the review on the issue of the college choice process has been that of Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith (1989) in which they provided a conceptualization of college choice with a framework outlining the role of parental involvement in the process. However, Ming (2010) did not include the role of parental involvement in his conceptualization framework of the college choice process. The determining factors in the process of choosing to attend colleges according to Ming (2010) are: campus visits and representation, availability of financial aid, location, academic programs, college reputation, educational facilities, cost, employment opportunities and advertisement. They proposed a three-stage model that

includes (a) predisposition, (b) search, and (c) choice as the process for any students when deciding to attend college. Their model regards the predisposition stage as the time frame from birth and until 9th grade where students develop an interest in attending college. The search stage takes place around the 9th and 10th grades as students begin to explore the varieties of higher learning institutions and possibilities creating their personal list of options or “choice set.” The final stage is the choice stage where students engage in a reduction process; hence, narrowing their “choice set” down to more realistic and manageable options to choose for college selection. According to the authors, three broadly defined activities that often involve parental involvement are setting aspirations, providing encouragement, and active support.

Smith (2008) characterized parental involvement in the college choice process as the “collection of parent-generated school and home-centered activities that collectively contribute to a student’s ability to prepare for, apply to, and enroll in colleges and universities” (p. 150). Basically, the parents are a central part of the process in assisting with the development of the plan for accessibility, matriculation, and persistence. Smith (2008) posited that parental involvement is one way to combat barriers regarding accessibility for first-generation students and other marginalized groups. He further noted that parental involvement is the vehicle that drives first-generation students’ success in preparing for, gaining access into, and graduating from colleges. It is especially pivotal in the college choice process regarding college application, admission, and enrollment at four-year colleges (Smith, 2008). In the same fashion, Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) indicated that parental encouragement is necessary in the college choice process and that it is a two-dimensional process involving motivation and proactivity. First, parents must

maintain high educational expectations for their children regardless of their educational position or socioeconomic status and second, parents must become involved in issues and events at the school, dialogue with their children, and save for college. These factors alone, according to the authors are key factors in the college choice process when regarding parental involvement.

Sports Participation

Understanding barriers to college accessibility and success for first-generation students has been of particular interest to many research efforts across time. Most of the previous literature shows some relationship between sports participation and academic achievement. Sports are influential by supporting individual development, aspirations, and resourcefulness for students. Studies of sports participation and its relationship to education highlights that access to sports for students can create societal opportunities and advance educational achievement. Jarvie (2014) suggested that sports participation can enhance success as part of both formal and informal education, specifically by providing resources to emerge from poverty and support achievement. However, Jarvie (2014) expressed the view that educational institutions play an integral role in how sports can provide support and resources in the educational achievement of students.

Several researchers have noted that sports can promote academic achievement through increased interest in school, expectations to maintain good grades for eligibility, increased self-concept, increased attention from peers and adults, peer acceptance, and college opportunities (Hanks & Eckland, 1976; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1990). Highly critical to the focus of this research is that of Eitle and Eitle (2002) who examined whether specific variables such as cultural capital, household educational resources,

family structure, and race are related to sports participation. Of central concern to their study was whether effects of participation in sports on academic achievement differ by race and sport. Their findings revealed that cultural disadvantage boosted interest in and dependence on sports participation, i.e., basketball and football as a means of social capital. Similarly, Sabo, Melnick, and Vanfossen (1993) examined race and gender differences on the social mobility of high school athletes. Their research was encouraged by previous research that noted that generalizations about sport-induced mobility need longitudinal data to adequately assess racial and ethnic differences. Additionally, most of the research regarding the interrelationship between athletic participation and social mobility has focused primarily on males and not females.

Students aspire to attend college for four primary reasons: social expectations, career goals, providing for family, and need for independence are primary reasons students go to college (Schlechter & Milevsky, 2010). Within these categories are athletic opportunities as student athletes view their participation in sports as their opportunity for college access. Clark and Schroth (2009) found that athletic participation is correlated with future aspirations. These authors posit that “first year college students attend college with the expectation of receiving future rewards, such as prestigious jobs, perhaps with generous incomes, or out of obligation or expectation” (p. 22).

Miller and Ken (2002) found that the relationship between athletics and academics has been complex and competitive. Their review of literature revealed that in athletic programs such as men’s football and basketball, academic achievements have been falsified in multiple areas. SAT scores, recruitment of academically underprepared players, and graduations of poorly prepared (e.g. illiterate, not workforce prepared)

athletes. Astoundingly, the authors noted that most college athletes were actually optimistic about obtaining the degree upon entering college. Instead, the athletic, social, and classroom experiences created an anti-intellectual environment for the athlete that served as barriers to academic success. Additionally, other factors that disengage the college athlete were fatigue from training, traveling and competition, insufficient time for studying, isolation, differential treatment from faculty, and unwanted and unnecessary pressures from coaches and alumni to win games. These factors culminate academic failure and non-completion of college.

A high proportion of the studies in the field of education are concerned with the transition experiences of college-student-athletes. The research of Bjornsen and Dinkel (2016) revealed four major themes that are needed for a successful transition for athletes from the college life to career attainment: supports, preparation, skills, and strategies. These authors sought to explore and understand the impact of the transition from being a college athlete to graduation. One pivotal aspect of the research indicated that during the student-athlete career until after graduation, coaches are very instrumental in providing support and a culture of familial surroundings for athletes. Coaches foster the proficiency of transferable life skills as well as technical development. These supports alone allow for a successful transition for college athletes.

Gayles (2009) found that student athletes perform as employees of college campuses. According to the author, “student athletes on average spend over twenty hours per week in practice or play, sustain bodily injury and miss a fair number of classes when their sport is in season,” (p. 33). Gayles (2009) further highlighted that there is the expectation of class attendance and academic success to maintain their eligibility. This is

critical in ensuring that they maintain access to the provisional finances that allow their attendance at these colleges. However, these demands are difficult to balance. These factors alone perpetuate the creation and maintenance of “a separate culture in which student athletes experience lower levels of academic performance, graduate at lower rates, cluster in certain majors, and become socially segregated” (p. 38).

Rational Choice Theory

Rational Choice Theory is the theoretical framework used in this study to examine how first-generation African-American students intentionally decide to participate in sports to increase financial accessibility to college. Implicit in the notion of the Rational Choice Theory is the basic assumption that individuals are motivated to make decisions intentionally and rationally. In a fundamental sense, the term “rational” in this framework is that the decision is goal oriented, reflective, and consistent in nature for the individual. For the first-generation student, college choice hinges on financial accessibility. Sports participation for first-generation African-American students is a rational choice in that individuals acknowledge its benefits to their overall quality of life especially when entering the college choice process. Therefore, for this research, Rational Choice Theory is applicable because it supports the idea that the conscious choice to participate in sports with the intention of using the participation as a means for financial accessibility to college is a rational decision.

Although Rational Choice Theory has been described as a market-based theory explaining how individuals make choices; sometimes, it is used in education to explain patterns of how individuals make decisions about school choices (Wilson, 2016). Chubb and Moe (1990) first used this theory in their research and shifted the focus with their

ideals of school choice patterns from the student to the parents. Two concepts emerged regarding parents and school choice patterns for students. The authors highlighted that parents choose schools based on their desire for the best school for their child. Rational Choice Theory is based in the assumption that students are consumers in an educational market (Kelly, 2007). Consistent with this notion is that considering various options for school accessibility, students will want and choose the best option for school accessibility during the college choice process.

Storen and Arnesen (2007) examined the choice of higher education by gender in Norway. The research examined how parental education and occupation and student's grades impact gender domination of particular subjects. The study revealed that Rational Choice Theory provided a better explanation of male's school choice of higher education than females.

Another view of the close connection between Rational Choice Theory and educational decision-making is discussed in the research of Jaeger (2007). Jaeger (2007) developed a model based on Rational Choice Theory regarding educational decision-making in which both social returns and economic form the total expected utility of education. The author found that students' educational choices are consistent with Rational Choice Theory.

Sullivan (2006) examined students as rational decision-makers by studying student attitudes and beliefs about their own abilities in relation to social background and gender. Using Rational Choice Theory, the author argues that the subjective beliefs and attitudes that enable students' decisions are worthy of empirical evaluations. Previous theorists address the issue of social class differences in educational participation while

using rational choice theory as an explanation for the behavior (Sullivan, 2006). An indication of the importance attached to the study of Rational Choice Theory is the notion that education, itself is a valuable good and viewed as a means to success in the labor market of society. Furthermore, social classes may differentially evaluate the worth of education- middle class students may view education as more enjoyable or a tool for self-development because it is more accessible through their financial position than their more disadvantaged counterparts.

Summary

Arguments for the significance of sports participation as a pathway to financial accessibility for college attendance are not extensive. However, there is an abundance of literature that supports the notion that first-generation students lack the available resources to attend college when compared to their non-first- generation counterparts. There is a distinct and significant approach to the decision of if and how to attend college for a specific population of students. This approach is inevitably innate and systematic for student athletes and parents of student athletes, alike. This approach is remarkable shaped by experiences that begin earlier in life than high school. With accessibility to education for first-generation students being constrained, the decision to attend college most times relies on financial accessibility. For student athletes, performance in sports becomes a highly complex experience than simply participation in an extracurricular task. It becomes a means to an end in terms of opportunity to access the finances needed to access a college education. This research uses Rational Choice Theory as an explanation when examining the influence of sports participation on the financial accessibility of college for first-generation African-American students.

CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

This study examined the role of sports scholarships as a bridge for high school students to attend and complete college without experiencing financial distress. This chapter describes the research methodology of the study. In addition to discussing the population and sample, instrumentation and data collection, procedures and analysis are presented in this chapter as well. This study used a quantitative survey design using a logistic regression approach to determine specific relationships resulting from and pertaining to the research questions.

Research Questions

The study was designed to address the following research questions:

1. Among first-generation African-American college students, does college athlete status create better college financial accessibility?

H¹: Becoming a student athlete is associated with better college financial accessibility for first-generation African-American undergraduate students.

2. Are reports of success higher for first-generation compared to non-first-generation African-American student athletes?

H²: First-generation African-American undergraduate student athletes more frequently report academic success than non-first-generation African-American undergraduate athletes.

3. Are self-reported graduation and professional expectations higher for first-generation compared to non-first-generation African-American student athletes?

H³: First-generation African American student athletes had greater graduation and professional expectations than their non-athlete counterparts.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

A survey instrument was administered to facilitate quantitative analyses using the face-to-face method and online via survey monkey for the participants. The survey was developed by the researcher and it was divided into two sections: (a) demographics and (b) sports participation. The first section, questions 1-18, captured the demographics of the respondent, namely, gender, age, college of attendance, classification, residence, employment status, income, marital status, parental support, parental income, generational status, sports participation and type of athlete. Question 19 asks whether an individual is an athlete. Research question 1 was addressed by survey questions 14-17 that addressed access to college and financial support from parents. See Table 1.

Table 1

Survey Questions for Research Question 1.

Survey Question	Response Options
14. What type of financial resources are you currently receiving to attend college? Please mark all that apply:	Athletic scholarship, Pell grant, academic scholarship, family support, self-pay, loans (Stafford, unsubsidized, etc.), others Source: The U.S. Department of Education (studentaid.gov)
15. Had it not been for the financial resources selected above (question #14), I would not have been able to afford to attend college.	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable

“Table Continued”

16. My parents would have never been able to assist me with my college education had it not been for my financial resources you selected above (question #14).	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable
17. My parents help me financially with my college experience (i.e., books, food, travel, supplies, etc.)	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable

Survey questions 20-42 captured factors pertaining directly to research questions 2 and 3 regarding sports participation and are matched with each research question in Tables 1-3 below, including specification of the type of measurement (continuous, categorical, Likert-type, etc). Questions 20-24 were included to capture the athlete’s response regarding their specific motivation for playing sports including perspective on sports participation as a means for college accessibility. Research question 2 was addressed using survey questions 25-28, 31, 32, 35, 36, and 38-42 and reflect issues, perceptions, experiences, assistance, and relationships related to academics for the student-athlete with themselves, peers, and professors as well as preparedness. See Table 2.

Table 2

Survey Questions for Research Question 2

Survey Question	Response Options
25. I feel academically prepared when I am in my college classes	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable
26. I have been successful in college academically.	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable
27. I am an athlete and my professors treat me with respect.	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable
28. I am an athlete and my peers treat me with respect	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable
31. Do you commit more of your time to sports or academics?	Sports, academics
32. What is your attitude towards academics?	To just pass, to go above and beyond
35. What is your over GPA?	2.00 or below, 2.01-2.49, 2.50-2.99, 3.00-3.49, 3.50 or above
36. Do your teammates have a similar GPA?	Yes, no, not sure
38. Are additional tutoring services or academic aid provided to you that are not provided to non-athlete students?	Yes, no

“Table Continued”

39. Do professors extend deadlines for exams exclusively for you and other student-athletes?	Yes, no
40. Professors are more lenient when it comes to grading my exams and assignments because they are aware that I am a student-athlete	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable
41. Additional academic help is provided strictly for student-athlete	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable
42. In terms of academics, I have an advantage over non-athletic students.	Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, not applicable

Research question 3 used survey questions 30, 33, 34, and 43 to capture attitudes and perceptions regarding self-reported graduation and professional expectations for first- and non-first generation African-American student athletes. See Table 3.

Table 3

Survey Questions for Research Question 3

Survey Question	Response Options
30. Do you plan on pursuing sports as a professional career?	Yes, no
33. Do you plan on graduating?	Yes, no
34. How many hours are you enrolled in this semester? (Please specify)	Open ended
43. What does a college education mean to you?	Open ended

Questions 37, 42, and 43 were used to capture the level of commitment to sports by the athlete, view of sports participation in relation to academic involvement, and importance of a college education, respectively.

Procedures

Eight colleges and universities were contacted about distributing this study survey to their undergraduate students. The schools included: Alcorn State University, Belhaven University, Delta State University, Jackson State University, Mississippi College, Mississippi Valley State University, Tougaloo College, and The University of Southern Mississippi. These schools were chosen because they all have athletic programs in which a high percentage of African-American students are participants. Permission for the study was granted by the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB).

Further, all colleges and universities participating in the study reviewed the survey instrument and provided IRB approval.

Athletic Directors, Assistant Athletic Directors, and First-Generation Coordinators at the selected schools were contacted by phone, email and in person to coordinate the data collection. The surveys were administered on paper and in-person, and distributed in select freshman courses, across athletic departments, and in cafeteria and recreational areas of the schools. During the invitation to participate, each person was informed that their participation in this research was complete voluntary, anonymous, and confidential, and those who provided informed consent completed the survey. The data collection process for the entire study took approximately one school semester. After the participant completed the survey, no future contact was necessary.

There were 867 survey respondents from the five schools that actively distributed the study survey: (Delta State University, Jackson State University, Mississippi Valley State University, Mississippi College and Tougaloo College). Of the surveys completed, there were 330 survey respondents that were ineligible for the study. There were 303 original respondents who were not African-American, four additional respondents did not answer the survey question about being an athlete, 18 more were not undergraduate students, and 5 more respondents did not answer the survey question of whether the respondents were a first-generation student. The final sample size included 537 African-American undergraduate students.

