THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATHLETIC TEAM FISCAL EXPENDITURES ON ATHLETIC AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR NCAA DIVISION II FOOTBALL AND BASKETBALL PROGRAMS

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by

JOHN B. MOSELEY

Dr. Bradley Curs, Dissertation Supervisor

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATHLETIC TEAM FISCAL EXPENDITURES ON ATHLETIC AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR NCAA DIVISION II FOOTBALL AND BASKETBALL PROGRAMS

presented by John Moseley

a candidate for the degree of doctor of education,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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Dr. Bradley Curs

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Dr. Ty-Ron Douglas

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Dr. Jennifer Fellabaum-Toston

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Dr. Casandra Harper-Morris

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated many who have been difference-makers in my life, starting with my wife, Crystal, and my daughter, Jillian. Being on this doctoral journey with my wife has been a testament to our love and belief in one another. And Jillian, I hope that you look back on this time with great pride knowing that our love for you was always apparent though we were chasing our own dreams.

My parents, Herbert and Nell Moseley, were grateful enough to provide my siblings and I with opportunities that they did not have, beginning with allowing us to pursue four-year degrees. I wish they were alive to see this goal become a reality.

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ABSTRACT

Athletics at National Collegiate Athletic Association schools have played a major role in the educational experience of students, alumni, and surrounding communities since they were first introduced to college campuses. This study examined the relationship between athletic team fiscal expenditures on athletic and academic success for NCAA Division II football and men's and women's basketball programs. There was a void in the literature as it relates to the relationship of athletic spending on specific sports at the Division II level. The quantitative study used correlation and regression analyses. This study found a positive statistically significant relationship between athletic spending and overall win percentage in all three sports. Only women's basketball demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between Academic Success Rates scores and total team expenses. Recommendations for future research include utilizing total athletic department expenses to evaluate the relationship with academic success of all sports at an institution. As sport-specific expenses may not be used to support academic services within the sport, total athletic department expenses may better represent a university's commitment to its student-athletes' academic success.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE DISSERTATION-IN-PRACTICE

Athletics at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) schools have played a major role in the educational experience of students, alumni, and surrounding communities since they were first introduced to college campuses (Dwyer, Eddy, Havard, & Braa, 2010). College presidents and NCAA officials often refer to athletics as the university's front porch, providing the community and prospective students with a glimpse of what the university has to offer (Suggs, 2003). Coaches, athletic directors, and university presidents at NCAA Division I schools have justified their athletic expenditures, by insisting that investment in athletics leads to winning, through large benefits to the university (Suggs, 2003).

Prior research on the relationship between athletic spending and academic success has generally occurred at the university level (e.g., Comeaux, 2013; Desrochers, 2013; Foster & Huml, 2017; Huml, Hambrick, & Hums, 2015; Navarro, 2015; Smith, 2019; Weiss & Robinson, 2013). Previous studies reported that Division I schools with winning football programs experience an increase in alumni athletic donations, the number of applicants, and in-state students attending the institution (Anderson, 2017; Pope & Pope, 2014). However, success in athletics at the NCAA Division I level brings about off-field benefits for the respective institutions that are not replicated at the lower levels of the NCAA (Stinson & Howard, 2008). Thus, it is important that we determine what level of investment it takes to be successful at the Division II level so that college administrators can evaluate the necessity of their financial commitment to athletics.

As colleges and universities face financial challenges to provide students with a quality educational experience, decisions must be made to determine how the university's

finances should be allocated (Goff, 1995). It is often a misguided belief that athletics at the collegiate level are a financial boon for many universities (Desrochers, 2013). According to research from Orszag and Israel (2009), athletics spending grew at nearly twice the rate of academic spending. Sobel (2013) found that an overwhelming majority of college athletics programs result in a net financial loss for their universities. In fact, only a few universities at the NCAA Division I level are self-funded, with many more of them requiring institutional support to fund their athletic department (Desrochers, 2013). This study seeks to provide administrators with a better understanding of the relationship of athletic spending on winning and graduating their student-athletes, which could support Division II administrators' justification of whether or not to provide funding for athletics on their campuses.

In 2014, the NCAA reported that 80% of revenues used to support Division II athletics programs that sponsor football are received from the institutions' general operating budget (Fulks, 2015). The same study found that non-football playing Division II institutions received 85% of their revenues from the university's general budget. Across all divisions of the NCAA, schools also receive revenue from associated student fees that support activities not covered by the university's tuition (Gregory, 2013). College presidents have given justification for allotting student fees to support athletics due to administrators' beliefs that athletics provide indirect benefits to the campus (Morton, 2017). Public scrutiny related to the comparison of athletic spending versus academic spending has caused administrators to review their spending habits as they evaluate university priorities (Descrochers, 2013). The decision on funding for athletics

could provide answers as to the expectations of whether these funds help the team win games and graduate their student-athletes.

Orszag and Orszag (2005) reported that in 2003, Division II schools that sponsored football averaged $2.7 million in athletic operating expenditures. In 2011-12, the median expenses for football-sponsoring institutions had risen to $5.3 million, while the median athletic expense at non-sponsoring football institutions increased to $4.0 million (NCAA, n.d.-a). This rise in cost resulted in total athletic spending accounting for 7% of the total institution's spending, an increase from 5% in 2004. During that same time, athletics spending rose at a slightly faster pace than institutional spending.

There are currently over 300 NCAA Division II schools in 45 states, including Hawaii and Alaska, and Washington, D.C. (NCAA, n.d.-f). Membership also includes Simon Fraser University, located in Canada, and three schools in Puerto Rico. Fulks (2010) noted that the student-athlete experience is a focus within NCAA Division II which provides student-athletes with highly competitive athletics while supporting the academic mission of the institution. Presidents and chancellors view Division II's "Life in the Balance" concept as a way of creating better work/life balance (NCAA, n.d.-d). This balance allows more time for student-athletes to spend on academic and social activities.

The NCAA's Division I institutions have only two options for student-athletes; they are full athletics scholarship or considered a walk-on. Walk-ons do not receive any athletic scholarship dollars (NCAA, n.d.-b). Financially, Division II's scholarship model includes funding based on academic ability, athletic ability, and the student's financial aid. Feezell (2013) shared that this partial athletic scholarship model allows for student-

athletes to receive funds for their athletic ability while also allowing for merit and need-based awards.

