

**Perceived Purpose of Collegiate Sport and Its Effect on Social Adjustment and Institutional Attachment: A Comparison of International and Domestic NCAA Student-Athletes**

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Several researchers have suggested a need for cross-cultural studies examining the effects of national sport policies on participants (Chalip, Johnson, & Stachure, 1996; Duda & Allison, 1990; Green & Oakley, 2001; Jamieson, 2006). While some authors have outlined comparative national policies in theoretical work (Chalip, 1995; Green & Oakley, 2001; Harvey, Beamish, & Defrance, 1993), only a handful of studies have used quantitative and qualitative research to look specifically at the experience of cross-cultural sport participants (Bale, 1987; Bale, 1991; Craven, 1994), primarily because of the difficulty in collecting data from sport participants who have experienced training and competition under different national sport policies. One population which remains understudied, but offers a glimpse into the effects of sport participation under multiple national sport policies, is international student-athletes. International student-athletes playing varsity sports in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) numbered over 10,000 during the 2004-05 academic year (NCAA, 2005), yet few studies have examined these student athletes and their perspective of sport participation, including its affect on their personal well-being and commitment to their United States university.

Several researchers have suggested many student-athletes at top NCAA Division I schools base their sense of achievement in college on successful athletic performance, which can diminish other aspects of the college experience and limit overall cognitive development (Adler & Adler, 1985; Killeya-Jones, 2005; Howard-Hamilton & Sina, 2001). Researchers examining international student-athletes, however, have often found this subgroup to be better adjusted to college in several non-sport dimensions when compared to domestic student-athletes (Bale, 1991; Popp, 2006; Ridinger, 1998; Ridinger & Pastore, 2000). Ridinger and Pastore (2000) developed a conceptual framework to help analyze the adjustment process for international student-athletes. This model outlines several antecedent dimensions which affect successful college adjustment. In their model, they indicated perceptual dimension as one of the key antecedent factors in gauging college adjustment. Ridinger and Pastore defined this perceptual dimension as the influence of college athletics department staff and social support networks in aiding international student-athletes' college adjustment. Popp (2006) suggested international student-athletes perceive the college sport experience differently than domestic student-athletes, which would also affect their adjustment to college based to the Ridinger and Pastore (1998) model. The purpose of this study, then, is to determine if different perceptions of the purpose of college sport influence the social adjustment and institutional attachment of domestic and international student-athletes.

In order to address the purpose of this study, two instruments were utilized. The first scale, the Purpose of Collegiate Sport Questionnaire, which is a modified version of the Purpose of Sport Questionnaire developed for high school students by Duda (1989), measured student-athlete perception of the purpose of collegiate sport. Duda (1989) found seven factors which participants believed important in sport participation: (a) enhancing mastery of skills and cooperation among teammates, (b) teaching and promoting a physically active lifestyle, (c) becoming a better citizen, (d) being competitive, (e) helping to achieve a high-status career, (f) enhancing self-esteem, and (g) promoting social status. The second scale, a modified version of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1989), measured how well student-athletes adjusted college. Two subscales from the SACQ were used to obtain adjustment scores for the participants in this study: (a) social adjustment and (b) institutional attachment. Social adjustment measures a college student's ability to cope with the interpersonal-societal demands of attending college, while institutional attachment gauges a student's commitment to the scholastic and institutional goals of a university and measures the quality of the bond formed between a student and a school (Baker & Siryk, 1989).

To complete the Purpose of Collegiate Sport Questionnaire, participants answered a series of items beginning with the stem "An important thing sport should do is." on a 5-point, Likert-type agreement scale. To complete the SACQ subscales, participants responded to items on a 9-point, Likert-type scale by indicating how closely items applied to them. Participants in the study included a stratified random sample of international and domestic student-athletes from several NCAA Division I institutions. Two multiple regressions were utilized to determine if perception of sport factor scores significantly predicted social adjustment to college and institutional attachment. Purpose of college sport factor scores served as independent variables on both regressions. Social adjustment to college scores served as the dependent variable on the first regression while institutional attachment scores served as the dependent variable on the second regression. The same two regressions, using the same

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variables, were conducted on the domestic student-athlete scores. Significant correlations were identified and compared. Results and implications of this study will be presented and ideas for future research will be discussed.