Data Analysis

The survey responses were used to generate a dataset that was analyzed using a logistic regression methodology to determine whether there is a relationship between

sports affiliation of African-American students and financial accessibility to college among first-generation students. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive and inferential methods were used to address the research questions. Descriptive statistics included calculation of frequencies, percentages, and chi-square tests for categorical variables, along with means, standard deviations, and ranges for continuous variables. Logistic regression was the inferential method used to determine the significant contributing factors that the relationship between college athletic participation and financial accessibility for first-generation African-American students at selected MS colleges and universities.

According to Kleinbaum and Klein (2010) and Katz (1999), multivariable binary logistic regression is primarily used to study the association between a categorical dependent variable and a set of continuous or categorical independent variables. This model describes the relative contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable, controlling for the influencers of the other independent variables (Hsieh, Bloch, & Larsen, 1998). Data analyses identified statistically and practically significant predictors of relationships between sports participation and college accessibility for first-generation African-American students.

According to Long (1997), logistic regression modeling is the application of the natural logarithm transformation of a linear regression model, and appropriate for use with dichotomous dependent variables. Logistic regression requires fewer principle assumptions compared to linear regression models, particularly regarding linearity of relationships between the dependent and independent variables. Cross-sectional data were collected for this study such that the outcome and explanatory variables were collected

simultaneously. These data can be appropriately analyzed with logistic regression (Hsieh, Bloch, & Laisen, 1998).

Summary

A quantitative research approach based on logistic regression model was employed to analyze these data. This method facilitates the determination of variables related to the relationship between sports participation and financial accessibility for first-generation African-American students. Therefore, there is the necessity to examine alternative options to college accessibility for a population of individuals that are economically stagnated due to their family system, societal constraints, and lack of available opportunities and resources to otherwise do so.

CHAPTER IV – RESULTS

The survey was completed by 537 African American undergraduate students who responded to the questions of whether they were first-generation students or student athletes. A total of 41.9% were first generation students, 31.1% of the student respondents were athletes; and 28.4% students were both first-generation and student athletes. First-generation students were those participants who indicated on the survey that their parents' highest level of education is high school or less (Survey Question 13), although this does not identify families where older siblings have attended college. In alignment with the research question, the students who participated in college sports were identified as the survey participants that reported being a student athlete (Question 19), although there may have been students who played recreational or intramural sports and were not counted as student athletes for this study. Descriptive characteristics of the overall sample are provided first, and the remaining results are organized by research question.

Sample Demographics (n=537)

Ninety-four percent (505/537) of respondents were 18-24 years of age, 2.8% were aged 25-34, 1.9% were aged 35-44, and 0.6% in each of the age categories of 44-54 and 55-64. In the sample, 60.1% were women and 72.1% participants lived on campus. Of the participants, 96.1% were never married (see Table 4). A total of 56.6% reported being students as their form of employment; 16.9% were working full-time, 12.7% worked part-time, and 9.7% were unemployed. The majority, or 73.2% of the participants had no income. With regard to income, 3.7% reported personal incomes between \$0-\$9,999, 16.0% reported incomes between \$10,000-\$19,999, 4.5% reported incomes between

\$20,000-\$29,999, 0.7% reported incomes between \$30,000-\$39,999, 0.6% reported incomes between \$40,000-\$49,999, 0.2% reported incomes within the ranges of \$50,000-\$59,999, no participants reported incomes between \$60,000-\$79,999, and \$80,000-\$89,999, 0.4% reported incomes of \$100,000 or more.

Table 4.

Sample Demographic Characteristics

	N	%	Missing
First Generation	225	41.90%	0
Age			
18-24	505	94.0%	1
25-34	15	2.8%	
35-44	10	1.9%	
45-54	3	0.6%	
55+	3	0.6%	
Marital Status			
Never			
Married	516	96.1%	2
Married	8	1.5%	
Divorced	6	1.1%	
Separated	4	0.7%	
Widowed	1	0.2%	
Sex			1

“Table Continued”

Females	323	60.3%
Males	213	39.7%

As shown in Table 5, 54.4% of the participants were from Mississippi Valley State and represented more people than from all the other reporting universities and colleges combined. The sample included 18.2% from Jackson State University 11.9% o from Delta State University and 3.7% came from Mississippi College. A total of 24.6% reported that their current school was their first college choice. Within the sample, 6.7% reported cost as the primary reason, 26.1% reported location as the primary reason, 11.2% reported the athletic program as their primary reason, 6.9% reported the academic programs as the primary reason, and 7.8% provided other reasons. In the sample, 71.1% of the students started at the same university they were currently attending; 35.9% were freshmen, 20.5% were sophomores, 22.7% were juniors and 20.9% were seniors.

Table 5

College Preference Descriptive Statistics (n=537)

	N	%	Missing
Transfer Students	154	28.7%	1
College Attended			
Mississippi Valley State University	292	54.4%	3
Jackson State University	98	18.2%	
Delta State University	64	11.9%	

“Table Continued”

Mississippi College	20	3.7%	
Tougaloo College	60	11.2%	
First Choice Institution	186	34.6%	3
If Not First Choice, Select Why?			
Cost Of Attendance	36	6.7%	10
Location	140	26.1%	
Athletic Program	60	11.2%	
Academic Program Options	37	6.9%	
Other	42	7.8%	
N/A	212	39.5%	
Classification			
Freshman	193	35.9%	0
Sophomore	110	20.5%	
Junior	122	22.7%	
Senior	112	20.9%	
On Campus Resident	387	72.1%	0

Parental income between \$10,000-\$19,999 was the most common range reported by 20.7% of the participants. A total of 17.3% reported their parents had no income, 1.3% reported parental incomes between \$0-\$9,999, 15.1% reported their parents had incomes between \$30,000-\$39,999, 1.7% reported parental incomes between \$40,000-\$49,999, 13.4% reported parental incomes between \$50,000-\$69,999, no individuals reported

parental incomes between \$70,000-\$79,999, 0.7% reported parental incomes between \$80,000-\$89,999, 6.0% reported parental incomes between \$90,000-\$99,999, and 6.1% reported parental incomes of \$100,000 or more.

When comparing the financial resources used to pay for the participants to attend college, 68.3% of the participants received Pell grants, 60.0% received loans, 20.7% received academic scholarships, 20.7% received family support, 13.8% reported paying for school themselves, and 3.5% reported using funds from other sources. The data showed that these financial resources were necessary for 77.3% of the participants to afford to attend college. A total of 71.1% of the respondents also indicated that their parents assisted them with their college education even without having other financial resources; 16.8% of the participants' parents helped them financially with their college experience but 10.6% did not. More details about the financial resources of the students are shown in Appendices L and M.

Personal and Parental Income by Athletic Status

Data on the income of the students and their parents are shown in Appendix M. Comparing personal income between athletes and non-athletes, 69.3% of non-athletes compared to 83.1% of non-athletes stated that they did not have any income. Few athletes had personal incomes, but non-athletes' personal incomes were higher than incomes among the athletes. Examining personal income, 3.5% of non-athletes and 4.2% of athletes have incomes between \$0-\$9,999, 18.8% of non-athletes and 10.2% of athletes reported incomes between \$10,000-\$19,999; 6.0% of non-athletes and 1.2% of athletes reported incomes between \$20,000-\$29,999, 0.8% of non-athletes and 0.6% of athletes reported incomes between \$30,000-\$39,999. Athletes did not have a personal income

between \$40,000-\$99,999, and 0.6% of athletes had a personal income of \$100,000 or more.

When comparing the parent's income, the majority of non-athletes than athletes' parent incomes were higher. In the sample, 26.0% of athletes and 9.7% of non-athletes reported parental income between \$10,000-\$19,999; 19.7% of athletes compared to 15.2% of non-athletes had parental incomes between \$20,000-\$29,999; and 17.0% of athletes and 11.5% of non-athletes had parental incomes between \$30,000-\$39,999. The results show that 11.2% of athletes compared to 18.8% of non-athletes reported parental incomes between \$50,000-\$69,999, and 4.7% of athletes compared to 9.7% of non-athletes reported parental incomes of \$100,000 or more. A total of 18.4% of the non-athletes compared to 15.8% of the non-athletes did not report income.

The demographic characteristics by generation status are included in Appendix N to supplement the descriptions for the overall sample and by athletic status provided above. There were 225 first-generation students and 312 non-first-generation students. Students aged 18-24 represented 94.5% of the non-first-generation students compared to 93.8% of first-generation students (93.8%). Students aged 25-34 were 1.9% of non-first-generation students and 4.0% of the first-generation students, students aged 35-44 were 23.0% of non-first-generation students and 1.3% of first-generation students, students aged 45-54 were 0.3% of non-first-generation student and 0.9% of first-generation students, and students aged 55-64 represented 1.0% of non-first-generation students and none of the first-generation students. No students for either generation were aged 65 or older; $\chi^2(4, N = 536) = 5.518, p = 0.238$. Men represented 40.2% of non-first-generation students and 39.1% of first-generation students, $\chi^2(1, N = 536) = .064, p = 0.801$. A total

of 95.8% of non-first-generation students and 97.3% of first-generation students were never married. Only 1.8% of first-generation and 1.3% of non-first-generation students had been married, and only 0.9% of first-generation and 13% of non-first-generation students had been divorced; 1.3% of non-first-generation students separated and 0.3% of non-first-generation students were widowed; $\chi^2(1, N = 536) = 8.819, p = 0.399$.

College-related descriptive statistics by generation are shown in Appendix O. The majority of students attended MVSU. When asked if the first-generation students or non-first-generation students transferred or started at the college, 35.6% of first-generation students and 23.8% of non-first-generation students transferred there and 64.4% of first-generation students and 76.2% of the non-first-generation students started at the college; showing a statistically significant difference between being a transfer student or starting at the college as a freshman, $\chi^2(1, N = 536) = 8.819, p = 0.003$.

Findings showed that 31.6% of non-first-generation students compared to 39.3% of first-generation students stated yes that the college was their first choice, $\chi^2(1, N = 534) = 3.373, p = 0.066$. When asked why the college was not their first choice, 6.6% of non-first-generation students and 7.1% of first-generation students stated cost of attendance; 29.0% of non-first-generation students and 23.2% first-generation students stated due to location; 12.2% of non-first-generation students and 10.3% of first-generation students stated athletic program; 6.3% of non-first-generation students and 18.0% of first-generation stated due to academic program options; 9.2% of non-first-generation students and 6.3% of first-generation students stated other; and 36.6% of non-first-generation students and 45.1% of first-generation stated non-applicable, $\chi^2(5, N = 527) = 6.436, p = 0.266$.

Freshmen represented 37.2% of non-first- generation and 34.2% of first-generation students. Sophomores were 20.5% of non-first- generation and 20.4% of first-generation students. Juniors were 22.8% of non-first- generation and 22.7% of first-generation students. Seniors represented 19.6% of non-first-generation and 22.7% of first-generation students, $\chi^2(3, N = 537) = .927, p = 0.819$. A total of 70.2% of non-first-generation students lived on campus, compared to 29.8% of first-generation students, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = .655, p = 0.418$.

Student employment was the primary employment for 56.3% of non-first-generation students and 57.3% of first-generation students. Just 14.5% of the non-first-generation students were employed full-time compared to 20.4% of the first-generation students. However, 13.2% of the non-first-generation students were part-time compared to 12.0% of the first-generation students; while 11.3% of the non-first-generation students were unemployed compared to 7.6% of the first-generation students; $\chi^2(4, N = 536) = 6.306, p = 0.177$. My study supports Gibbons and Woodside (2014) when they stated that first-generation college students have more non-traditional roles such as being employed, commuting, and attending college only part time; therefore, their need of support differs from their counterparts.

The financial resources used for this study determined the amount of money used to help first-generation and non-first-generation students pay for college. Athletic scholarships were awarded to 25.6% of the non-first-generation and 17.8% of the first-generation students, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 4.658, p = 0.031$; Pell grants were awarded to 66.0% of non-first-generation and 71.6% of first-generation students, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 1.848, p = 0.174$; Academic scholarships were awarded to 15.6% of the first-generation

students and 24.4% of the non-first-generation students, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 6.178, p = 0.013$. Family support was reported by 16.4% of first-generation students and 23.7% of non-first-generation students, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 4.218, p = 0.04$. Just 11.6% of first-generation and 15.4% of non-first-generation students reported self-paying for school, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 1.613, p = 0.204$, but 64.4% of non-first-generation and 56.7% of first-generation students got loans, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 3.240, p = 0.072$.

A total of 82.9% of the first-generation students and 79.5% of the non-first-generation students strongly agreed/agreed that had it not been for the financial resources noted in question 14, they would not have been able to afford to attend college, $\chi^2(1, N = 513) = .967, p = 0.325$.

More first-generation students (80.6%) than non-first-generation students (19.4%) responded that their parents would have never been able to assist them with their college education had it not been for their financial resources (reported in question 14), showing a statistically significant between first-generation and non-first-generation students whose parents would have never been able to assist them with their education had it not been for the financial resources; $\chi^2(1, N = 504) = 4.511, p = 0.034$. The results showed that 70.5% of the first-generation students and 84.9% of the non-first-generations students strongly agreed/agreed that their parents help them financially with their college experience; $\chi^2(1, N = 498) = 14.966, p = <.001$.

Of the survey participants, 31.1% athletes and 68.9% were non-athletes. Of the 167 athletes, 11.7% played football, 4.1% played basketball, 2.4% played softball or baseball; 1.3% played tennis or soccer, 6.5% ran track, 1.9% played volleyball, 0.2%

were on the bowling, golf and swimming teams; and 2.0% did other things like band, cheer, or a trainer in the gym.

Spearman's correlations were performed for all of the study variables (Tables 6 - 9) to supplement the chi-square analyses presented further below. Significant correlations were identified with athletic status and sports measures including participation as a way to go to school, first choice for college, gender, marital status, age, college attended, campus residency, receipt of athletic scholarships, Pell grants, and loans, personal income, parental income, parental financial support, parental assistance, and ability to afford to attend college. First-generation status was significantly associated with college as a first choice, athletic student academic advantage, transfer student status, receipt of athletic and academic scholarships, receipt of family support, parental income, parental financial support, and parental assistance.