Statement of the Problem

The question studied was to determine the relationship between athletic spending and athletic and academic success at NCAA Division II institutions. Over 300 schools are currently participating in Division II athletics with little research to evaluate whether their investment is at a level that contributes to producing winning teams or assisting their student-athletes with satisfactorily meeting the standards for the NCAA's Academic Success Rate (ASR).

Researchers have investigated the topic at the NCAA Division I level with a higher interest in the sport of football at those institutions (Litan, Orszag, & Orszag, 2003; Orszag & Israel, 2009; Orszag & Orszag, 2005; Smith, 2009). Previous studies have evaluated the relationship between spending and success in the NACDA Director's Cup standings at the NCAA Division I and Division III levels (Beaudin, 2017; Jones, 2013; Tobin, 2005). Caro and Elder (2017) evaluated the relationship between spending and winning in Division I baseball. As administrators make decisions related to the funding of extracurricular activities like athletics, they must be able to access information that justifies their spending and reflect its positive impact on their students (Goff, 1995). Additionally, many studies have only looked at the impact of athletic spending on Academic Progress Rates (APR) of student-athletes at the Division I level (Comeaux, 2015; Dohrn & Reinhardt, 2014; Johnson, Manwell, & Scott, 2018). Division II administrators could benefit from knowing the relationship between the investment in athletics and the expected outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between athletic department spending, athletic success, and academic success at NCAA Division II schools. The research aimed to identify whether universities that spend more to support their football and men's and women's basketball programs should expect to have a better winning percentage and achieve higher ASR's than their peers. For administrators that view athletics as a marketing department for the university, knowing the level of funding necessary to graduate students and compete for championships can help determine the level of investment necessary for academic and athletic success.

The research questions guiding this study are:

1. Is there a relationship between athletic department spending and athletic success (winning percentage, conference championships, and post-season appearances) in the sports of football and men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions?
2. Is there a relationship between athletic department spending and academic success (Academic Success Rates) of student-athletes who participate in football and men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions?

Conceptual Framework

Among the first to introduce the Resource-Based View (RBV), Penrose (1958) portrayed organizations as an accumulation of beneficial resources. The RBV created a competitive advantage for organizations that were able to assemble and use critical resources effectively (Barney, 1991). One goal of the RBV is that organizations become more productive than their rivals when they are able to refill or acquire resources after

recognizing deficiencies (Grant, 1991). Won and Chelladurai (2016) modified earlier studies by defining the RBV into four categories: physical capital resources; human capital resources, financial capital resources; and organizational capital resources.

Smart and Wolfe (2000) were among the first to utilize the RBV in athletics by evaluating football programs in the Big Ten. Their research noted that financial capital resources contribute to the acquisition of physical capital resources, human capital resources, and organizational capital resources. In a later study, Won (2004) stated that financial resources are necessary to run a successful athletic department effectively. This current study seeks to determine the relationship between financial capital resources on winning and graduating student-athletes.

Physical Capital Resources

The importance of facilities has been noted in earlier research on college athletics (Andrew, Martinez, & Flavell, 2016; Hoffer, Humphreys, Lacombe, & Ruseski, 2014; Saunders, 2010). Gameday facilities, practice facilities, weight rooms, training equipment, and athletic training rooms are all examples of physical capital resources within college athletics (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). Facilities for the administration of academic services for athletes are included in the physical capital resource category. While some universities can establish stand-alone academic centers for athletics, others utilize space within existing facilities for the same purposes (N4A, 2013).

A prospective student-athletes' decision to attend a university is impacted not only by the school's academic reputation but also by that school's athletic facilities (Andrew et al., 2016; Saunders, 2010). NCAA rules prohibit universities from paying its student-athletes, so athletic departments feel pressure to provide better athletic facilities

than their peers when seeking to attract the services of the best student-athletes (Hoffer et al., 2014). This pressure is relative across the landscape of all the divisions of the NCAA.

Within Division II, the Mid-American Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MIAA) has seen several of its members invest in athletic facility projects in recent history (Boyce, 2018). Missouri Western University, by way of a partnership with the Kansas City Chiefs of the National Football League, was the first in the MIAA to have an indoor facility constructed for use by its football program (Divino, 2009). Within the past 5 years, the construction of indoor track and football facilities has occurred at Pittsburgh State University, Northwest Missouri State University, and Washburn University (Boyce, 2018).

Human Capital Resources

The most notable human capital within a college athletic department is its student-athletes and its coaches (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). The sports that were chosen for the current study were football, men's basketball, and women's basketball. Two of the sports, football and men's basketball, have been at the center of exploitation of Black male athletes, whose participation has contributed to the financial gain of many American college institutions (Singer, 2019). In 2019, Black student-athletes makeup 46% of the participants in Division II football but only 17% of the head football coaches are Black. More staggering is the fact that when you remove the head coaches from HBCUs, there are only eight Black head coaches at 169 Division II football-playing universities (NCAA, n.d.-i).

Division II men's basketball consists of 50% of its student-athletes identifying as Black, while 20% of the head coaches are of the same race. HBCUs account for 26 of the

60 Black head basketball coaches in Division II. Women's basketball also consists of 20% of its head coaches identifying as Black, while 34% of its student-athletes identify as the Black, also.

In 2019, there were a total of 313 institutions that participated in the NCAA's Division II, with over 121,500 student-athletes representing these institutions in athletic competition. Using the NCAA's demographic database (NCAA, n.d.-i), we learn that 59% of student-athletes in Division II were White, 19% identified as Black, and a total of 22% of total students identified as either two or more races, Asian, Native American, or other.

The top leadership position in the athletic department is the athletic director. Of the 313 athletic directors in Division II, 82% were White while only 13% identified as Black. Those identifying as Black held 26 of the 28 athletic director positions at Division II HBCUs. While 42% of student-athletes in Division II are female, only 18% of the athletic directors are, as well.

Tsitsos and Nixon (2012) reported that college athletic administrators justify spending on coaching salaries because of the belief that this increase in spending will result in more wins for their programs. However, research has found inconsistencies between the relationship of coaching salaries on team success for Division I football and men's basketball coaches (Brady & Upton, 2007; Wieberg, Upton, Perez, & Berkowitz, 2009). A study by Cunningham and Sagas (2004) did find that coaching experience and diversity amongst the staff were significant predictors of success for Division I football programs. Less is known about metrics predicting athletic and academic success in NCAA Division II universities.

