Psychic Income and College Students’ College Satisfaction from Their Football Team

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Higher education institutions have been conducting research on student satisfaction assessments to help identify institutions’ strengths and challenges. However, limited research has investigated specific aspects of college satisfaction from their college athletic teams. The primary goal of this study was to gain a better understanding of how college students’ psychic income from their football team influences their college satisfaction. Crompton’s (2004) psychic income paradigm was adopted to develop scale items. Sirgy et al.’s (2006) quality of college life (QCL) scale was modified to measure college satisfaction. In order to establish a preliminary questionnaire, we conducted a comprehensive literature review, expert review, a field test, and a pilot study.

Confirmatory factor analysis and reliability tests were employed with data from a total of 663 college students to assess the properties of the developed of the Scale of Psychic Income (SPI). An initial model, seven factors and 43 items, was conceptualized as a 7-factor model with 27 items as a result of the factor analysis: Social Bonding (3 items), Excitement (3 items), Emotional Involvement (5 items), Collective Self-esteem (3 items), Pride from Being a Major Collegiate Sport Institution (5 items), Pride from Increased Institution Visibility (4 items), and Pride Due to Additional Campus Development Efforts (4 items). A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to identify predictors of college satisfaction and revealed that six independent variables significantly predicted the outcome and collectively explained approximately 40% of the variance in college satisfaction. The six variables were gender, Excitement (MeanE), Emotional Involvement (MeanEI), Pride from Being a Major Collegiate Sport Institution (MeanPMI), Pride from Increased Institution Visibility (MeanPIV), and Pride Due to Additional Campus Development Efforts (MeanPAD). The psychic income factors increased approximately 25% (ΔR²=.246, p < .001) of the variability in the outcome accounted for by the predictors. Only MeanPIV was negatively related to college satisfaction (β = -.185, t (421) = -2.698, p < .01). Among the remaining six psychic income measures, MeanPAD showed the largest impact in the model (β = .304, t (421) = 5.003, p < .001). The rest of the standardized beta values (β) were 0.236 (MeanPMI, t (421) = 3.606, p < .001), 0.146 (MeanEI, t (421) = 2.481, p < .05), and 0.141 (MeanE, t (421) = 2.380, p < .05).

This study proved the importance of an intangible value of big-time intercollegiate football to students’ college life beyond the stereotypical notions of entertainment. Furthermore, as intercollegiate sport is gaining more media attention and its business aspect are increasingly under scrutiny, evidence of the value that collegiate sports teams can add to campus life and student well-being should allow for the continued health and development of college sports.