Table 6

*Spearman's Correlation Coefficients for Demographic Measures by
Athletic and First-Generation Student Status*

	Athletic Status	Generation
Are you a first-generation student?	-.049	1.000
Athletic Status	1.000	-.049
Employment Status	-.074	.046
Gender	-.293**	.011
Marital status	.086*	.042
Age	.116**	-.014
College Attended	.086*	.019
On campus resident	-.301**	.016
Transfer Student Status	.056	.128**
College/university classification	-.034	-.039
* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$		

Table 7

Spearman's Correlation Coefficients for Financial Measures by Athletic and First-Generation Student Status

	Athletic Status	Generation
Financial Resources Received (Question 14)		
Athletic	-.692**	.093*
Pell Grant	.174**	-.059
Academic	-.054	.107*
Loans	.223**	-.078
Family	.055	.089*
Self-Pay	.023	.055
Other	.063	-.021
Personal annual income	.155**	-.059
Parental annual income	-.183**	.292**
My parents help me financially with my college experience (i.e., books, food, travel, supplies, etc.).	.108*	-.164**
My parents would have never been able to assist me with my college education had it not been for my financial resources above	-.165**	.130**

“Table Continued”

Had it not been for the financial resources above, I	-.200**	0.079
would not have been able to afford to attend		
college		

* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$

Table 8

Spearman's Correlation Coefficients for Sports and Academic Outcomes by Athletic and First-Generation Student Status

	Athletic Status	First- Generation
Sports participation pathway to college	.204**	-0.041
Plan to graduate	-0.009	-0.145
Peers treat me with respect	0.140	0.059
Professors treat me with respect	0.144	0.079
Academically prepared in my college classes	0.031	-0.053
Academically successful in college	0.142	0.048
If I did not play sports, I would still want to attend college	0.143	-0.048
Attitude towards academics	0.054	-0.087
Motivation for playing sports	-0.106	0.045
Hours enrolled	-0.131	-0.038
Overall GPA	-0.054	0.024
Reasons for attending college	0.050	-0.085
First choice college reason	.086*	-.092*
* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$		

Table 9

Spearman's Correlation Coefficients for Sports and Academic Outcomes by Athletic and First-Generation Student Status (continued from Table 5)

	Athletic Status	First- Generation
Athletes have an academic advantage over non-athletic students		.178*
Professors are more lenient when it comes to grading my exams and assignments because they are aware that I am a student athlete.		0.104
Additional academic help is provided strictly for student-athletes		-0.044
Do professors extend deadlines for exams exclusively for you and other student-athletes?		0.049
Additional tutoring services or academic aid provided to you that are not provided to non-athletic students	0.102	-0.040
Pressured from your family to excel at sports in hopes of a college scholarship	0.062	-0.103
* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$		

Results for Research Question 1

Research question 1 asked: Do first-generation African American students who participate in sports have better financial accessibility for college than first-generation African American students who do not participate in sports? It was hypothesized that first-generation African American student athletes have greater financial accessibility for college than first-generation student non-athletes. This study hypothesis was supported by the results presented below. The results below are organized to address comparisons for all the sample athletes and non-athletes, then for first-generation athletes and non-athletes. Spearman correlation statistics were calculated to quantify the associations of the financial resource measures with other study variables for research question 1. Additional findings about differences across generations are shown in Appendices N-Q.

From the Spearman correlational tests, both first-generation student status and parental income variables were significantly associated with parental, family, athletic, and academic financial support. Various correlations were identified within the types of financial resources and are shown in Appendix P.

Demographics Comparisons for Athletes and Non-Athletes

Frequencies of the study variables were examined and chi-square tests were performed to determine whether there were significant associations between athlete status and first-generation status with the study covariates (see Table 10). There are 167 athletes and 370 non-athletes. Ages 18-24 represented 98.2% of the athletes and 92.4% of the non-athletes. Just 3.2% of non-athletes and 1.8% of athletes were aged 25-34, and no athletes were over age 34; 2.7% of the non-athletes were 35-44, 0.8% of athletes were 45-54 and 0.8% were also aged 55-64; $\chi^2(4, N = 536) = 8.423, p = 0.077$. Men represented

61.1% of the athletes while women represented 69.9% of the non-athletes, $\chi^2(3, N = 536) = 46.127, p = <.001$. In the sample, 98.8% of the athletes and 95.4% of the non-athletes were never married; $\chi^2(4, N = 535) = 5.222, p = .265$.

Table 10

Sample Descriptive Statistics for the Complete Sample By Athlete Status

	Athletic Status		p-value
	Athlete (n=167)	Non-Athlete (n=370)	
	N (%)	N (%)	
Age			0.077
18-24	163 (98.2%)	342 (92.4%)	
25-34	3 (1.8%)	12 (3.2%)	
35-44	0 (0.0%)	10 (2.7%)	
45-54	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.8%)	
55+	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.8%)	
Marital Status			0.265
Never			
Married	164 (98.8%)	352 (95.4%)	
Married	2 (1.2%)	6 (1.6%)	
Divorced	0 (0.0%)	6 (1.6%)	
Separated	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.1%)	
Widowed	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	
Sex (Males)	102 (61.1%)	111 (30.1%)	<.001

Comparisons of College Choice by Athletic Status

In Table 11, 32.5% of the athletes and 27.0% of the non-athletes were transfer students, $\chi^2(1, N = 536) = 1.695, p = .193$. A total of 32.9% of the athletes and 37.3% of the non-athletes were freshmen, and 92.2% of the athletes and 63.0% of the non-athletes lived on campus, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 48.879, p = <.001$.

The majority of the participants, 59.3% of the athletes and 52.6% of the non-athletes, attended Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU). The distribution of athletes and non-athletes that attended the other colleges were statistically different, $\chi^2(4, N = 534) = 24.347, p <.001$. A total of 38.9% of the non-athletes and 25.9% of the athletes reported the school they attended as their first choice, $\chi^2(1, N = 534) = 8.458, p = .004$. A total of 29.3% of the athletes and 45.3% of the non-athletes reported no concerns about their first school of choice. Among the students who raised concerns, 42.4% of the athletes reported the athletic program was the most common reason the school was not the first choice, and 50.7% of the non-athletes reported the school location as the most common reason the school was not their first choice.

Table 11

Sample College-Related Descriptive Statistics By Athlete Status

	Athlete (n=167) N (%)	Non-Athlete (n=370) N (%)	p-value
Transfer Students	54 (32.5%)	100 (27.0%)	0.193
Classification			0.768
Freshman	55 (32.9%)	138 (37.3%)	
Sophomore	37 (22.2%)	73 (19.7%)	
Junior	38 (22.8%)	84 (22.7%)	
Senior	37 (22.2%)	75 (20.3%)	
	154		
On Campus Resident	(92.2%)	233 (63.0%)	<.001
College Attended			<.001
Mississippi Valley State			
University	99 (59.3%)	193 (52.6%)	
Jackson State University	33 (19.8%)	65 (17.7%)	
Delta State University	15 (9.0%)	49 (13.4%)	
Mississippi College	13 (7.8%)	7 (1.9%)	
Tougaloo College	7 (4.2%)	53 (14.4%)	
First Choice Institution	43 (25.9%)	143 (38.9%)	0.004
If Not First Choice, Select Why?			<.001

“Table Continued”

Cost Of Attendance	10 (6.0%)	26 (7.6%)
Location	35 (21.0%)	105 (29.2%)
Athletic Program	50 (29.9%)	10 (2.8%)
Academic Program Options	6 (3.6%)	31 (8.6%)
Other	17 (10.2%)	25 (6.9%)
N/A	49 (29.3%)	163 (45.3%)

Differences in Financial Resources for College by Athletic Status

In Table 12, 61.4% of the athletes and 54.6% of the non-athletes reported being a student as their employment, and 15.1% of the athletes compared to 17.8% of the non-athletes worked full-time. Pell grants were awarded less just 56.3% of the athletes compared to 73.8% of the non-athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 16.281, p < .001$. A total of 43.7% of athletes and 67.3% of the non-athletes received loans, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 26.660, p < .001$. Academic scholarships were awarded to 24.0% of the athletes and 19.2% of the non-athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 1.592, p = .207$. Athletic scholarships were awarded to 65.3% of the athletes and 3.0% of the non-athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 537) = 257.337, p < .001$. Additional data about the income of the students and parents are shown in Appendix L.

Had it not been for the financial resources listed, 72.6% of the athletes and 27.4% of the non-athletes strongly agreed/agreed that they would not have been able to afford to attend college, whereas 84.6% of the athletes and 15.4% of the non-athletes strongly disagree/disagree that they would not have been able to afford to attend college meaning

that a statistically significant difference existed between the athlete and non-athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 513) = 10.049, p = 0.002$.

The majority of athletes, 64.1%, and 81.0% of the non-athletes strongly agreed/agreed that their parents would have never been able to assist them with their college experience had it not been for their external financial resources, $\chi^2(1, N = 504) = 16.832, p < .001$. Most students, 83.5% of athletes and 76.8% of non-athletes, also reported that their parents help them financially with their college experience, $\chi^2(1, N = 498) = 2.980, p < .084$.

Table 12

Measures of Financial Affordability by Athletic Status (n=537)

	Athlete (n=167) N (%)	Non-Athlete (n=370) N (%)	p-value
Employment Status			0.074
Full-Time	25 (15.1%)	66 (17.8%)	
Part-Time	12 (7.2%)	56 (15.1%)	
Unemployed	20 (12.0%)	32 (8.6%)	
Student	102 (61.4%)	202 (54.6%)	
N/A	7 (4.2%)	14 (3.8%)	
Financial Resources			
Athletic Scholarship	109 (65.3%)	11 (3.0%)	<.001
Pell Grant	94 (56.3%)	273 (73.8%)	<.001
Academic Scholarship	40 (24.0%)	71 (19.2%)	0.207
Family Support	29 (17.4%)	82 (22.2%)	0.204
Self-pay	21 (12.6%)	53 (14.3%)	0.586
Loans	73 (43.7%)	249 (67.3%)	<.001
Others	3 (1.8%)	16 (4.3%)	0.142
Financial Resources Were Required	114 (72.6%)	43 (27.4%)	0.002

Results for First-Generation Athletes and Non-Athletes (n=225)

Demographic Differences by Athletic Status for First-Generation Students

Demographic characteristics were also examined for first- and non-first-generation students. The chi-square test results are reported in Table 13, and showed no statistically significant differences in age or marital status, though men represented 56.3% of athletes and 32.3% of non-athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 11.032, p = .001$.

Table 13

Sample Descriptive Statistics By Athlete Status for First-Generation Students (n=225)

	Athlete (n=64)	Non-Athlete (n=161)	p-value
	N (%)	N (%)	
Age			0.318
18-24	63 (98.4%)	148 (91.9%)	
25-34	1 (1.6%)	8 (5.0%)	
35-44	0 (0.0%)	3 (1.9%)	
45-54	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.2%)	
55+			

“Table Continued”

Marital Status			0.425
Never			
Married	62 (96.9%)	157 (97.5%)	
Married	2 (3.1%)	2 (1.2%)	
Divorced	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.2%)	
Separated	(0.0%)	(0.0%)	
Widowed	(0.0%)	(0.0%)	
Gender (Men)	36 (56.3%)	52 (32.3%)	0.001

Of the colleges attended by first generation students, 53.8% of the non-athletes and 59.4% of the athletes attended MVSU than any of the other colleges, but there was no statistically significant differences in the distributions of school attendance by athlete status, $\chi^2(4, N = 225) = 5.662, p = .226$.

The findings showed 43.8% of the athletes reported their current school as their first choice compared to 37.5% of the non-athletes but the difference was not statistically significant $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = .749, p = .387$. The location was the primary reason the school was not the first choice for 26.3% of the non-athletes, while 15.6% of the athletes reported the athletic program was a common reason, $\chi^2(5, N = 225) = 44.112, p = <.001$. A total of 22.4% of the non-athletes were employed full-time compared to 15.6% of the athletes, $\chi^2(4, N = 225) = .14537, p = .006$. A total of 79.7% of the athletes had income compared to 66.9% of the non-athletes, but the income distributions were not statistically significantly different $\chi^2(5, N = 225) = 5.791, p = .327$. The analyses showed 34.8% of

non-athletes transferred compared to 37.5% of the athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = .148, p = .701$.

The parental incomes were statistically different for athletes and non-athletes, $\chi^2(8, N = 225) = 26.456, p = .001$. Results showed 34.6% of the athletes and 21.0% of the non-athletes reported income between \$10,000-19,999, and just 7.5% of the athletes and 11.3% of the non-athletes reported parental income between \$50,000-\$69,999.

Differences in Financial Resources by Athletic Status for First-Generation Students

The researcher performed chi-square tests to compare the use of multiple financial resources for first generation athletes and non-athletes. Among the athletes, 59.4% received Pell grants compared to 76.4% of the non-athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 6.520, p = .011$; 14.1% of athletes compared to 17.4% of non-athletes received family support $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 0.369, p = .543$; 10.9% of athletes compared to 11.8% of non-athletes reported self-payments $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 0.033, p = .855$; 43.8% of athletes compared to 72.7% of non-athletes received student loans $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 16.717, p = <.001$. Similar proportions- 31.0% of athletes and 4.3% of non-athletes- reported receiving other scholarships, $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 0.178, p = .673$; and 20.3% of the athletes compared to 13.7% of the non-athletes reported receiving academic scholarships $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 1.541, p = .215$. The findings showed 54.7% of the athletes received athletic scholarships compared to 3.1% of the non-athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 225) = 83.359, p = <.001$.

A total of 74.6% of the first-generation athletes and 86.2% of the non-athletes reported that they “would not have been able to afford college without the additional financial resources they received” (referenced in Question 14), $\chi^2(1, N = 211) = 4.047, p$

= .044. Results showed that 72.6% of the first-generation student athletes and 83.9% of the non-athletes also reported that their parents would not have been able to assist them with going to college without the above financial resources, $\chi^2(1, N = 211) = 3.579, p = .059$. Finally, 75.4% of the first-generation athletes reported their parents help them financially compared to 68.5% of the non-athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 207) = .990, p = .320$.

Studying First-Generation and Non-First Generation Athletes

Demographics Differences for Athletes by Generation

In the sample, 98.4% of the first-generation athletes and 98.0% of the non-first-generation athletes were aged 18-24 years. Men represented 56.3% of the first-generation and 64.1% of the non-first generation participants, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = 1.017, p = .313$.

Within the sample, 59.4% of the first-generation student athletes and 59.2% of the non-first-generation student athletes attended MVSU; the distributions of students across the other schools were comparable as well, $\chi^2(4, N = 167) = 2.237, p = .692$. No differences in the distribution of students across academic classifications were shown, $\chi^2(3, N = 167) = 0.426, p = .935$. A total of 89.1% of the first-generation athletes and 94.2% of the non-first-generation athletes lived on campus, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = 1.437, p = .231$. In the sample, 37.5% of the first-generation athletes and 29.4% of the non-first-generation athletes were transfer students, but the difference was not statistically significant $\chi^2(1, N = 166) = 1.172, p = .279$.

In the sample, 43.8% of the first-generation athletes reported their current school as their first choice compared to 14.7% of the non-first-generation athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 166) = 17.283, p < .001$. Location was reported by 24.3% of the non-first-generation

athletes as the main reason for the school not being their first choice, and the athletic program was reported by 15.6% of the first-generation athletes as their primary reason or the school not being their first choice, $\chi^2(5, N = 167) = 10.241, p = .069$. Among the athletes, 14.7% of the non-first-generation and 15.6% of the first-generation athletes worked full-time. The distributions of students across employment categories were similar for the athletes by generation, $\chi^2(4, N = 166) = 2.962, p = .564$.

Among athletes, 85.3% of the non-first-generation and 79.7% of the first-generation athletes reported no income. The distributions by generation status were similar across the other income groups, $\chi^2(5, N = 166) = 4.260, p = .513$. A total of 23.3% of the non-first-generation athletes and 11.3% of the first-generation athletes reported parental incomes between \$50,000-\$69,000, and similar differences were present for income greater than \$69,000, $\chi^2(10, N = 165) = 32.841, p = <.001$. Had it not been for the financial resources selected, 71.4% of the non-first-generation athletes and 74.6% of the first-generation athletes stated they would not have been able to afford to attend college, $\chi^2(1, N = 157) = 0.183, p = 0.668$. Additionally, 72.6% of the first-generation athletes and 58.5% of the non-first-generation athletes stated that their “parents would have never been able to assist me with my college education had it not been for the financial resources,” $\chi^2(1, N = 156) = 3.214, p = 0.073$. The results showed that 24.6% of the first-generation and 11.3% of the non-first-generation athletes stated that their parents help them financially with their college experience such as books, food, travel, and supplies; showing a statistically significant difference between first- and non-first-generation athletes parents helping them financially with their college experience; $\chi^2(1, N = 158) = 4.782, p = 0.029$.