Coaching salaries are also influenced by a coach's ability to attract and retain the best recruits for their programs. A university's head coach, and the assistant coaches, were among two of the top five reasons that a prospect chose to attend a specific college (Andrew et al., 2016). Researchers have found that signing better players had led to success in athletic competition (Langelett, 2003). The amount of athletic scholarship funds provided is an essential factor in a student-athletes decision to attend a university (Schneder & Messenger, 2012).

Financial Capital Resources

There are costs associated with operating a university athletic department (Won, 2004). Finances to support operating costs, recruiting costs, the funding of scholarships and salaries are needed. Financial capital resources are necessary to have better facilities, better coaches and athletes, and money also contributes to a university's reputation (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). For Division II institutions, the majority of their funding is provided from university allocated funding which includes student athletic fees (Fulks, 2015).

Jones (2013) found a relationship between athletic expenditures and on-field success for FBS football programs. Caro and Elder (2017) examined spending on baseball and determined that universities that increase expenses have a better chance at participating in postseason baseball at the Division I level. Orszag and Israel (2009) noted that universities felt compelled to increase spending on athletics when other conference schools increased their investments.

Organizational Capital Resources

Barney (1991) defined organizational capital resources as the culture, relationships, and history of an organization. Earlier research has explored this notion of organizational capital resources within college athletics (Gladden, Milne, & Sutton, 1998; Pulter & Wolfe, 1999; Smart & Wolfe, 2000). In a study on the Penn State football, researchers determined that the history of success and the culture that surrounded the program provided a competitive advantage over their Big Ten peers (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). Pulter and Wolfe (1999) detailed that the support of fans and alumni of a university's athletic department fans and alumni was impacted by their perceptions of the department's winning, academic success, ethical behavior, and operating within budget.

Research Design

The design for this study will be a quantitative correlational analysis to investigate the relationship between athletic department spending and athletic success and academic success of NCAA Division II institutions. This correlational research will be used to determine the relationships between two or more variables. According to Mertler (2018), the word *relationship* means "an individual's status on one variable tends to reflect his or her status on another variable" (p. 119). Predicting future conditions is made possible by understanding the strength between multiple variables. Mertler (2018) also states that correlations sometimes suggest that one variable causes the other to occur. Once correlations are established, regressions will be run to understand the relative influence on the outcome variable.

This design is similar to earlier studies that are being used to guide the current research. Jones (2013) applied a similar design that consisted of a yearly, fixed effects regression analysis measured over 4 years while examining the relationship between

athletic spending and on-the-field success in Division I FBS football programs. Caro and Elder (2017) used a similar approach while studying the relationship between athletic expenditures and winning percentage and participation in NCAA baseball teams.

Population

Participants for this current research will include NCAA Division II schools that participated in football and men's and women's basketball between 2013-2018. There are 314 Division II institutions located in 45 states within the U.S., as well as Canada and Puerto Rico (NCAA, n.d.-f). This study will include all institutions that self-reported as NCAA Division II from 2013-2018. Institutions that moved to a different division during this period and universities that did not sponsor the respective sports included in the current study will be excluded from analysis. According to information from the 2018 EADA Report, nearly 29,000 student-athletes participated in the sports included in this study (USDOE, n.d.-b).

Data Sets Utilized

The data for this study was compiled by the research from five secondary data sources: the Equity in Athletics Data Act (EADA) report, the NCAA, conference and institutional websites, and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). A description of the respective data source, and the reason it is being utilized, is detailed below.

EADA report. Athletic spending was measured using the information reported to the Office of Postsecondary Education within the United States Department of Education as part of the Equity in Athletics Data Act (USDOE, n.d.-a). The EADA was created to monitor the progress of gender equity across the intercollegiate athletics' landscape (Yiamouyiannis & Hawes, 2015). Among the resources available to the public is the

EADA Cutting Tool. This tool consists of annually submitted data from co-educational postsecondary institutions that receive Title IV funding and sponsor intercollegiate athletics programs.

The EADA Cutting Tool provides a breakdown of financial resources such as operating expenses per participant, and per team, for each sport the university offers (USDOE, n.d.-a). These resources include funding to operate the entire athletic department and individual athletic teams, recruit student-athletes, provide scholarships to student-athletes, pay coaches' salaries, and host athletic contests. Additionally, the EADA report contains demographic information on each university that includes total enrollment for the respective school.

NCAA Academic Success Rate. The Academic Success Rate (ASR) is the percentage of student-athletes who graduate within six years of initial enrollment in college and includes virtually all Division II student-athletes, including transfers and those not receiving athletics scholarships (Durham, 2015). The ASR for Division II is similar to the Graduation Success Rate that is recorded for Division I student-athletes, with the exception being the inclusion of freshmen student-athletes that do not receive athletic-related aid (NCAA, n.d.-e). Also, the ASR includes student-athletes who transfer schools after their initial enrollment and discards student-athletes that leave school while academically eligible. The current study utilized the four-year rolling average for APR scores that is reported by the NCAA. This information is received annually from all Division II athletic departments as part of their responsibilities of membership to the NCAA and is available for public access on the NCAA's website.

Athletic conference websites. Data is to be collected from the athletic conference websites for the universities that participate in the sports included in this study. These conference websites provide standings for the years evaluated in the current research. Standings include total wins and losses, as well as wins and losses in conference play.

Institutional athletic websites. The final source for data collection will be athletic websites that are maintained by the respective Division II institutions. These websites were used to verify information collected from the conference websites pertaining to winning percentages for the sports being analyzed in this current study.

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) operates within the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) which is a part of the United States Department of Education. IPEDS annually collects data in seven general categories: institutional characteristics, institutional prices, enrollment, student financial aid, degrees and certificates conferred, student persistence and success, and institutional human and fiscal resources (NCES, 2014). For this study, IPEDS data was used to collect institutional data pertaining to total undergraduate enrollment, institutional selectivity, and whether an institution is public or private.

Constructs and Variables

Dependent variables are defined as "the outcomes or results of the influence of the independent variable" (Creswell, 2014, p. 52). Dependent variables to measure athletic success for this research includes the overall winning percentage, conference winning percentage, conference championships, and participation in postseason events. To measure academic success, the Academic Success Rate (ASR) is recorded for each

NCAA Division II institution in the NCAA's Academic Success Rate database served as a dependent variable.

Athletic success dependent variables. Win-loss records were gathered from each of the 24 athletic conference websites that comprise NCAA Division II. If discrepancies were noted or records were unavailable on the conference website, individual university athletic websites were used to collect win-loss records for the respective teams.

To calculate overall winning percentage, first the total number of games is determined by adding the wins and losses together, then dividing the total number of wins by the total number of games played (Ang, 2018). Overall winning percentage includes all regular season and post-season games, while excluding any exhibition or scrimmage games that were conducted.

In addition to overall winning percentage, conference winning percentages were used in this study. Conference standings, which include the wins and losses of each team versus other members of the league, were collected at the same time as the overall record. The athletic conference website was the primary source, with individual university athletics websites serving as an additional source to resolve questions or discrepancies. The process for calculating conference winning percentage is similar to that of overall winning percentage but only includes regular season games against conference opponents.

While collecting information from the conference websites, this study also collected data which identifies the team (or teams) that finished with the best winning percentage within the conference standings. Teams that won the regular season conference championship were identified versus those that did not. If multiple teams

finished with identical winning percentages in the regular season, they were each identified as conference champions.

The last dependent variable was post-season appearance. Sixty-four teams make the NCAA Division II Postseason Tournament in the sports of men's and women's basketball (Cavadi, 2020). Football championships in NCAA Division II consist of 28 teams (Cavadi, 2019). For the respective years included in the current study, a dichotomous variable was created to identify teams that made an NCAA postseason event versus those that did not, which is similar to what was used by Caro and Elder (2017). This information was collected from the NCAA Division II website.

Academic success dependent variables. The Academic Success Rate (ASR) is the percentage of student-athletes who graduate within six years of initial enrollment in college and includes virtually all Division II student-athletes, including transfers and those not receiving athletics scholarships (Durham, 2015). The ASR is calculated by totaling the number of student-athlete graduates and dividing that by the total number of first-time, full-time freshmen on athletics aid, 2- and 4-year transfers on athletics aid, mid-year enrollees on athletics aid, and all non-scholarship athletes. Students who transfer into an institution for athletics are entered into the cohort that corresponds to the first year they enrolled as a full-time student at a 2- or 4-year college. Students who are academically eligible and transfer from an institution are removed, thus reducing the denominator for their cohort (NCAA, n.d.-e). This information was collected from the NCAA's Academic Success Rate website which includes the ASR database, and the scores reflect four-year rolling averages for each institution.

Independent Variables

Creswell (2014) defines independent variables as those that potentially affect, influence, or cause outcomes. In this research, total team athletic expenses for the football and men's and women's basketball team served as the independent variable. These sports were chosen because they are considered revenue sports and the EADA report requires that universities report on these sports individually while totaling all other sports into the categories of male sports and female sports (USDE, 2015). Athletic expenditures per team relates to college athletics that include game guarantees, athletically related student aid, contractual services, equipment, operating costs, promotions, recruiting, salaries and benefits, supplies, travel, and other related expenses (USDE, 2015). This information was retrieved using the EADA Cutting Tool.

Control Variables

Covariates were used to assist with ensuring that the reported relationship between institutional athletic expenditures and team winning percentage is unbiased. The same covariates will be used to address the relationship between athletic expenditures and ASR. Similar to Caro and Elder (2017) and Jones (2013), the current study will control for institutional selectivity. This information was gathered from the IPEDS report.

In addition to the institutional fixed effects, the current study addressed variables to avoid omitted variable bias. The following variables can change from year to year: the number of participants (as reported on the EADA report) will impact the amount a university spends on equipment, travel, meals, and other operating costs; and, the number of total students at an institution (as reported on the IPEDS report) could impact the amount of university funding provided to the school's athletic department.

Lastly, each team was coded for conference affiliation during the respective seasons included in the current study to determine if spending influences winning within the conference. This will allow our research to evaluate spending across all NCAA Division II institutions as well as within athletic conferences across the United States.

Statistical Methods

Raw data retrieved from the NCAA, the EADA cutting tool, and Division II conference and institutional websites was accessed and imported into SPSS. Only data from universities that were members of NCAA Division II for the entire duration of the years included in the research were utilized (2013-2018). Data was then scrubbed, and institutions that were missing data for the variables used in this research were removed from the data set. From the data, the research used SPSS to create descriptive statistics of the athletic expenditures, operational expenses per team and per individual, undergraduate enrollment, and ASR.

Correlations and bi-variate regressions were run on the following variables: total athletic expenditures, total expenditures per participant in football and men's and women's basketball, and total expenditures for football and men's and women's basketball. Correlations show the strengths between variables.

This research used regression analyses and several control variables to study the relationship of athletic expenditures on athletic and academic success at NCAA Division II institutions. In addition, regression analyses were used to examine the relationship of athletic expenditures to attaining conference championships and NCAA postseason appearances.

Significance of the Study

This current study aims to build on previous research that has studied the relationship between athletic expenditures, athletic success, and academic success of NCAA Division II institutions. While previous research has been conducted at the NCAA Division I and Division III levels (Beaudin, 2017; Jones, 2013; Tobin, 2005, Won & Chelladurai, 2016), there seems to be a shortage of such questions being asked of NCAA Division II institutions.

A slightly positive relationship between expenditures and a team's overall winning percentage was identified in Division I football (Orszag & Israel, 2009). Jones (2013) found a positive, statistically significant relationship between athletic expenditures and winning among FBS teams. A similar measure of athletic success was used by Caro and Elder (2017) in a study of college baseball teams that participate in Division I. Using the Jones (2013) and Caro and Elder (2017) studies as guides, our study will explore athletic spending on the winning percentage (regular season and conference), conference championships, and postseason appearances of Division II football, and men's and women's basketball programs.

Previous research has determined benefits of winning athletic programs which include increased applications to public institutions (Perez, 2012; Smith, 2008), increased donations (Stinson & Howard, 2007), and greater advertising effects (Chung, 2013). If benefits of athletics do indeed exist, it will be important for Division II institutions to know how much money is necessary to invest for universities to realistically expect to compete for higher winning percentages, conference championships, and postseason appearances.

Academically, the NCAA has spent the better part of two decades researching student-athlete graduation rates, with graduation being the central goal of the college experience (NCAA, n.d.-e). In the early 2000s, presidents and chancellors of NCAA members asked the NCAA to create a more modern-day approach to calculate graduation rates that accounted for transfer students. The NCAA created the Academic Success Rate (ASR) for Division II schools which measures the academic success of all student-athletes that participate in athletics at this level, regardless of whether or not they receive athletically-related financial aid (NCAA, n.d.-e).