Differences in Financial Resources for Athletes by Generation

Financial resources available to student athletes, comparing first- and non-first-generation students are shown in Table 14. The findings show that 54.7% of the first-generation athletes and 71.8% of the non-first-generation athletes received athletic scholarships, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = 5.126, p = .024$.

Compared to 26.2% of the non-first generation athletes, just 20.3% of first-generation athletes reported receiving academic scholarships, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = .755, p = .385$. Family support was reported by 14.1% of the non-first generation athletes compared to 19.4% of the first-generation athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = .789, p = .374$; 10.9% of first-generation athletes report self-paying for school compared to 13.6% of the non-first-generational athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = .253, p = .615$; and 43.8% of first-generation athletes reported receiving loans compared to 43.7% of non-first-generation athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = <.001, p = .994$. Results also showed that 71.6% of the first-generation athletes received Pell grants compared to 66.0% of the non-first-generation athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = .402, p = .526$, and 3.1% of the first-generation athletes reported using other financial means compared to 1.0% of non-first-generation students, $\chi^2(1, N = 167) = 1.038, p = .308$. No significant differences in the financial resources beyond athletic scholarships were shown for first and non-first-generation student athletes.

Table 14

Measures of Financial Affordability by Generation for Athletes (n=167)

	First Generation (n=64) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=103) N (%)	p-value
Employment Status			0.564
Full-Time	10 (15.6%)	15 (14.7%)	
Part-Time	4 (6.3%)	8 (7.8%)	
Unemployed	11 (17.2%)	9 (8.8%)	
Student	37 (57.8%)	65 (63.7%)	
N/A	2 (3.1%)	5 (4.9%)	
Financial Resources			
Athletic Scholarship	35 (54.7%)	74 (71.8%)	0.024
Pell Grant	38 (59.4%)	56 (54.4%)	0.526
Academic			
Scholarship	13 (20.3%)	27 (26.2%)	0.385
Family Support	9 (14.1%)	20 (19.4%)	0.374
Self-pay	7 (10.9%)	14 (13.6%)	0.615
Loans (Stafford, unsubsidized, etc.)	28 (43.8%)	45 (43.7%)	0.994

“Table Continued”

Others	2 (3.1%)	1 (1.0%)	0.308
Financial Resources Were			
Required	44 (74.6%)	70 (71.4%)	0.668

Results for Research Question 2

Research question 2 asked: Are reports of academic success (preparedness, GPA, and attitudes) higher for first-generation compared to non-first-generation African American student athletes? The hypothesis was that first-generation African American student athletes would have more academic successes than their non-first-generation counterparts. The results showed modest support for this hypothesis.

Academic successes were based on self- reports of feeling academically prepared, GPA, feeling more successful in college, attitudes toward academics, self-reports of respect from their professors, self-reports of respect from their peers, perceptions of family pressure to excel, and their interest in attending college without playing sports. Multiple chi-square tests were performed to compare student experiences of academic success. Spearman’s correlation coefficients were assessed for the study variables of this research question. For the measures of which there was a statistically significant difference in reporting for first- and non-first-generation student athletes, logistic regression was used to assess whether these differences were attributable to other demographic factors including age, gender, transfer status, on campus residency, and marital status.

Results of the Spearman's correlational analyses showed the following as significant correlates of gender: attitude toward academics, overall GPA, having peer respect and being academically successful. Respect from professors was correlated with being a transfer student, having an athletic financial resource, having financially supportive parents, professors extending deadlines, reasons for attending college, and family pressure to excel to get college scholarships. GPA was associated with the type of financial resources received and perceptions that athletes have an academic advantage. Having professors extend deadlines was associated with viewing sports participation as a pathway to college, reasons for attending college, feeling academically prepared, and being academically successful. Additional correlations relevant to research question 2 are included in Appendices Q-W.

Preparedness

The chi-square analyses showed no statistically significant differences between first- and non-first-generation student athletes for academic preparedness measures. The results showed 87.7% of the first-generation student athletes felt academically prepared when in college classes compared to 91.7% of non-first-generation student athletes, $\chi^2(4, N = 153) = .630, p = .427$. The results showed that 93.0% of first-generation student athletes and 92.6% of non-first-generation student athletes felt academically successful in college, $\chi^2(1, N = 151) = .010, p = .922$.

Several questions addressed interpersonal factors related to generation among the athletes and are shown in Appendix O. No generational differences were shown: similar proportions reported their professors and peers treat them with respect; similar proportions also showed comparable college academic success, the students felt

academically prepared, and reported that additional help was provided. A majority also reported pressure from their families to excel, but only a minority reported they would still attend college even if they could not play sports.

As shown in Table 15, more than half of the athletes stated that they get additional tutoring services or academic aid provided to them, with 60.0% of the first-generation versus 64.6% of non-first-generation student athletes reporting such, $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = .346, p = .557$. The findings showed 58.2% of the first-generation student-athletes and 63.0% of non-first-generation athletes agreed that additional help is provided strictly for them compared to non-athletes, but the difference was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 147) = 0.343, p = .558$.

Table 15

Sports Purpose for Athletes by Generation (n=167)

	First Generation (n=64)	Non-First Generation (n=103)	p-value
	N (%)	N (%)	
College Meaning			0.620
Employment	4 (6.3%)	11 (10.7%)	
Everything	12 (18.8%)	16 (15.5%)	
Future	13 (20.3%)	21 (20.4%)	
Knowledge	4 (6.3%)	7 (6.8%)	
Success	16 (25.0%)	33 (32.0%)	

“Table Continued”

Sports Involvement

Impediment	34 (56.7%)	66 (66.7%)	0.206
Additional Tutoring Services	36 (60.0%)	64 (64.6%)	0.557
Professors Extend Deadlines	26 (43.3%)	38 (38.4%)	0.537

GPA Performance

The results are shown in Table 16. Among the first-generation student-athletes, 10.0% had a GPA of 2.00 or below, 10.0% had a GPA between 2.01-2.49; 28.3% had a GPA between 2.50-2.99; 23.3% had a GPA between 3.00-3.49; and 28.3% had a GPA of 3.50 or higher. Among non-first-generation student athletes, 5.1% had a GPA of 2.00 or below; 9.1% had a GPA of 2.01-2.49; 29.3% had a GPA between 2.50-2.99; 33.3% had a GPA between 3.00-3.49; 23.2% had a GPA of 3.50 or higher. According to χ^2 test of independence, there were no statistically significant differences across GPA categories for first- and non-first-generation student athletes, $\chi^2(4, N = 159) = 3.018, p = .555$. When asked how their GPAs compared to those of their teammates, 35.0% of the first-generation and 38.4% of the non-first-generation student athletes reported their teammates had similar GPAs, while 18.3% of first-generation and 17.2% of non-first-generation student athletes said their teammates did not have similar GPAs (18.3% vs 17.2%), and 46.7% of first-generation compared to 44.4% of non-first-generation student athletes were unsure how their GPAs compared to their teammates. According to chi-square test of independence, there were no statistically significant differences in

perceptions of GPA comparability for first- and non-first-generation students, $\chi^2(2, N = 159) = 0.185, p = .912$.

Table 16

Academic Performance for Athletes by Generation (n=167)

	All Athletes (n=167) N (%)	First Generation (n=64) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=103) N (%)	p-value
	157			
Plan to Graduate	(98.7%)	58 (96.7%)	99 (100.0%)	0.068
Hours Enrolled				0.394
12	10 (6.3%)	2 (3.3%)	8 (8.1%)	
13	4 (2.5%)	3 (5.0%)	1 (1.0%)	
14	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.0%)	
15	45 (28.3%)	15 (25.0%)	30 (30.3%)	
16	19 (11.9%)	11 (18.3%)	8 (8.1%)	
17	23 (14.5%)	7 (11.7%)	16 (16.2%)	
18	43 (27.0%)	17 (28.3%)	26 (26.3%)	
19	8 (5.0%)	2 (3.3%)	6 (6.1%)	
21	4 (2.5%)	2 (3.3%)	2 (2.0%)	
more than				
21	2 (1.3%)	1 (1.7%)	1 (1.0%)	

“Table Continued”

Overall GPA	0.555		
2.00 or			
below	11 (6.9%)	6 (10.0%)	5 (5.1%)
2.01 - 2.49	15 (9.4%)	6 (10.0%)	9 (9.1%)
2.50 - 2.99	46 (28.9%)	17 (28.3%)	29 (29.3%)
3.00 - 3.49	47 (29.6%)	14 (23.3%)	33 (33.3%)
3.50 or			
above	40 (25.2%)	17 (28.3%)	23 (23.2%)

Attitudes

Results shown in Tables 17 and 18 showed comparable motivation for playing sports, the purpose of participating in sports, and similar reasons for attending college. A greater proportion of non-first-generation athletes began playing sports at younger ages than first-generation athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = 26.523, p = .<.001$. A total of 73.3% of first-generation and 64.6% of non-first generation athletes reported that their attitude towards academics is that they want to go above and beyond rather than just pass, $\chi(1, N = 159) = 1.294, p = .255$. Just 57.6% first-generation athletes compared to 39.4% of non-first-generation athletes reported committing more of their time to academics than sports, $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = 4.945, p = .026$.

Examining motivation to play sports showed enjoyment and leisure, career aspiration, and potential opportunity as the most common and similar for first and non-

first-generation athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = 6.077, p = .193$ (see Table 18). Playing sports and increasing the quality of life were the most common reasons reported for attending college, $\chi^2(1, N = 160) = 3.279, p = .351$. For all the athletes, four or more days were the most common number of days the participants did sports activities $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = 8.950, p = .062$.

Based on the logistic regression model of time commitment to sports compared to academics, being a first-generation compared to non-first-generation student athlete was associated with higher odds of committing more time to academics than sports ($B=0.819, SE=0.352, p=.020$); transferring from another institution ($B = -0.969, SE=0.380, p=.011$) was associated with lower odds of committing more time to academics than sports. First-generations student athletes stated that 43.3% of them have professors that extend deadlines for exams compared to 38.4% of non-first-generation student athletes, $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = .381, p = .587$. In terms of academics, 37.5% of the first-generation compared to 27.3% of non-first-generation athletes agreed that they have the advantage over non-athletic students, $\chi^2(1, N = 144) = 1.666, p = .197$; the results showed 31.5% of first-generation student athletes compared to 18.9% of non-first-generation student athletes stated that “professors are more lenient when it comes to grading my exams and assignments because they are aware that I am a student athlete,” but the difference was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 144) = 2.967, p = .085$. Interpersonal experiences were also assessed for the student athletes stratified by generation, and the results are shown in Appendix DD. No statistically significant differences were shown across the generations.

Table 17

Athlete Sports Purpose- Motivation for Athletes by Generation (n=167)

	First Generation (n=64) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=103) N (%)	p-value
Age Begin Playing Sports			<.001
Ages 4-6	18 (30.0%)	56 (56.0%)	
Ages 7-9	23 (38.3%)	14 (14.1%)	
Ages 10-12	15 (25.0%)	11 (11.1%)	
Ages 13-14	2 (3.3%)	17 (17.2%)	
Ages 15-18	2 (3.3%)	1 (1.0%)	
Goes Above and Beyond Rather than Just Pass for Academics	44 (73.3%)	64 (64.6%)	0.255
Commit More Time to Academics than Sports	34 (57.6%)	39 (39.4%)	0.026

Table 18

Athlete Sports Purpose- Athlete Motivation by Generation Status (n=167)

	First Generation (n=64) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=103) N (%)	p-value
Motivation For Playing Sports			0.193
Enjoyment and Leisure	21 (35.0%)	33 (33.3%)	
Status	2 (3.3%)	2 (2.0%)	
Career Aspiration (Professional)	20 (33.3%)	33 (33.3%)	
Parents' Desires	3 (5.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
Provides Opportunity	14 (23.3%)	31 (31.3%)	
View Participation In Sports	51 (85.0%)	87 (87.9%)	0.603
Reasons For Attending College			0.351
Play Sports	17 (28.3%)	37 (37.0%)	
Increase Quality Of Life	41 (68.3%)	60 (60.0%)	
Status	1 (1.7%)	0 (0.0%)	
Parents' Expectations and Wishes	1 (1.7%)	3 (3.0%)	
Days Required To Participate Sports			0.062
One Day	4 (6.7%)	1 (1.0%)	
Two Days	5 (8.3%)	4 (4.0%)	

“Table Continued”

Three Days	6 (10.0%)	5 (5.1%)
Four Days	8 (13.3%)	25 (25.3%)
More than Four Days	37 (61.7%)	64 (64.6%)

Results for Research Question 3

Research question 3 asked: “Are self-reported graduation and professional expectations higher for first- compared to non-first-generation African American student athletes?” It was hypothesized that first-generation African American undergraduate student athletes had greater graduation and professional expectations than their non-first-generation counterparts. These hypotheses were not supported by the study findings below. These analyses included chi-square tests to examine graduation expectations the survey participants had by college generation status among college athletes, and subsequent one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests to compare the average credit hour enrollment across class standing.

Spearman correlations for the study variables addressed in research question 3 are shown in Appendix W. Statistically significant correlations were identified; plans to graduate were associated with employment status and personal income; credit hour enrollment was associated with gender and parental assistance; and reasons to attend college was associated with gender, employment status, transfer student status, athletic scholarship receipts, respect from professors and peers, professor leniency, and availability of additional tutoring and academic aid for athletes.

Graduation Plans and Progression

In this sample, 96.7% of the first-generation student-athletes planned to graduate compared to 100% of the non-first-generation athletes; Fisher exact test results showed the difference was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = 3.342, p = .068$.

First- and non-first-generation student athletes enrolled in comparable numbers of credit hours, with the majority carrying 15-18 hours, and maintaining similar GPAs

generally above a 2.50 (see Table 13). The study also examined the number of credit hours the participants enrolled in for the current semester in relation to their class standing (Table 19). The average number of credit hours was lower for first- compared to non-first-generation athletes across classification. Results of a two-way ANOVA tests showed there were no statistically significant differences in hours enrolled by generation or classification, $F(7, 152)=1.616, p=.135$.