Athletic departments within Division II face financial challenges that prevent them from constructing academic facilities, hiring academic staff to work directly with their student-athletes, and providing additional academic support programming (Nite, 2012). Our study aims to show whether there is a relationship between athletic expenditures and the academic success of football, and men's and women's basketball athletes. This knowledge will help guide decisions related to the necessary investment to expect a university's athletes to succeed in the classroom. Findings may result in universities choosing to increase spending to provide academic positions within the athletics department to help student-athletes with their academic endeavors.

While the pressure to win is similar to Division I coaches at Division II schools have a greater role in the academic success of their students because the department is unable to staff individuals who specialize in academic support (Nite, 2012). This lack of funding requires coaches and others within the athletics department to work together to provide adequate academic support (Huml et al., 2015).

If it is determined that athletic spending influences winning and graduation, this study will assist university athletic directors in their quest to garner more financial support for their athletic programs, especially football and men's and women's basketball. The research will provide administrators with a guide to know if spending is at a level that the university can realistically expect to compete for athletic championships. In addition, it can guide universities as they seek to graduate a higher percentage of student-athletes. The findings from this study could prove to be beneficial as university administrators determine how to invest university funds to best build the institutional brand. Additional benefits could include assistance with attracting more students to the university, as well as assisting with the university's fundraising efforts. It could provide significance to convince individuals and corporations to contribute to the athletic department so that the university's athletic programs can be more successful in competition and the classroom.

However, if it is determined that athletic spending has no relationship on athletic and academic success of Division II institutions, future research can be conducted to determine what other factors may contribute to winning in competition and in the classroom.

Summary

This study sought to evaluate the relationship between athletic expenditures and athletic and academic success of Division II institutions. Having learned that NCAA Division II institutions fund their athletic departments from the general fund and student athletic fees, we explored whether universities should expect to outspend their peers if they want to win and graduate their student-athletes, Financial challenges currently being

experienced at colleges across the country are forcing university administrators to take a closer look at where they are spending their money and what results from these investments. With minimal research on Division II, administrators are limited in their knowledge of the relationship of athletic spending on the athletic and academic success of their athletic teams and student-athletes. This study will provide administrators with a clearer picture of the expected outcomes based on the funding they are providing for the sports of football and men's and women's basketball.

SECTION TWO: PRACTITIONER SETTING FOR THE STUDY

I am currently serving at the Director of Athletics and Head Men's Basketball Coach at Lincoln University, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Jefferson City, MO. This is my sixth year as the Athletics Director and seventh year as the head coach. Prior to my time at Lincoln, I had served 11 years in various capacities in the sport of men's basketball at the following National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) Division I institutions: North Carolina Central University, East Carolina University, Winston-Salem State University, Wright State University, and the University of Delaware.

Lincoln University is a member of the NCAA's Division II, and participates in the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA). As the Director of Athletics, I am responsible for overseeing 11 athletic programs that include football, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's track (indoor and outdoor), men's and women's golf, women's cross country, and women's softball. This oversight includes assuring that our athletic teams are abiding by rules that are established by the NCAA, the MIAA, and the university.

Additionally, I have fiscal oversight of the athletics department which includes advocating for funding within the university structure, selling sponsorships to vendors, and fundraising on a more personal level with alumni and other donors. I am responsible for overseeing an annual departmental budget of nearly $4 million, of which nearly $3.5 million is provided from the university's general operating budget that is comprised of both state appropriations and tuition and fees from the students. In addition, the athletic department received approximately $500,000 annually from a Student Athletic Fee that

was instituted in January of 2017. Currently, each student at the university's main campus location pays an athletic fee of $10 per credit hour that supports athletic facilities, scholarships, and the student experience.

During the 6 years that I have served in the role of Athletics Director, the university has experienced increases in either tuition, fees, and room and board each year with some years resulting in increases in multiple categories. Yet, athletic budgets have remained consistent in both athletic scholarships and operating costs. There have been no annual cost-of-living adjustments to address increased expenses in transportation, hotels, and meals when our teams travel. Also, during this time the MIAA has increased fees for game officials. Funding has consistently been an issue that we have worked to address.

Two ways that we try to support the university's budget is through sponsorships and fundraising. The Lincoln athletic department currently has sponsorships from local vendors that total nearly $50,000 in cash and in-kind trade annually. From a fundraising perspective, we established the Blue Tiger Athletics Club (BTAC) in August of 2015. The BTAC is our athletics booster club that has now surpassed 400 members and contributes over $80,0000 annually towards our athletic department and individual sports programs.

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between athletic spending on the athletic success (winning) and academic success (the NCAA's Academic Success Rate) at NCAA Division II institutions. My view of the role of the Director of Athletics is to serve as a liaison between the university's administration and the athletic department, as well as to advocate on behalf of our coaches and student-athletes to provide the necessary tools for our athletic programs to compete academically and

athletically on both the conference and national level. It is my belief that athletics provides learning opportunities outside of the classroom setting, and that many of these skills prove beneficial throughout an athlete's lifetime. College athletics are a competitive endeavor, with coaches and athletes investing large amounts of time and athletics directors are obligated to help develop a successful program that builds comradery between the university, its alumni, and the local community. As university budgets continue to get tighter because of reductions in state funding, this study can be used to inform university decision-makers as they determine the level of funding necessary if the university expects to compete for conference championships.

While reviewing the dismal history across athletics at Lincoln University, one is compelled to ask why there has been such a lack of winning in many of the programs. While the women's track program is consistently a contender for NCAA National Championships and the men's track program as garnered national attention, as well, the remaining sports have not experienced much success. In fact, most of those sports have finished at (or very near) the bottom of their conference standings for much of the athletic program's history.

This study focuses on football and men's and women's basketball, as these programs are traditionally listed as revenue generating sports. At Lincoln, these are the only three sports that charge an admission fee to attend the games. Softball is the only other sport that Lincoln sponsors that consistently hosts home contests during their regular seasons. Over the past six seasons, the men's golf team has hosted only one regular season event. Men's and women's track have only hosted the MIAA outdoor post-season event in the spring of 2014, an event that is assigned on a rotating basis from

the conference office. Women's golf and women's bowling do not host athletic events, instead they play all their matches at road venues.

In addition, this study reveals if the funding used to support these three sports contributed to the Academic Success Rate (ASR) of its student-athletes. While athletic teams compete versus one another in their respective sports, universities share the common goal of graduating their student-athletes. Does a university's investment in their athletic program give their athletes a better chance at achieving success in the classroom?