Table 19

***Hours Enrolled by Generation and Classification for Student Athletes
(n=160)***

	First-Generation (n=60)			Non-First-Generation (n=100)		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
Freshman	19	5.16	1.89	31	5.87	1.86
Sophomore	15	5.27	1.62	22	5.82	1.71
Junior	12	5.92	1.44	25	5.00	2.25
Senior	14	5.93	2.84	22	4.36	2.32
SD= Standard Deviation						

Professional Expectations

When the participants were asked whether they considered involvement in sports as an impediment to their academics, 56.7% of first-generation student-athletes compared to 66.7% of non-first-generation athletes said yes, but the difference was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = 1.601, p = .206$. A total of 63.3% of first-generation student-athletes and 50.0% non-first-generation athletes planned to pursue sports a professional

career, $\chi^2(1, N = 159) = 2.488, p = .115$. When asked about the meaning of college education, five categories emerged from the open-ended responses: success, future, everything, employment, and knowledge. Success was most often reported as important for 25.0% of the first-generation and 32.0% of the non-first-generation athletes, future was the second most reported factor representing 20.3% of first-generation and 20.4% of non-first-generation athletes, “everything” was reported by 18.8% of the first- and 15.5% of the non-first-generation athletes, employment was reported by 6.3% of the first-generation and 10.7% of the non-first-generation athletes, and knowledge was reported as important for 6.3% of the first-generation and 6.8% of non-first-generation athletes. A total of 23.4% of the first-generation and 14.6% of the non-first-generation athletes did not answer the question. The chi-square test did not reveal any statistically significant differences in responses for this question between first- and non-first-generation athletes, $\chi^2(5, N = 167) = 3.521, p = .620$.

CHAPTER V – CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Summary and Discussion

This research addressed the disparity in athletic status, generational college attendance, college access and success among African-American students. Using Rational Choice Theory as the theoretical framework, this research posited that first-generation African-American students recognize sports participation as advantageous in their goal to finance a higher education. Rational Choice Theory as the theoretical framework is embedded in the notion that the decision of sports participation is goal oriented, reflective, and consistent and the individuals are motivated to participate in sports both intentionally and rationally. The decision to participate in sports may elevate the individual's quality of life through access to college. For first-generation African-American students, opportunities for financial gains such as scholarships and financial assistance are awarded through their success in sports participation.

The existing literature on academic success for African American students lacks an extensive examination of sports participation as a rational means to allow for college accessibility. This study began with three objectives: 1) Determine the relationship between sports participation and college access for first-generation African-American students; 2) Determine if first-generation African-American student athletes report greater academic success than non-first-generation African-American student athletes; and 3) Explore whether first-generation African American student athletes report higher graduation and professional expectations than non-first-generation African American student athletes.

The study hypotheses were modestly supported by the statistical analyses. The main argument advanced in this study is that athletic status is variably related to financial support and college experiences by generation among African-American students. The study results supported hypothesis 1, that first-generation African American undergraduate student athletes have greater financial accessibility for college than first-generation student non-athletes. The results modestly supported hypothesis 2, that first-generation African American undergraduate student athletes would have more academic successes than their non-first-generation counterparts. Hypothesis 3 was not supported, and the results did not provide evidence of any differences in graduation and professional expectations between first-generation and non-first-generation African American undergraduate student athletes.

Non-first-generation student athletes received more athletic scholarships than first-generation student athletes. Bandre (2011) acknowledged that it is absolutely necessary to the overall success of colleges and universities to recruit the students who are both exceptional academically and athletically. Given this need, there is the question of whether there is an academic difference between first-generation student athletes and non-first-generation student athletes when regarding athletic scholarship advantage if academics and athletics are interrelated. Bandre (2011) also affirmed the position that federal policy initiatives impact the availability of finances available to families that have constrained incomes such as Social Security or financial aid. These federal policy initiatives make it almost impossible to have an excess of finances available to the first-generation student when it is the sole income of the family.

In view of the close connection between academic success and sports participation for first-generation student athletes is the relevance of faculty perceptions towards student athletes. This research revealed statistical significant associations regarding the perception of student athletes by faculty members. Comeaux (2011) acknowledges the complexities and troublesome relationships between faculty and student athletics at Division I Colleges. Previous studies have found that faculty members hold more negative attitudes toward student athletes in general than their non-athletic peers, especially at NCAA Division I and II universities (Comeaux, 2011). Athletes at these colleges often feel marginalized and not taken seriously by their faculty members. Additionally, previous studies also noted differences by racial orientation when comparing African-American and Caucasian athletes in their interactions with faculty. William, Colles, and Allen (2010) revealed that primarily, the most pivotal perception of intercollegiate athletic programs by faculty is that they have a negative effect on the academic reputation of the schools which inadvertently results in a disconnect between athletics and academics. Moreover, athletes have reported that they feel punished by faculty for participating in sports by being told to drop the class or take a zero for missed assignments on game days (Williams, Colles, & Allen, 2010). These conversations speak to the need to increase the levels of academic support systems for first-generation student athletes as well as support from higher education administrators in creating partnerships between the athletic and academic communities on campus. However, this prompts the question of whether athletes take full advantage of faculty and the academic experience.

The lack of parental financial success, supportive relationships with faculty, and inadequate athletic scholarship acquisitions speaks to the multiple barriers faced by first-

generation student athletes across all campuses and universities. These issues also lead to a lack of belonging or isolation that hinders the persistence to graduation process for first-generation student athletes (Stebbleton & Soria, 2012). College accessibility is already compromised and constrained by finances and to experience barriers such as lack of social and academic support hinders the entire educational process for these students.

Rational Choice Theory

The theoretical framework of Rational Choice Theory formed the basis of exploring the relationship between sports participation between sports participation and financial accessibility for first-generation African-American students. Burns and Roszkowska (2016) used Rational Choice Theory to explain and contextualize human behavior both psychologically and socially. Rational choice is specifically concerned with finding the best means to accomplish a goal when there is knowledge of all available alternatives.

Within the context of this study, rational choice occurs for first-generation students in the absence of the available alternatives, and as a result, choosing the best strategy achieve their expected outcomes while being attentive to the future consequences. This study theorized that first-generation African-American student athletes consciously chose to participate in sports as a means to gain financial access to higher education. In view of these considerations, Sato (2013) first highlighted how Rational Choice Theory is realized by choice and transition. Basically, an individual chooses an alternative that he/she believes will bring about a social outcome that maximizes their utility under subjectively conceived constraints. For first-generation

African-American students, sports participation is a rational choice when considering all other alternatives of accessibility to college.

For this study, Rational Choice Theory seems to be the most appropriate when explaining the role of sports participation as a bridge between college accessibility and quality of life. Rational Choice Theory explains the psychological, social, and material contextualization of human behavior for disadvantaged and impoverished individuals as they push their children into sports participation from early ages in hopes of a better quality of life for the entire family. Burns and Roszkowska (2016) identified critical criticisms for Rational Choice Theory as the individual being identified as a social individual separate from society and lack of acknowledgement of the constraints and limitations placed on the decision by available resources to the individual or limited resources of the society. Secondly, it provides an unrealistic cognitive and psychological assumption assuming the decision maker has complete knowledge or capabilities to make a rational choice. Third, there is a lack of recognition of innovative or creative capabilities and agency, meaning that the individual is resourceful enough to educate themselves regarding other alternatives. The final criticism or limitation is the lack of a moral dimension meaning whether moral beliefs, spiritual, familial, or learned, that prohibits the decision making.

Major limitations associated with Rational Choice Theory include (Burns Roszkowska, 2016, p. 198):

- 1) collective action, the cooperation of individuals in groups, associations, or other forms of joint action, where individuals choose something that benefit others more than themselves;

- 2) that often people adhere to and follow to societal norms over time and space such as for instance altruism, reciprocity, and trust, even if such behavior violates their self-interest;
- 3) social structural phenomena are not reducible to the actions of particular individuals, and require explanation in terms other than agent choices (e.g., socio-cultural evolution, or material or ecological patterns).

Of relevance here is the notion that when regarding the viewpoint of sports participation as a vehicle of college accessibility; there are limitations when explaining the choice process of students' sports participation by Rational Choice Theory. For some students, sports participation is not chosen but rather pushed upon them by their parents and perpetuated by their success resulting in the continuation of participation. For African-Americans, sports participation and the success thereof is monumental in the community and may very well may motivate students to continue their participation even if they are not themselves interested.

Implications for the Higher Education Administration

From this research, several themes emerged regarding implications for higher education administration and college accessibility for first-generation African American students. These themes are financial support from parents for first-generation students, commitment to academics from athletes and higher education faculty, and athletic scholarship provision to athletes. These themes can be addressed through a discussion regarding at-risk factors for first-generation students at the secondary level, diversity and inclusion, and equitable accessibility. It is pivotal to the mission of higher education to advance diversity and inclusion to provide equitable access to college to all populations.

Specifically, higher education institutions must include first-generation African-American students in their efforts because they are at a greater disadvantage than their counterparts. They have been characterized as “at risk” from birth by assuming they come from a disadvantaged, low-income family.

There is an increasing demand for a college and career ready workforce in Mississippi and throughout the United States along with emerging initiatives in advancing diversity and inclusion in higher education. According to Whitley, Benson, and Wesaw (2018), 33% of college students have been identified as first-generation students. The increase of first-generation students in higher education calls for the need of equitable accessibility policies at the college, state, and federal levels. The Higher Education Administration has a responsibility to first-generation students in ensuring equitable and available accessibility financial resources regarding college admissions. However, before doing so, these professionals must seek opportunities to increase preparedness from the primary to the secondary levels. For first-generation, African-American students, there are many risk factors to accessibility to college and student success. If degree attainment is vital to the overall success of the society and African-American community, college accessibility must be given the appropriate attention by the higher education administration.

Horton (2015) uses *The Glossary of Education Reform*’s definition of at-risk to describe individual students or groups of students “who are considered to have a higher probability of failing academically or dropping out of school” (p. 83). Additionally, “at risk” can be used to describe students who face circumstances or characteristics that prohibit or hinder their ability to achieve academic goals or complete school or in this

case access college (p. 84). Significant risk factors associated with first-generation African-American college students primarily emerge in high school. These risk factors include individual background characteristics, early adult responsibilities, social attitudes, values and behavior, school performance, family background characteristics, (i.e., first-generation, impoverished, low-income), school engagement and success and school behavior. These study findings may support dedicating additional effort to support high school students when trying to increase college accessibility for first-generation student athletes.

First-generation students are often African-American or other racial/ethnic minorities, low income, older, and have a disability (Kutty, 2014). These individuals are also more likely to come from single-parent households and have lower levels of academic preparation than their peers to name a few characteristics that also mirror risk factors. In regard to risk-factors, Ormrod (2012) asserts that most at-risk students have the commonality of being male, poor, from single-parent households, and African-American. It is imperative that higher education administrators acknowledge risk factors that prohibit accessibility to college for first-generations students. By knowing these risk factors, administrators can target these students from a holistic, person-centered approach through their campus policies and initiatives.

Conclusion

Recommendations to higher education administration and policy makers include considering more equitable policies that aid and assist first-generation students in access and success in higher education. Karp (2011) suggested that first-generation students experience positive outcomes as result supportive relationships forged during extended

student success courses. Previous research has recommended at-risk students partake in student success courses, as students who enroll in these types of courses are more likely to earn college credits in the first year and persist to college (Karp, 2011). While accessibility for first-generation African-American students has increased, graduation rates have not. Therefore, there needs to be a specific focus on academic success for first-generation African-American students.

Other interventions could explore collaborating with school personnel, i.e., school administrators, counselors, community professionals, and parents to create systems of supports for first-generation students and their parents, thus creating mentorship relationships. Mentorship, according to Johnson (2016), is a relationship that develops between a student and a more experienced individual that encourages learning, socialization, leadership, and career development. Ramos (2019) acknowledged the challenges faced by first-generation students regarding access and success in higher education. The author provided that mentorship can be used as a holistic approach in supporting first-generation students. However, this research furthers his position by proposing mentorship as a support for parents, families, and students beginning even as early as the elementary level until the completion of college. These mentors should be professional individuals, knowledgeable of the educational process as well as community and financial resources for accessing and succeeding in college.

Without support, first-generation students are at a disadvantage and cannot look to their parents for guidance or financial support. Students and parents of first-generation students are in need of guidance. Higher education administrators have a responsibility to their universities to ensure the financial and educational preparedness of students upon

entering college campuses. Regarding academic success, first-generation students must first overcome the financial and economic barriers to successfully commit to the educational goals in pursuit of a better quality of life. The fundamental bridge to access and success for first-generation students includes: (1) equitable access policies; (2) formalized support systems; (3) academic preparedness beginning from elementary until secondary schools; (4) sports participation; and (5) financial resources.

Limitations

Various limitations exist in this study. The primary limitation of this study is the absence of extensive literature regarding sports participation as a means of financial accessibility for college access. Without previous literature, quantitative surveys are one of the most common approaches used to address this research topic with a large sample. Alternative study designs that combine quantitative and qualitative approaches with a relatively large sample size will be required, as well as revision to the types of questions that meaningfully address the combinations of financial resources and intellectual/familial supports required to achieve in college in this particular population. A second important limitation of this study is that it was confined to the state of Mississippi and not all of the eight contacted universities responded. The study was therefore limited to five instead of eight selected universities in Mississippi. This limited the analyses and confines the results to just those colleges and universities.

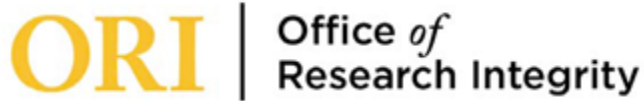
Future Research

Much additional research is needed to examine the relationship between sports participation and financial accessibility for first-generation African-American students in higher education. With Rational Choice Theory being economic in nature, additional

research is needed to fully explore the intentional choice process of first-generation African American students participating in sports to gain access to college. Future research stemming from this study include a comparative analysis between first-generation African-American and non-first-generation African-American students by location, region, or gender to further explore more variables.

Another direction in which this research can be taken is to explore the choice process and college aspirations for high school senior athletes with non-college degree holding parents while including variables such as high school preparedness and college readiness. Additionally, a longitudinal study of first-generation African-American athlete students can be conducted to determine college matriculation and success factors. Also, research can be conducted to examine the role of Trio Programs in the college choice process for first-generation African-American athlete students. This research can also be extended to include community colleges, 4-year colleges, and universities across various regions.

APPENDIX A – USM Online Informed Consent Form



Institutional Review Board

STANDARD (ONLINE) INFORMED CONSENT

STANDARD (ONLINE) INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURES	
<p>The Project Information and Research Description sections of this form should be completed by the Principal Investigator before submitting this form for IRB approval. Use what is given in the research description and consent sections below when constructing research instrument online.</p>	
Last	
Edited July 20 th , 2017	

Today's date: 01-24-2019		
Project Information		
Project Title: An Examination of the Relationship Between Sports Participation and Financial Accessibility for First-Generation African-American Students at Selected Mississippi Colleges and Universities		
Principal Investigator: Theresa V. Rash	Phone: 662-719-5880	Email: theresa.rash@usm.edu
College: Education and Human Sciences	Department: Educational Research and Administration	
RESEARCH DESCRIPTION		
<p>1. Purpose:</p> <p>This study is designed to investigate the extent of financial assistance that is provided for college attendance in Mississippi, specifically for first-generation African-American students and how their experiences differ by sports participation, gender, age, and academic discipline.</p>		
<p>2. Description of Study:</p>		

Students who are athletes and non-athletes, first-generation, African-American, male or female are eligible to participate in this study if they attend either of the following colleges or universities: a college student at Tougaloo College, Jackson State University, Mississippi College, Belhaven University, the University of Southern Mississippi, Delta State University, Alcorn State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. Should you decide to participate, you will need to finish reading this brief introduction to the study and then complete the survey. Submission of the survey will serve as explicit consent to participate. Data for the study will be collected from responses to the attached survey. It will take approximately 15 minutes or less to complete the survey. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and at any time you may choose to not participate, withdraw, or discontinue your participation from the study.