Athletics serves as extracurricular activities for the student-athletes who participate and it is my belief that our programs should strive to achieve excellence in three areas: graduate student-athletes, compete for athletic championships, and be active members of our community. Led by these three pillars, I have become interested in pursuing this study in the interest of improving athletics at Lincoln University.

This section navigates the intersection of race, sport, and my life. Additionally, the main setting for this study, NCAA's Division II, is discussed, including an examination of race in Division II athletics. Within Division II, the researcher explored the history of the MIAA, as well as the athletic history of Lincoln University with an emphasis on women's basketball, men's basketball, and football. Next, the researcher evaluated the organizational analysis of the Lincoln University Department of Athletics through the political and human resource frames. Also included is a leadership analysis guided by self-awareness, a strong moral compass, transparent relationships, and balanced processing. Lastly, the researcher shared implications for research in the practitioner setting.

An Intersection of Race, Sport, and My Life

Race and sports have long been a conversation across the United States. As a former athlete, one of the things I have always appreciated about sports was the feeling of togetherness that existed in a locker room. We never cared about the race or socioeconomic status of our teammates. We simply wanted to win. I grew up in a majority minority community. I was one of a few White guys that played basketball for my high school during my two years as varsity athlete where I was coached by a Black head coach. As a teenager, I was naïve to many of the things that were taking place in the world because they were not taking place in my circle. Basketball has always been a passion of mine and it had been dominated by Black players since my earliest memories of watching the game.

Though I had aspirations of extending my playing career into college, limited athleticism (and renovations to my university's gymnasium which prevented me from trying out) caused me to spend more time focusing on what I wanted to do after my playing career had ended. From the time I was in the eighth grade, I had known that I wanted to pursue a career in coaching. When I reached college and discovered that playing competitively would no longer be an option, it was easy to transition towards a career on the sidelines as a coach. I was fortunate to serve as a student manager during my college days. This allowed me a glimpse into the lives of the players while seeing the game through the eyes of our coaches. I was privy to sit in on coaching meetings where strategy was discussed. I learned the art of recruiting student-athletes. I got to see how the entire program was run: academically, fundraising, administratively, recruiting, budgeting, etc.

At the age of 23, I was named an assistant basketball coach at the University of Delaware where I was one of the youngest Division I coaches in the country. My coaching career led me to five institutions where I worked on the staffs of three Black head coaches and two White head coaches. My career has spanned 16 years, 11 of which were spent at HBCUs. I have been the head basketball coach at Lincoln University, an NCAA Division II HBCU, for the past seven years, while also simultaneously serving as the university's athletic director the past six years. The necessity of HBCUs reflect the United States racist past because Black students were not allowed to be educated at White institutions. I am aware of the influence that I have as a White male in social circles that lack an understanding of issues of racism.

I have always considered myself conscious of race relations and the necessity to surround yourself with a diverse staff that could bring differing perspectives to the organization. When I became a head coach, I was intentional about hiring a Black assistant coach. It had been my experience that many staffs at Division I would have at least one Black assistant whose responsibility was primarily to recruit and help manage the players. This had bothered me throughout my career as an assistant and I pledged to hire a staff that was capable of managing all of the responsibilities involved in coaching. My goal as a coach was to develop assistant coaches for a career beyond our program, either as an assistant at a larger university or as a head coach. As part of the agreement to serve in a dual capacity as the athletic director, I negotiated for the addition of an entry level coaching position for our basketball program that would offset my absence due to these additional administrative responsibilities. I have been intentional in hiring young

minority coaches in this role to contribute to the need for minority coaches in leadership positions in college athletics.

The intersection of race and sports has often been intertwined. Growing up in the generation that witnessed Michael Jordan's career as the NBA's best player during his time with the Chicago Bulls, it was rare for athletes to get involved with political matters. Once Jordan was asked why he would not provide his opinion of a highly contested senate race in his home state of North Carolina, to which Jordan replied, "Republicans buy sneakers, too." (Jordan, 1990, as cited by Bontemps, 2020, para. 1). This was a sharp contrast from the actions of Muhammad Ali, the famous boxer who openly avoided the draft and often spoke out about the mistreatment of Black people in America (Bryant, 2018).

I became a head coach in April 2014, just four months before the death of Michael Brown at the hands of a police officer in Ferguson, MO, an event that once again triggered an outcry of police brutality in Black and Brown communities (McLauglin, 2014). As protests grew in size, so did the fears of parents of prospective recruits outside the state of Missouri whose sons were being recruited to Lincoln University. Some expressed concerns for their son's safety and decided they were uncomfortable allowing their child to attend school in a state with such unrest. I remember standing in front a team of young Black males, apologizing for the actions of those charged to protect us. I explained that as a White man, I would never understand the feelings they had because our lives were so different. As a team, we gave our athletes a chance to express the emotions that this event, and others like it, had created inside of them.

This was followed by the racial uprising at the University of Missouri, just 30 minutes north of Lincoln's campus. Student-athletes supported their fellow student's hunger strike to bring attention to racial injustice on the Columbia campus, with football players refusing to play in an upcoming game unless demands were met (McKnight, 2020). I had long known of the power that student-athletes possessed at these large Division I schools where rabid fan bases cheered the athletic abilities of so many young Black athletes. The events at Mizzou exposed this power to athletes across the country.

Fast forward to the fall of 2017, when San Francisco quarterback Colin Kaepernick began kneeling during the National Anthem to draw attention to the plight of Black Americans across the United States. Kaepernick spoke with Nate Boyer, another former NFL player and Green Beret, who recommended that kneeling would be a respectful way to project Kaepernick's message (Bryant, 2018). After television crews put Kaepernick in the spotlight quietly kneeling during the National Anthem, disgruntled fans and commentators alike started attacking the quarterback's actions as unpatriotic. Since the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, America's sporting events became more patriotic with military branches using pregame activities (the anthem, flyovers of military aircraft, etc.) as recruiting grounds because demographics of the fanbase fit the profile of the American soldier (Bryant, 2018). Kaepernick was supported vocally by NBA superstars Carmelo Anthony, Chris Paul, and LeBron James. While O.J. Simpson, Michael Jordan, and Tiger Woods stayed on the sidelines, this generation of professional athletes were taking a more active role in exposing the plight of Black Americans (Bryant, 2018).