3. Benefits:

While no direct benefits for participants are anticipated, their participation in research will contribute to the knowledge about the link between sports participation and financing of college.

4. Risks:

There are no known, direct risks associated with study participation.

5. Confidentiality:

All study data will de-identified and maintained in a password-secured dataset that is accessible only by the study investigator. De-identified study data will be kept confidential; however, these data may be used for ongoing aggregate analysis and the results will be reported in professional presentations and publications.

6. Alternative Procedures:

For this study, there are no alternative procedures.

7. Participant's Assurance:

This project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations.

Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the IRB at 601-266-5997. Participation in this project is completely

voluntary, and participants may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits.

Any questions about the research should be directed to the Principal Investigator using the contact information provided in Project Information Section above.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Consent is hereby given to participate in this research project. All procedures and/or investigations to be followed and their purpose, including any experimental procedures, were explained to me. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected.

The opportunity to ask questions regarding the research and procedures was given. Participation in the project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. Unless described above and agreed to by the participant, all personal information is strictly confidential, and no names will be disclosed. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided if that information may affect the willingness to continue participation in the project.

Questions concerning the research, at any time during or after the project, should be directed to the Principal Investigator with the contact information provided above. This project and this consent form have been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5116, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, 601-266-5997.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

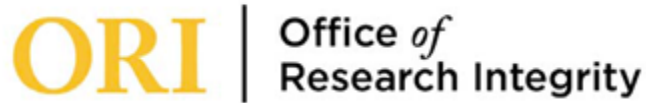
By clicking the box below, consent is hereby given to participate in this research project. All procedures and/or investigations to be followed and their purposes, including any experimental procedures, were explained to me. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected.

☐

Check this box if you consent to this study, and then click "Continue." (Clicking "Continue" will not allow you to advance to the study, unless you have checked the box indicating your consent.)

If you do not wish to consent to this study, please close your browser window at this time.

APPENDIX B – USM Informed Consent Form



Institutional Review Board

STANDARD (ONLINE) INFORMED CONSENT

STANDARD (ONLINE) INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURES	
<p>The Project Information and Research Description sections of this form should be completed by the Principal Investigator before submitting this form for IRB approval. Use what is given in the research description and consent sections below when constructing research instrument online.</p>	
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Principal Investigator: Theresa V. Rash	Phone: 662-719-5880	Email: theresa.rash@usm.edu
College: Education and Human Sciences	Department: Educational Research and Administration	
RESEARCH DESCRIPTION		
<p>1. Purpose:</p> <p>This study is designed to investigate the extent of financial assistance that is provided for college attendance in Mississippi, specifically for first-generation African-American students and how their experiences differ by sports participation, gender, age, and academic discipline.</p> <p>2. Description of Study:</p>		

Students who are athletes and non-athletes, first-generation, African-American, male or female are eligible to participate in this study if they attend either of the following colleges or universities: a college student at Tougaloo College, Jackson State University, Mississippi College, Belhaven University, the University of Southern Mississippi, Delta State University, Alcorn State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. Should you decide to participate, you will need to finish reading this brief introduction to the study and then complete the survey. Submission of the survey will serve as explicit consent to participate. Data for the study will be collected from responses to the attached survey. It will take approximately 15 minutes or less to complete the survey. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and at any time you may choose to not participate, withdraw, or discontinue your participation from the study.

3. Benefits:

While no direct benefits for participants are anticipated, their participation in research will contribute to the knowledge about the link between sports participation and financing of college.

4. Risks:

There are no known, direct risks associated with study participation.

5. Confidentiality:

All study data will be de-identified and maintained in a password-secured dataset that is accessible only by the study investigator. De-identified study data will be kept confidential; however, these data may be used for ongoing aggregate analysis and the results will be reported in professional presentations and publications.

6. Alternative Procedures:

For this study, there are no alternative procedures.

7. Participant's Assurance:

This project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations.

Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the IRB at 601-266-5997. Participation in this project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits.

Any questions about the research should be directed to the Principal Investigator using the contact information provided in Project Information Section above.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Consent is hereby given to participate in this research project. All procedures and/or investigations to be followed and their purpose, including any experimental procedures, were explained to me. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected.

The opportunity to ask questions regarding the research and procedures was given. Participation in the project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. Unless described above and agreed to by the participant, all personal information is strictly confidential, and no names will be disclosed. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided if that information may affect the willingness to continue participation in the project.

Questions concerning the research, at any time during or after the project, should be directed to the Principal Investigator with the contact information provided above. This project and this consent form have been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5116, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, 601-266-5997.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

By clicking the box below, consent is hereby given to participate in this research project. All procedures and/or investigations to be followed and their purposes, including any experimental procedures, were explained to me. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected.

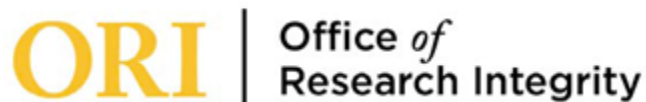
☐

Check this box if you consent to this study, and then click "Continue." (Clicking "Continue" will not allow you to advance to the study, unless you have checked the box indicating your consent.)

If you do not wish to consent to this study, please close your browser window at this

time.

APPENDIX C – USM Face-to-Face Informed Consent



Institutional Review Board

STANDARD (SIGNED) INFORMED CONSENT

STANDARD (SIGNED) INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURES
<p>This completed document must be signed by each consenting research participant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Project Information and Research Description sections of this form should be completed by the Principal Investigator before submitting this form for IRB approval.• Signed copies of the consent form should be provided to all participants. <p style="text-align: right;">Last Edited</p> <p>March 5th, 2019</p>

Today's date: March 14, 2019		
Project Information		
Project Title: An Examination of the Relationship Between Sports Participation and Financial Accessibility for First-Generation African-American Students at Selected Mississippi Colleges and Universities		
Principal Investigator: Theresa Rash	Phone: 662-719-5880	Email: theresa.rash@usm.edu
College: Education and Human Sciences	School and Program: Educational Research and Administration	
RESEARCH DESCRIPTION		
<p>1. Purpose:</p> <p>This study is designed to investigate the extent of financial assistance that is provided for college attendance in Mississippi, specifically for first-generation African-American students and how their experiences differ by sports participation, gender, age, and academic discipline.</p> <p>2. Description of Study:</p>		

Students who are athletes and non-athletes, first-generation, African-American, male or female are eligible to participate in this study if they attend either of the following colleges or universities: a college student at Tougaloo College, Jackson State University, Mississippi College, Belhaven University, the University of Southern Mississippi, Delta State University, Alcorn State University, and Mississippi Valley State University. Should you decide to participate, you will need to finish reading this brief introduction to the study and then complete the survey. Submission of the survey will serve as explicit consent to participate. Data for the study will be collected from responses to the attached survey. It will take approximately 15 minutes or less to complete the survey. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and at any time you may choose to not participate, withdraw, or discontinue your participation from the study.

3. Benefits:

While no direct benefits for participants are anticipated, their participation in research will contribute to the knowledge about the link between sports participation and financing of college.

4. Risks:

There are no known, direct risks associated with study participation.

5. Confidentiality:

All study data will be de-identified and maintained in a password-secured dataset that is accessible only by the study investigator. De-identified study data will be kept confidential; however, these data may be used for ongoing aggregate analysis and the results will be reported in professional presentations and publications.

6. Alternative Procedures:

Those African American students, athletes and non-athletes, who I do not survey face-to-face, an online survey will be provided to capture those using SurveyMonkey. The survey will be the same survey as the face-to-face survey. There will be an online informed consent form in which the participants will have to agree to take the survey by clicking OK at the bottom of the form and then proceed to taking the survey.

7. Participant's Assurance:

This project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations.

Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the IRB at 601-266-5997. Participation in this project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits.

Any questions about the research should be directed to the Principal Investigator using the contact information provided in Project Information Section above.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Participant's Name: _____

I hereby consent to participate in this research project. All research procedures and their purpose were explained to me, and I had the opportunity to ask questions about both the procedures and their purpose. I received information about all expected benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts, and I had the opportunity to ask questions about them. I understand my participation in the project is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the project at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. I understand the extent to which my personal information will be kept confidential. As the research proceeds, I understand that any new information that emerges and that might be relevant to my willingness to continue my participation will be provided to me.

Questions concerning the research, at any time during or after the project, should be directed to the Principal Investigator with the contact information provided above. This project and this consent form have been reviewed by USM's Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5125, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, 601-266-5997.

**Research Participant
Explaining the Study**

Person

Date

Date

APPENDIX D – Belhaven University IRB Approval Letter

Permission from the IRB to serve as a data collection site

From: Amy Rex Smith (arexsmith@belhaven.edu)
To: tvrash@yahoo.com; arexsmith@belhaven.edu
Cc: kcampbell@belhaven.edu; bmsmith@belhaven.edu; slittle@belhaven.edu
Date: Wednesday, December 12, 2018, 02:30 PM CST

Dear Ms. Rash:

We have received your request to serve as a data collection site for your research study entitled "An examination of the relationship between sports participation and financial accessibility for first-generation African American students at selected Mississippi colleges and universities". We found your proposal to be valuable work and are open to have you use our campus as a data collection site.

The next step would be for you to connect with our AD Scott Little--I have copied him above -- and see if Mr. Little has any interest in supporting this work and is willing to help you out. Maybe he can refer you to someone else if that is more appropriate.

Mr. Little, Ms. Rash is working with the IRB here and we (the IRB) have requested her to explore the project with you. If you and Ms. Rash make a positive connection and she is able to tell satisfy you with how she plans to recruit, and you agree to help her gain access we will have no issues with giving her permission.

Ms. Rash, Belhaven University IRB does not review your application. We will need a copy of your letter of approval from the University of Southern Mississippi IRB before you could begin any recruitment of subjects or research on our campus.

Sincerely,
Dr. Rex Smith for the IRB

Amy Rex Smith, PhD, RN
Professor of Nursing
Director, RN to BSN Program
Belhaven University
School of Nursing
Irby Building, Room 203B
1500 Peachtree Street
Jackson, MS 39202
email: arexsmith@belhaven.edu On-
campus extention: 8657
Office phone: 601-968-8933

APPENDIX E – Mississippi Valley State University IRB Approval Letter



Date: 12.6.2018
To: Theresa V. Rash
From: Mississippi Valley State University Institutional Review Board
Project Title: An Examination of the Relationship Between Sports Participation and Financial
Type of Application: Accessibility for First-Generation African-American Students at Selected Mississippi Colleges and Universities
Action: Expedited
Approved

Attention: Theresa V. Rash:

The Mississippi Valley State University Institutional Review Board (MVSU-IRB) has considered your submission for the project referenced above.

The MVSU-IRB approval has been approved.

Good luck with your research and if the MVSU-IRB can assist you further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Kimberly Broadwater'.

Dr. Kimberly Broadwater, Chair IRB-MVSU
Associate Professor of Music
Coordinator of Music
Mississippi Valley State University
14000 Hwy 82 West, #7255
Itta Bena, MS
38941
662.719.0221
kimberlybroadwater@hotmail.com



APPENDIX F - Mississippi College IRB Approval Letter



Notice of Review: Projects Using Human Subjects

Study Title: An Examination of the Relationship Between Sports Participation and Financial Accessibility for First Generation African-American Students at Selected Mississippi Colleges and Universities

Principal Investigator: Theresa Rash

12/18/2018

Date of Approval:

- ☒ In accordance with the MC POLICY FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS, the MC IRB - Human Subjects Research Committee reviewed and APPROVED this project on the above date. You may begin gathering data immediately.
- ☐ In accordance with the MC POLICY FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS, the MC IRB - Human Subjects Research Committee reviewed this project and have determined that the project does not meet IRB standards and is therefore DEFICIENT for the reasons listed in our email.
- ☐ This project did not qualify for expedited or exempt review status and thus required and received a full Board review.
- ☒ This project received expedited review status. This status is based on section VIII of the MC POLICY FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS.
- ☐ This project received exempt review status. This exemption is based on section III(B) of the MC POLICY FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS.
 - ☐ This project is approved for waiver of informed consent.
 - ☐ The project is subject to annual continuing review and the conditions listed in the comments sections below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Randazzo".

Keith Randazzo, PhD.
Co-Chair, MC Institutional Review Board



GRADUATE & CONTINUING STUDIES

December 17, 2018

Ms. Theresa V. Rash
15 Collins Drive
Cleveland, MS 38732

Study: An Examination of the Relationship Between Sports Participation and Financial Accessibility for First-Generation African-American Students at Selected Mississippi Colleges and Universities

IRB Protocol number: **18-075**
Approval Date: **December 17, 2018**
Project Start Date: **January 1, 2019**
Project End Date: **January 1, 2020**

Dear Ms. Rash,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Delta State University, I am pleased to inform you that your request for IRB clearance for the project identified above is approved. I see no deception, coercion, or harmful effects to your participants. Participants are voluntary and they do not appear to be vulnerable in any way. This project is approved with conditions: first, you must provide documentation to this office of your approval from USM's IRB; second, your research at Delta State may be limited by the methods of delivery for the survey instruments, depending on our Office of Institutional Research and Planning's capability to identify the selected audience and disseminate the survey. Please keep in mind that you are responsible for coordinating your efforts with our Institutional Research and Planning office.

This project is classified as EXEMPT under the following category of exemption:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the

research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation;

The project does not require further review by Delta State IRB unless you make changes to the protocol that could affect research subject welfare. If so, please file a request for a change to the original protocol.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "B. Moon", written in dark ink on a light background.

Beverly M. Moon, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board, Chair
DSU ID Number: **IRB00011020**

Kent Wyatt Hall, Suite 239 • 1003 West Sunflower Road • Cleveland, MS 38733 • P:
662-846-4700 • F: 662-846-4313 • www.deltastate.edu

APPENDIX H – The University of Southern Mississippi IRB Approval Letter

Michaela Donohue

Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2019 2:40 PM
To: Lilian Hill; Theresa Rash; Sue Fayard; Michaela Donohue
Subject: IRB-18-206 - Initial: Sacco Committee Letter - Expedited and Full

Office of
Research Integrity



118 COLLEGE DRIVE #5125 • HATTIESBURG, MS | 601.266.6576 | USM.EDU/ORI

NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACTION

The project below has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University Policy to ensure:

- The risks to subjects are minimized and reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered involving risks to subjects must be reported immediately. Problems should be reported to ORI via the Incident template on Cayuse IRB.
- The period of approval is twelve months. An application for renewal must be submitted for projects exceeding twelve months.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-18-206

PROJECT TITLE: An Examination of the Relationship Between Sports Participation and Financial Accessibility For First-Generation African-American Students at Selected Mississippi Colleges and Universities

SCHOOL/PROGRAM: School of Education, Educational Research and Admin

RESEARCHER(S): Theresa Rash, Lilian Hill

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Approved

CATEGORY: Expedited

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: March 26, 2019 to March 25, 2020

APPENDIX I – Tougaloo College IRB Approval Letter



TOUGALOO COLLEGE
TOUGALOO, 39174

(601) 977-4463
FAX: (601) 977-4490

KERRY THOMAS, DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH
TITLE III OFFICE

December 17, 2018

Theresa Rash
15 Collins Drive
Cleveland, MS 38732

Protocol Title:

**"An Examination of the Relationship Between Sports Participation and Financial Accessibility
for First Generation African American Students at Selected Mississippi Colleges and
Universities"**

Dear Ms. Rash:

Please be advised that Tougaloo College Institutional Review Board supports and approves the protocol referenced above as noted below:

This Approval - The research will be conducted according to the most recent version of the protocol that was submitted.

Reporting – OSPR must be immediately informed of any injuries to subjects that occur and/or that arise, in the course of your research.

Modifications – Any proposed changes MUST be submitted to the IRB as an amendment for review and approval prior to implementation.

Failure to comply with these conditions will result in withdrawal of this approval.

If further information is required please contact Mr. Kerry Thomas at the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research at 601.977.4463.

Sincerely,

Kerry Thomas
IRB Chair



"WHERE HISTORY MEETS THE FUTURE"

APPENDIX J – Jackson State University IRB Approval Letter



DATE: December 14, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Theresa V. Rash
15 Collins Drive
Cleveland, MS 38732

FROM: Dr. Sophia S. Leggett, IRB Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Leggett', written over the printed name.

Re: Protocol entitled# **0079-19**: "An examination of the relationship between sports participation and financial accessibility for first-generation African-American students at selected Mississippi colleges and universities-A pilot study"

Department: University of Southern Mississippi

The Jackson State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application and has come to the conclusion your responses are satisfactory and meet the requirements for protection of human participants as stipulated by the Federal government. Your application received an **Exempt** approval according to 45 CFR §46.110. This approval is good for **one year** from the date of this letter.

Any adverse reactions or problems resulting from this investigation must be reported immediately to the university Institutional Review Board. If you decide to modify or change your procedures in any way, please notify the IRB office in writing. We will review your request in the context of your complete application. If the changes are approved, you will receive written notification for the approval. Please be sure to use the stamped, approved consent form and survey instrument, if your research requires such usage.

Any research that continues beyond one year should be resubmitted for approval before the end of each academic year (March 2019)-so there is no lapse. The extension form can be accessed on the JSU website (<http://www.jsu.edu/research/forms-and-applications/>).

cc: Dr. Lilian H. Hill, Advisor

1400 John R. Lynch St | Post Office Box 17057 | Jackson, MS 39217 | 601.979.2931 | www.jsu.edu

APPENDIX K -USM Dissertation Survey Questions

SURVEY

Part I. Demographics

1. Gender:
 - A. Male
 - B. Female
 - C. Other _____
2. Which of the following categories describe your age?
 - A. 18-24
 - B. 25-34
 - C. 35-44
 - D. 44-54
 - E. 55-64
 - F. 65 or older
3. What college do you attend?
 - A. Mississippi Valley State University
 - B. Jackson State University
 - C. University of Southern Mississippi
 - D. Alcorn State University
 - E. Belhaven University
 - F. Delta State University
 - G. Mississippi College
 - H. Tougaloo College
4. Was this your first choice for college?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
5. If this college was not your first choice, please select why not?
 - A. Cost of attendance
 - B. Location
 - C. Athletic program
 - D. Academic program options
 - E. Other _____
6. Did you begin college here or did you transfer here from another institution?
 - A. Started here
 - B. Transferred from another institution

7. What is your classification on this college/university campus?

- A. Freshman
- B. Sophomore
- C. Junior
- D. Senior
- E. Graduate Student
- F. Unclassified_____

8. Do you live on campus at this college/university?

- A. Yes
- B. No

If yes, where do you live during the school year?

- A. Dormitory or other campus housing
- B. Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within walking distance of the institution
- C. Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within driving distance of the institution
- D. Fraternity or athletic house
- E. Other_____

9. Employment Status:

- A. Full-time
- B. Part-time
- C. Unemployed
- D. Student
- E. N/A

10. Your personal annual income approximately:

- A. No income
- B. \$0-\$9,999
- C. \$10,000-\$19,999
- D. \$20,000-\$34,999
- E. \$35,000-\$49,999
- F. \$50,000-\$74,999
- G. \$75,000-\$99,999
- H. \$100,000 or more

11. What is your marital status?

- A. Never married
- B. Married
- C. Divorced
- D. Separated
- E. Widowed

F. Other _____

12. Are you a first-generation student? (First-generation students are those students whose parents' highest level of education is a high school diploma or less)

- A. Yes
- B. No

13. What is your parent's income level?

- A. No income
- B. \$0-\$9,999
- C. \$10,000-\$19,999
- D. \$20,000-\$34,999
- E. \$35,000-\$49,999
- F. \$50,000-\$74,999
- G. \$75,000-\$99,999
- H. \$100,000 or more

14. What type of financial resources are you currently receiving to attend college?

Please mark all that apply.

- A. Athletic scholarship
- B. Pell grant
- C. Academic scholarship
- D. Family support
- E. Self-pay
- F. Loans (Stafford, unsubsidized, etc...)
- G. Others _____

15. Had it not been for the financial resources you selected above (question #14), I would not have been able to afford to attend college?

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly Disagree
- E. N/A

16. My parents would have never been able to assist me with my college education had it not been for my financial resources you selected above (question #14).

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly Disagree
- E. N/A

17. My parents help me financially with my college experience (i.e., books, food, travel, supplies, etc.).
- A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Disagree
 - D. Strongly Disagree
 - E. N/A

18. Are you an athlete?

- A. Yes
- B. No

If yes, what sport(s) do you play? _____
If yes, continue to question #19.

If no, this is the end of the survey.

Part II: Sports Participation

19. What is your motivation for playing sports?
- A. Enjoyment and Leisure
 - B. Status
 - C. Career Aspiration (Professional League)
 - D. Parents' desires
 - E. Provides opportunity to attend college
20. Did you view your participation in sports as a way to go to college?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
21. What were your reasons for attending college?
- A. Play sports
 - B. Increase quality of life (i.e., home ownership, better job, more income)
 - C. Status
 - D. Parents' expectations and wishes
 - E. Other _____
22. At what age did you begin playing sports?
- A. 4-6
 - B. 7-9
 - C. 10-12
 - D. 13-14
 - E. 15-18

23. Did you ever feel any pressure from your family to excel at sports in hopes of a college scholarship?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
24. If I did not play sports, I would still want to attend college.
- A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Disagree
 - D. Strongly Disagree
 - E. N/A
25. I feel academically prepared when I am in my college classes.
- A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Disagree
 - D. Strongly Disagree
26. I have been successful in college academically.
- A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Disagree
 - D. Strongly Disagree
27. I am an athlete and my professors treat me with respect.
- A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Disagree
 - D. Strongly Disagree
28. I am an athlete and my peers treat me with respect.
- A. Strongly Agree
 - B. Agree
 - C. Disagree
 - D. Strongly Disagree
29. How many days per week are you required to participate in sports-related activities? (i.e., practices, games, meetings)
- A. One day
 - B. Two days
 - C. Three days
 - D. Four days
 - E. More than four days

30. Do you plan on pursuing sports as a professional career?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
31. Do you commit more of your time to sports or academics?
- A. Sports
 - B. Academics
32. What is your attitude towards academics?
- A. To just pass
 - B. To go above and beyond
33. Do you plan on graduating?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
34. How many hours are you enrolled in this semester (Please specify).
- _____
35. What is your overall GPA?
- A. 2.00 or below
 - B. 2.01-2.49
 - C. 2.50-2.99
 - D. 3.00-3.49
 - E. 3.50 or above
36. Do your teammates have a similar GPA?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Not sure
37. Do you consider your involvement in sports as an impediment to your academics?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
38. Are additional tutoring services or academic aid provided to you that are not provided to non-athletic students?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
39. Do professors extend deadlines for exams exclusively for you and other student-athletes?
- A. Yes
 - B. No

40. Professors are more lenient when it comes to grading my exams and assignments because they are aware that I am a student athlete.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly Disagree

41. Additional academic help is provided strictly for student-athletes.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly Disagree

42. In terms of academics, I have an advantage over non-athletic students.

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly Disagree

43. What does a college education mean to you?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SURVEY!

APPENDIX L – Measures of Financial Affordability for the Overall Sample (n=537)

	N	%
Employment Status		
Full-Time	91	16.9%
Part-Time	73	13.6%
Unemployed	52	9.7%
Student	304	56.6%
N/A	21	3.9%
Financial Resources		
Athletic Scholarship	120	22.3%
Pell Grant	367	68.3%
Academic Scholarship	111	20.7%
Family Support	111	20.7%
Self-pay	74	13.8%
Loans (Stafford, unsubsidized, etc.)	322	60.0%
Others	19	3.5%
Could Not Have Attended College without the Financial Resources	157	29.2%

APPENDIX M – Measures of Financial Affordability for the Overall Sample and by

Athletic Status (n=537)

	Overall (n=537) N (%)	Athlete (n=167) N (%)	Non-Athlete (n=370) N (%)	p-value
Personal Annual Income				0.033
No Income	393 (73.2%)	138 (83.1%)	255 (69.3%)	
\$0-\$9,999	20 (3.7%)	7 (4.2%)	13 (3.5%)	
\$10,000 - \$19,999	86 (16.0%)	17 (10.2%)	69 (18.8%)	
\$20,000 - \$29,999	24 (4.5%)	2 (1.2%)	22 (6.0%)	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	4 (0.7%)	1 (0.6%)	3 (0.8%)	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	3 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.8%)	
\$50,000 - \$59,999	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	
\$60,000 - \$69,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$70,000 - \$79,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$80,000 - \$89,999	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	
\$90,000 - \$99,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$100,000 - or more	2 (0.4%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.3%)	
Parent's Income Level				<.001
No Income	92 (17.1%)	26 (15.8%)	67 (18.4%)	
\$0-\$9,999	7 (1.3%)	5 (3.0%)	2 (0.5%)	
\$10,000 - \$19,999	111 (20.7%)	16 (9.7%)	95 (26.0%)	
\$20,000 - \$29,999	86 (16.0%)	25 (15.2%)	61 (16.7%)	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	81 (15.1%)	19 (11.5%)	62 (17.0%)	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	9 (1.7%)	7 (4.2%)	2 (0.5%)	
\$50,000 - \$69,999	72 (13.4%)	31 (18.8%)	41 (11.2%)	
\$70,000 - \$79,999	2 (0.4%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.3%)	
\$80,000 - \$89,999	4 (0.7%)	3 (1.8%)	1 (0.3%)	
\$90,000 - \$99,999	32 (6.0%)	16 (9.7%)	16 (4.4%)	
\$100,000 - or more	33 (6.1%)	16 (9.7%)	17 (4.7%)	
Parents Would Not Be Able to Assist Without the Financial Resources	156 (29.1%)	100 (64.1%)	56 (35.9%)	<.001
Parents Help Financially	158 (29.4%)	132 (83.5%)	26 (16.5%)	0.084

APPENDIX N – Sample Descriptive Statistics by Generation (n=537)

	First Generation (n=225) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=312) N (%)	p-value
Age			0.238
18-24	211 (93.8%)	294 (94.5%)	
25-34	9 (4.0%)	6 (1.9%)	
35-44	3 (1.3%)	7 (23.0%)	
45-54	2 (0.9%)	1 (0.3%)	
55+	0 (0.0%)	3 (1.0%)	
Marital Status			0.399
Never Married	219 (97.3%)	297 (95.8%)	
Married	4 (1.8%)	4 (1.3%)	
Divorced	2 (0.9%)	4 (1.3%)	
Separated	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.3%)	
Widowed	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	
Gender (Men)	88 (39.1%)	125 (40.2%)	0.801

APPENDIX O – Sample College-Related Descriptive Statistics by Generation (n=537)

	First Generation (n=225) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=312) N (%)	p-value
College Attended			0.661
Mississippi Valley State Univ	124 (55.4%)	168 (54.2%)	
Jackson State University	40 (17.9%)	58 (18.7%)	
Delta State University	31 (13.8%)	33 (10.6%)	
Mississippi College	8 (3.6%)	12 (3.9%)	
Tougaloo College	21 (9.4%)	39 (12.6%)	
First Choice Institution	88 (39.3%)	98 (31.6%)	0.066
If Not First Choice, Select Why?			0.266
Cost Of Attendance	16 (7.1%)	20 (6.6%)	
Location	52 (23.2%)	88 (29.0%)	
Athletic Program	23 (10.3%)	37 (12.2%)	
Academic Program Options	18 (8.0%)	19 (6.3%)	
Other	14 (6.3%)	28 (9.2%)	
N/A	101 (45.1%)	111 (36.6%)	
Transfer Students	80 (35.6%)	74 (23.8%)	0.003
On Campus Resident	67 (44.7%)	158 (40.8%)	0.418
Classification			0.819
Freshman	77 (34.2%)	116 (37.2%)	
Sophomore	46 (20.4%)	64 (20.5%)	
Junior	51 (22.7%)	71 (22.8%)	
Senior	51 (22.7%)	61 (19.6%)	

APPENDIX P – Measures of Financial Affordability for All Students by Generation

(n=537)

	First Generation (n=225) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=312) N (%)	p-value
Employment Status			0.177
Full-Time	46 (20.4%)	45 (14.5%)	
Part-Time	27 (12.0%)	41 (13.2%)	
Unemployed	17 (7.6%)	35 (11.3%)	
Student	129 (57.3%)	175 (56.3%)	
N/A	6 (2.7%)	15 (4.8%)	
Financial Resources			
Athletic Scholarship	40 (17.8%)	80 (25.6%)	0.031
Pell Grant	161 (71.6%)	206 (66.0%)	0.174
Academic Scholarship	35 (15.6%)	76 (24.4%)	0.013
Family Support	37 (16.4%)	74 (23.7%)	0.040
Self-pay	26 (11.6%)	48 (15.4%)	0.204
Loans	145 (64.4%)	177 (56.7%)	0.072
Others	9 (4.0%)	10 (3.2%)	0.623
Parents Would Not Be Able to Assist Without the Financial Resources	175 (82.9%)	240 (79.5%)	0.325

APPENDIX Q – Measures of Financial Affordability from Parents by
Generation (n=537)

	First Generation (n=225) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=312) N (%)	p-value
Personal Annual Income			0.563
No Income	158 (76.5%)	235 (75.8%)	
\$0-\$9,999	8 (3.6%)	12 (3.9%)	
\$10,000 - \$19,999	42 (18.8%)	44 (14.2%)	
\$20,000 - \$29,999	13 (5.8%)	11 (3.5%)	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	2 (0.9%)	2 (0.6%)	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	1 (0.4%)	2 (0.6%)	
\$50,000 - \$59,999	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	
\$60,000 - \$69,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$70,000 - \$79,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$80,000 - \$89,999	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	
\$90,000 - \$99,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$100,000 - or more	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.6%)	
Parent's Income Level			<.001
No Income	52 (23.5%)	41 (13.3%)	
\$0-\$9,999	3 (1.4%)	4 (1.3%)	
\$10,000 - \$19,999	68 (30.8%)	43 (13.9%)	
\$20,000 - \$29,999	35 (15.8%)	51 (16.5%)	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	28 (12.7%)	53 (17.2%)	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	5 (2.3%)	4 (1.3%)	
\$50,000 - \$69,999	19 (8.6%)	53 (17.2%)	
\$70,000 - \$79,999	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.6%)	
\$80,000 - \$89,999	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.3%)	
\$90,000 - \$99,999	0 (0.0%)	26 (8.4%)	
\$100,000 - or more	0 (0.0%)	28 (9.1%)	
Parents Would Not Be Able to Assist Without the Financial Resources	170 (80.6%)	212 (72.4%)	0.034
Parents Help Financially	146 (70.5%)	247 (84.9%)	<.001