Fast forward to the spring to 2020 when frustration hit an all-time high when a Minneapolis police officer kneeled on the neck of George Floyd for 8 minutes and 46 seconds before Floyd passed due to asphyxiation (Altman, 2020). This event was recorded and displayed on social media accounts across the world. The days and weeks that followed were met with demonstrations and protests led by the Black Lives Matter movements. NBA athletes refused to play their games, with teams walking off the court moments before their scheduled tip-off (Mannix, 2020). Athletes used their social media platforms to express their frustrations with LeBron James leading the way. Just two years earlier, Laura Ingraham, a Fox News analyst, had told James to, "Shut up and dribble" after the NBA star addressed concerns about issues pertaining to race after the gate of his Los Angeles home had been spray-painted with racial epitaphs (Bunn, 2020). James, arguably one of the games' greatest players, is cementing himself a legacy off the court with his investment in education in his hometown of Akron, OH, as well as his passion for increasing voter turnout during the 2020 presidential election cycle (Peter & Zillgitt, 2020). Rhoden (2006) opined that a collective band of Black athletes could influence contemporary culture across the globe, and we are seeing that vision come to fruition right before our eyes in 2020.

While I am currently employed at an HBCU, I feel a deep sense of obligation to develop young minority leaders in athletics regardless of where I work. I find it important for young minority athletes to see administrators, coaches, and athletic trainers that look like them. This sentiment was shared by Rhoden (2006) when he noted that Black players had a significant presence in team sports but lacked a presence in the industry's leadership positions. I want our athletes to be able to find someone they feel comfortable

connecting with to share their feelings. When addressing my team, I often tell them that if my single goal is to win championships, I will fail them as people. My job is to help them grow socially, academically, and spiritually, as we work to prepare them to be better husbands, fathers, and difference-makers in the community they choose to live. I get to coach them for only a brief time, but I pray my lessons last a lifetime.

The Setting for this Study: NCAA Division II

College athletics originated as a student-led activity on individual university campuses (Hums & MacLean, 2004). This grew when Harvard and Yale's rowing teams decided to meet for the first recorded intercollegiate competition in 1852 (Weight & Zullo, 2015). For the next twenty years, the movement grew to include additional sports competitions in baseball and football, among others (Hums & MacLean, 2004). President Theodore Roosevelt urged the leaders of many of the finest academic institutions to discuss safety issues pertaining to football contests. Initially 62 institutions came together to form what was initially known as the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS) in the spring of 1906 (Weight & Zullo, 2015). In 1910, the IAAUS would formally transition to its current organization, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) (Hums & MacLean, 2004).

The NCAA initially housed all schools under a single umbrella until 1973 when member institutions split into three distinctly different divisions known as Division I, II, and III. Each have characteristics that distinguish between them, beginning with the minimum number of sports that institutions are required to sponsor: Division I: 14, Division II: 10, and Division III: 5 (NCAA, n.d.-c). Those who produced the greatest amount of revenue were steered into Division I, which allowed its athletes to receive full

athletic scholarships that covered tuition, room and board (Yost, 2010). Another significant difference between the three divisions is the athletic scholarship structure. The Division I model is designed to provide full athletic scholarships; Division II provides partial athletic scholarships and Division III provides no athletic scholarships (Feezell, 2009). The partial-scholarship model in Division II is often referred to as an equivalency system, with each sport allowed a maximum number of scholarships that can be divided among the participants. While Division II football programs are allowed the equivalency of 36 full scholarships, awards are often shared across a roster of over 100 student-athletes. Specifically, the Division II model is designed for universities to offer partial athletic scholarships that allow student-athletes to combine athletic aid, academic aid, federal financial aid, and grants, along with personal money (Feezell, 2009; Fulks, 2010).

In a 2014 report on Division II athletics, the NCAA stated that university allocated funds were used to provide 80% of the total revenues for football-playing schools. Non-football playing schools received nearly 85% of their income from university allocated funds (Fulks, 2015). Schools also receive revenue from associated student fees that support activities not covered by the university's tuition (Gregory, 2013). This is significant when considering the athletic operating budget of football playing universities was $2.7 million in 2003 and had increased to over $5.3 million in 2011-12 (Orszag & Orszag, 2005). This increase in spending accounted for 7% of the institution's total spending, up from 5% in 2004.

It is more difficult for Division II schools to operate self-sufficiently as compared to their Division I peers who benefit from greater ticket revenue, donations from larger alumni bases, and a more significant share of post-season basketball distributions, as well

as television revenue (Fulks, 2013). The majority of funding for Division II athletics comes from institutional subsidies, with ticket sales, sports camps and cash contributions accounting for less than 9% of total revenues (Burnsed, 2015). While Division I institutions benefit significantly from the revenue generated by the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, only $42.1 million of the $821 million received by the NCAA goes to support Division II institutions (NCAA, n.d.-g). Limited resources, as compared to their Division I peers, has forced Division II schools into tough decisions regarding their ability and desire to invest in college athletics (Dwyer et al., 2010).

At universities with smaller athletic budgets, the relationship between the coach and their student-athletes is more significant, according to Nite (2012), who found that many Division II institutions employed one or fewer people to oversee academics within the department. Two primary impediments to student-athletes' academic success were limited resources and the pressure they face to win. While some Division I institutions have a similar number of student-athletes as their Division II peers, Division I schools are employing multiple people to perform duties assigned to one employee at a Division II school. Cunningham and Ashley (2001) found similarities in the general operating budget regardless of the division in which the athletic department competed. They noted characteristics that are specific to NCAA Division II, which make it more challenging to supply academic support similar to those in Division I. Funding inequities required many members of Division II athletic departments to perform duties outside of the expected scope of their position.

The lack of resources in NCAA Division II requires a single employee to perform multiple responsibilities compared to their peers in Division I. Nite (2012) explored the

challenges which influence the academic development of student-athletes at Division II institutions noting that schools often lacked the necessary resources to construct facilities dedicated to academics, as well as to provide additional academic programming for student-athletes. While the pressure to win is similar to that of Division I, a lack of financial resources creates a significant challenge to the academic success of student-athletes participating in Division II. Coaches at Division II often have a larger role in the academic success of their student-athletes because of the limited staffing caused by financial constraints. Division II coaches have a greater responsibility to ensure that their student-athletes remain academically eligible and continue to matriculate towards graduation (Nite, 2012). While athletic success was not a major factor in the evaluation of coaches for Gorney and Ness (2000), winning has become more important for determining the success of a coach (Nite, 2012). Division II universities are more likely to invest in resources to increase athletic performance before they would spend on tools to improve the academic success of their athletes.