APPENDIX R – Measures of Financial Affordability for First Generation Students by

Athletic Status (n=225)

	Athlete (n=64) N (%)	Non-Athlete (n=161) N (%)	p-value
Employment Status			0.006
Full-Time	10 (15.6%)	36 (22.4%)	
Part-Time	4 (6.3%)	23 (14.3%)	
Unemployed	11 (17.2%)	6 (3.7%)	
Student	37 (57.8%)	92 (57.1%)	
N/A	2 (3.1%)	4 (2.5%)	
Financial Resources			
Athletic Scholarship	35 (54.7%)	5 (3.1%)	<.001
Pell Grant	38 (59.4%)	123 (76.4%)	0.011
Academic Scholarship	13 (20.3%)	22 (13.7%)	0.215
Family Support	9 (14.1%)	28 (17.4%)	0.543
Self-pay	7 (10.9%)	19 (11.8%)	0.855
Loans	28 (43.8%)	117 (72.7%)	<.001
Others	2 (3.1%)	7 (4.3%)	0.673
Parents Would Not Be Able to Assist Without the Financial Resources	44 (74.6%)	131 (86.2%)	0.044

APPENDIX S – Measures of Financial Affordability from Parents for First Generation

Students (n=225)

	Athlete (n=64) N (%)	Non-Athlete (n=161) N (%)	p-value
Personal Annual Income			0.327
No Income	51 (79.7%)	107 (66.9%)	
\$0-\$9,999	2 (3.1%)	6 (3.8%)	
\$10,000 - \$19,999	9 (14.1%)	33 (20.6%)	
\$20,000 - \$29,999	1 (1.6%)	12 (7.5%)	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	1 (1.6%)	1 (0.6%)	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)	
\$50,000 - \$59,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$60,000 - \$69,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$70,000 - \$79,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$80,000 - \$89,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$90,000 - \$99,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$100,000 - or more	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
Parent's Income Level			0.001
No Income	14 (22.6%)	38 (23.9%)	
\$0-\$9,999	3 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$10,000 - \$19,999	13 (21.0%)	55 (34.6%)	
\$20,000 - \$29,999	9 (14.5%)	26 (16.4%)	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	6 (9.7%)	22 (13.8%)	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	5 (8.1%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$50,000 - \$69,999	7 (11.3%)	12 (7.5%)	
\$70,000 - \$79,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$80,000 - \$89,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$90,000 - \$99,999	3 (4.8%)	3 (1.9%)	
\$100,000 - or more	2 (3.2%)	3 (1.9%)	
Parents Would Not Be Able to Assist Without the Financial Resources	45 (72.6%)	125 (83.9%)	0.059
Parents Help Financially	46 (75.4%)	100 (68.5%)	0.320

APPENDIX T –Measures of Financial Affordability for Athletes by Generation (n=167)

	First Generation (n=64) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=103) N (%)	p-value
Personal Annual Income			0.513
No Income	51 (79.7%)	87 (85.3%)	
\$0-\$9,999	2 (3.1%)	5 (4.9%)	
\$10,000 - \$19,999	9 (14.1%)	8 (7.8%)	
\$20,000 - \$29,999	1 (1.6%)	1 (1.0%)	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	1 (1.6%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$50,000 - \$59,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$60,000 - \$69,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$70,000 - \$79,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$80,000 - \$89,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$90,000 - \$99,999	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	
\$100,000 - or more	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.0%)	
Parent's Income Level			<.001
No Income	14 (22.6%)	12 (11.7%)	
\$0-\$9,999	3 (4.8%)	2 (1.9%)	
\$10,000 - \$19,999	13 (21.0%)	3 (2.9%)	
\$20,000 - \$29,999	9 (14.5%)	16 (15.5%)	
\$30,000 - \$39,999	6 (9.7%)	13 (12.6%)	
\$40,000 - \$49,999	5 (8.1%)	2 (1.9%)	
\$50,000 - \$69,999	7 (11.3%)	24 (23.3%)	
\$70,000 - \$79,999	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.0%)	
\$80,000 - \$89,999	0 (0.0%)	3 (2.9%)	
\$90,000 - \$99,999	3 (4.8%)	13 (12.6%)	
\$100,000 - or more	2 (3.2%)	14 (13.6%)	
Parents Would Not Be Able to Assist Without the Financial Resources	45 (72.6%)	55 (58.5%)	0.073
Parents Help Financially	46 (75.4%)	86 (88.7%)	0.029

APPENDIX U – Educational experience for Athletes by Generation (n=167)

	First Generation (n=64) N (%)	Non-First Generation (n=103) N (%)	Chi- square statistic	p-value
Professors Are More Lenient	17 (31.5%)	17 (18.9%)	2.967	0.085
Additional Academic Help Is Provided	32 (58.2%)	58 (63.0%)	0.343	0.558
Academics, Advantage Non-Athletic	21 (37.5%)	24 (27.3%)	1.666	0.197
Feel Pressure From Family To Excel	19 (31.7%)	42 (42.4%)	1.826	0.176
Not Play Sports, I Will Still Attend	44 (74.6%)	70 (71.4%)	0.183	0.668
I Feel Academically Prepared	50 (87.7%)	88 (91.7%)	0.630	0.427
Successful In College Academically	53 (93.0%)	87 (92.6%)	0.010	0.922
Professors Treat Me With Respect	52 (91.2%)	86 (94.5%)	0.598	0.440
Peers Treat Me With Respect	53 (93.0%)	86 (96.6%)	1.012	0.314

APPENDIX V – Spearman correlations for financial resource variables in research question 1

	Family Financial Resources	Family Financial Resources	Athletic	Academic	Self- Paying	Loans	Pell Grant	Other
First-Generation	.089*	.089*	.093*	.107*	0.055	-0.078	-0.059	-0.021
Athletic Financial Resources	-0.064	-0.064	1.000	0.024	-0.072	-.292**	-.183**	-0.054
Financial Resource								
Pell Grant	0.031	0.031		-0.058	0.040	.245**	1.000	-0.021
Academic	.114**	.114**		1.000	0.023	-.240**		0.052
Family	1.000	1.000			.263**	0.051		-0.048
Self-Paying					1.000	0.051		-0.077
Loans						1.000		-0.070
Other								1.000

APPENDIX W – Spearman correlations for parental financial resource variables in research question 1

	Parents financially support my college experience	Parents would not have been able to assist me without resources	Would not have been able to afford college without the resources
First-Generation Student	-.164**	.130**	0.079
Athletic Financial Resources	0.012	.175**	.179**
Financial Resource			
Pell Grant	0.022	-.177**	-.180**
Academic	-.128**	0.015	0.011
Family	-.218**	0.038	0.008
Self-Paying	-0.040	0.082	0.039
Loans	0.010	-.190**	-.208**
Other	.113**	-.123**	-.119**
Would not have been able to afford college without the resources	0.013	.609**	1.000
Parents would not have been able to assist me without resources		-0.064	1.000

* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$

APPENDIX X – Spearman correlations for demographic and academic attitude variables of research question 2

	Additional Academic Aid	Additional tutoring available	Attitude toward Academics	Athlete Academic Advantage	Academically Prepared	GPA	Academically Successful
First-Generation	-0.044	-0.040	-0.087	.178*	-0.053	0.024	0.048
Athlete Status		0.102	0.054		0.031	-0.054	0.142
Gender	0.049	-0.030	-.178*	-0.079	-0.079	-.352**	.166*
Age	0.010	0.127	-0.061	0.125	0.063	-0.109	0.074
Marital Status	-0.057	-0.011	-0.003	-0.105	-0.103	-0.047	-0.018
First Choice Institution	-0.045	0.087	-0.085	0.129	0.090	0.076	0.064
Transfer Student	0.118	0.016	0.096	0.037	0.103	-0.082	0.066
On Campus Resident	0.072	-0.095	0.108	0.125	0.035	0.012	-0.013
* = p < 0.05; ** = p < 0.01; *** = p < 0.001							

APPENDIX Y - Spearman correlations for demographic and academic experience variables of research question 2

	Respect from Professors	Professor Leniency	Respect from Peers	Professors Extend Deadlines
First-Generation Student	0.079	0.104	0.059	0.049
Athlete Status	0.144		0.140	
Gender	-0.072	-0.060	-.158*	-0.057
First Choice Institution	0.068	0.101	0.042	0.095
Transfer Student	.159*	-0.008	0.150	-0.007
On Campus Resident	-0.002	0.137	0.057	-0.029
* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$				

APPENDIX Z - Spearman correlations for financial variables in research question 2

		Academically Prepared	Attitude toward Academics	GPA	Athlete Academic Advantage	Academically Successful
Financial Resource						
	Athletic	0.005	-0.108	.218**	0.019	-.204**
	Pell Grant	0.026	0.073	-0.115	0.076	0.020
	Academic	-0.117	0.116	.176*	0.097	-0.112
	Family	0.027	0.103	0.049	0.096	-0.034
	Self-Paying	0.032	0.096	-0.080	0.142	-0.006
	Loans	-0.050	0.008	-.187*	0.009	0.080
	Other	0.113	-0.004	-0.091	-0.030	0.077
	Would not have been able to afford college without the resources	0.137	0.029	.159*	0.037	-0.027
	Parents would not have been able to assist me without resources	0.037	0.047	.158*	-0.022	-0.030
	Parents financially support my college experience	0.136	0.046	-0.065	0.060	.217**
* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$						

APPENDIX AA - Spearman correlations for academic environment variables in research question 2

	Additional Academic Aid	Additional Tutoring Available	Respect from Professors	Professor Leniency	Respect from Peers	Professors Extend Deadlines
Financial Resource						
Athletic	-0.147	-0.054	-.176*	0.032	-0.117	0.104
Pell Grant	0.025	0.007	-0.016	0.063	0.028	0.047
Academic	0.015	0.000	0.086	0.077	0.069	0.121
Family	0.043	0.017	0.009	0.026	0.095	-0.092
Self-Paying	0.121	-0.059	0.084	.179*	0.071	-0.037
Loans	0.029	-0.033	0.031	-0.106	-0.016	-0.125
Other	0.055	-0.107	-0.030	0.015	0.036	0.020
Would not have been able to afford college without the resources	-0.044	-0.108	0.110	0.050	.244**	-0.067
Parents would not have been able to assist me without resources	-0.047	0.028	0.050	0.105	0.093	-0.041
Parents financially support my college experience	.269**	0.065	.232**	0.057	0.140	0.113
* = p < 0.05; ** = p < 0.01; *** = p < 0.001						

APPENDIX BB - Spearman correlations for sports and academic environment variables from research question 2

	Additional Academic Aid	Additional tutoring available	Respect from Professors	Athlete Academic Advantage	Respect from Peers	Academically Successful	Professors Extend Deadlines
Motivation for playing sports	-0.111	-0.136	-0.019	0.031	0.022	-0.019	-0.029
Sports as a pathway to college	0.043	0.123	-0.012	-0.012	0.130	-0.088	.172*
Family Pressure	0.038	-0.028	.264**	0.060	0.055	0.047	-0.063
Attend College without Sports	-0.026	0.101	1.000	-0.008	.299**	-0.031	.194*
Academically Prepared	-0.134	0.106		0.062	1.000	0.023	.373**
Academically Successful	-0.022	0.063		-0.058		-0.090	.314**
Respect from Professors	0.140	0.104		0.120		0.025	.711**
Respect from Peers	0.062	0.052		0.127		0.036	1.000
Attitude towards Academics	0.040	0.077		0.011		-0.017	
Plan to Graduate	-0.022	1.000		-0.150		-0.064	
Additional tutoring available	0.153			0.092			
Professors Extend Deadlines	1.000			.230**			
Professor Grading Leniency				1.000			

* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$

APPENDIX CC – Spearman correlation coefficients for demographic variables from research question 2

	Athlete Status	First- Generation Student	Family Pressure to Excel	Attend college without sports	Motivation for sports	Sports as a pathway to college	Plan to Graduate	Reason Attending College	Hours Enrolled
First-Generation Student	-0.049	1.000	-0.103	-0.048	0.045	-0.041	-0.145	-0.085	-0.038
Athlete Status	1.000		0.062	0.143		.204**	-0.009	0.050	-0.131
Gender	-.293**	0.011	.232**	0.151	0.034	-.227**	0.088	-.272**	-.183*
Age	.116**	-0.014	0.125	.161*	-0.052	0.058	-0.018	-0.057	-0.133
Institution	.086*	0.019	-0.048	-0.133	-0.124	.191*	0.153	0.142	-0.084
First Choice Institution	-.126**	0.079	0.023	-0.057	0.074	0.072	-0.058	0.008	0.086
Transfer Student	0.056	.128**	-0.136	-0.072	-0.022	0.146	0.076	.191*	0.012
On Campus Resident	-.301**	0.016	0.030	-0.066	0.058	-0.127	0.006	0.100	0.067
* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$									

APPENDIX DD - Spearman correlation coefficients for advancement variables from research question 2

	Athlete Status	First- Generation Student	Family Pressure to Excel	Attend college without sports	Motivation for sports	Sports as a pathway to college	Plan to Graduate	Reason Attending College	Hours Enrolled
Financial Resource									
Athletic	-.692**		-0.090	-0.043	.302**	-.224**	-0.035	-.194*	0.004
Pell Grant	.174**		.242**	0.061	0.059	0.042	0.099	-0.038	-0.006
Academic	-0.054		-0.082	-0.121	-.162*	-0.007	-0.065	0.124	0.136
Family	0.055		-0.079	-0.028	-0.051	-0.034	0.096	0.139	-0.106
Self-Paying	0.023		-0.054	0.020	-0.139	0.132	0.128	0.076	-0.035
Loans	.223**		-0.034	-0.051	-0.029	0.028	0.128	0.072	-0.001
Other	0.063		-0.081	-0.063	0.065	0.082	-0.016	0.087	-0.121
Would not have been able to afford college without the resources	-.200**		-0.047	-0.007	-0.038	-0.020	0.006	0.014	0.122
Parents would not have been able to assist me without resources	-.165**		-0.026	-.207**	-0.048	0.052	-0.021	-0.072	.209**
Parents financially support my college experience	.108*		0.066	.192*	.190*	-0.081	0.047	0.008	-0.114
* = p < 0.05; ** = p < 0.01; *** = p < 0.001									

APPENDIX EE - Spearman correlation coefficients for research question 3

	Athlete Status	First-Generation Student	Reason Attending College
Motivation for Sports	-0.106	-0.009	0.058
Sports as a Pathway to College	0.150	-0.081	-0.053
Family Pressure to Excel	1.000	-0.006	0.045
Attend college without sports		0.003	0.134
Academically Prepared		0.123	0.130
Academically Successful		0.032	0.138
Professors treat me with respect		0.127	.222**
Peers treat me with respect		.193*	.222**
Attitude toward Academics		0.051	-0.031
Plan to Graduate		-0.076	0.067
Additional tutoring/academic aid provided		.168*	.291**
Professors extend exam deadlines		.168*	0.138
Professors are more lenient in grading		.436**	.329**
Additional academic help is provided		.374**	1.000
Academics Advantage		1.000	
* = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$			

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