Fulks (2010) noted the importance of the student-athlete experience as one stark difference in Division II institutions compared to their Division I peers. Presidents and chancellors of Division II institutions coined the phrase “Life in the Balance” to highlight memberships’ focus on providing student-athletes with highly competitive athletics while supporting the academic mission of the institution (NCAA, n.d.-d). This balance allows Division II students more time to focus on their academic and social activities while continuing to participate in their chosen sport. This initiative mandates a later reporting date for student-athletes participating in fall sports, a weeklong break over the winter

holiday where no team-related activities can be conducted, and a reduction in the number of athletic contests in all sports with the exception of football.

Feezell (2009) discovered that faculty at Division II institutions do not view athletics as a financial endeavor but as a student-driven activity similar to other campus student activities. Some Division II faculty view athletics as a positive influencer of enrollment, one that can help keep the institution in good financial standing. Those faculty with a negative view believes there is financial strain caused by investing in athletics (Feezell, 2013). As funding for athletic departments becomes more and more scarce, many universities are being forced to consider reclassification to align their resources better (Hosick, 2009). Though expenses for the Division II athletic scholarship model are often less than their peers in Division I, the overhead and operating costs can be very similar (Dwyer et al., 2010).

The NCAA headquarters were located in Kansas City, MO, from 1952-1997 before moving to their present location in Indianapolis, IN. The association is led by President Mark Emmert and employs over 500 staffers at the NCAA headquarters (NCAA, n.d.-h). Terri Steeb Gronau is the Vice President of Division II, with her primary role being to serve as the chief liaison to the Division II governance body and membership. There are currently over 300 NCAA Division II schools in 45 states, including Hawaii and Alaska, as well as Washington, DC (NCAA, n.d.-f). Members can also be found in Canada (Simon Fraser University), and also three universities in Puerto Rico. Teams in Division II participate in one of 24 conferences across the US or compete as a Division II independent. Lincoln University competes in the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

Race in Division II Athletics

The sports that were chosen for the current study were football, men's basketball, and women's basketball. Two of the sports, football and men's basketball, have been at the center of exploitation of Black male athletes, whose participation has contributed to the financial gain of many American college institutions (Singer, 2019). In 2019, Black student-athletes makeup 46% of the participants in Division II football but only 17% of the head football coaches are Black. More staggering is the fact that when you remove the head coaches from HBCUs, there are only eight Black head coaches at 169 Division II football-playing universities (NCAA, n.d.-i).

Division II men's basketball consists of 50% of its student-athletes identifying as Black, while 20% of the head coaches are of the same race. HBCUs account for 26 of the 60 Black head basketball coaches in Division II. Women's basketball also consists of 20% of its head coaches identifying as Black, while 34% of its student-athletes identify as Black.

In 2019, there were a total of 313 institutions that participated in the NCAA's Division II, with over 121,500 student-athletes representing these institutions in athletic competition. Using the NCAA's demographic database (NCAA, n.d.-i), we learn that 59% of student-athletes in Division II were White, 19% identified as Black, and a total of 22% of total students identified as either two or more races, Asian, Native American, or other.

The top leadership position in the athletic department is the athletic director. Of the 313 athletic directors in Division II, 82% were White while only 13% identified as Black. Those identifying as Black held 26 of the 28 athletic director positions at Division

II HBCUs. While 42% of student-athletes in Division II are female, only 18% of the athletic directors are, as well.

Because of the events mentioned in the earlier section, the NCAA has placed a greater emphasis on social justice. These actions have been led by the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, the Association's student-led group that has memberships on every campus and a national representative from each NCAA conference.

Though Division I institutions have built multi-million dollar athletic enterprises on the backs of many Black football and men's basketball athletes, Division II has not realized the same financial gains. With the partial scholarship model that exists in Division II, along with the Division's "Life in the Balance" focus, I see Division II athletics as a vehicle for many young athletes to continue their competitive playing careers while gaining their education. Though some Division II athletes turn professional in their chosen sport, these opportunities are few and far between.

A History of the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Association

The MIAA was originally established in 1912 when 14 universities joined together to form the Missouri Intercollegiate Athletic Association. It was during 1924 that the conference began sponsoring football, basketball, and outdoor track and field. Tennis and indoor track were later added over the next 30 years. A new era in the history of the MIAA began in 1957 when the league officially joined the NCAA. In 1981, the league named its first fulltime commissioner and soon after added championships for women's athletics in basketball, cross country, softball, tennis, track and field, and volleyball. It was in 1989 when the conference added its first members outside of the state of Missouri when Washburn and Pittsburg State joined the MIAA. Though talk of

changing the name of the league began in 1989, it would not officially occur until the conference added Emporia State in 1992. At this point, the MIAA transitioned to its current name, the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA, n.d.).

Currently, the MIAA spans four states (Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma) and has 12 full members: the University of Central Missouri, Washburn University, Emporia State University, Pittsburg State University, Northwest Missouri State University, Missouri Western State University, Missouri Southern State University, Fort Hays State University, the University of Nebraska-Kearney, the University of Central Oklahoma, Northeastern State University, and Lincoln University. After the departure of two schools in 2019, the MIAA added Rogers State University and Newman University as associate members. The conference office is headquartered in Kansas City, MO, and employs four fulltime employees included the conference's commissioner, Mike Racy.

History of Athletics at Lincoln University

At Lincoln University, the sport of football dates back to its inaugural season of 1920 when the Tigers finished 3-0 for the season (Lincoln Athletics, 2019). The university experienced a significant increase in focus on athletics during the 1950s with an increased emphasis on scholarships (Parks, 2007). According to Parks (2007), this desire to grow athletics was consistent with what was taking place at many institutions across the United States. After Lincoln University was integrated, White students were initially reluctant to join the athletic teams. Lewis Vetter is recognized as one of the first White students to join the football team at Lincoln (Marshall, 1966). Integrated teams were rarely a problem in basketball and track, but during the 1950s, Grambling in

Louisiana, along with Jackson and Alcorn in Mississippi, did not allow athletic contests against racially diverse teams (Holland, 1991).

For nearly two decades, Lincoln earned a reputation as an athletic powerhouse. During a period between 1951-1953, Lincoln's football program won 21 consecutive games, with two games ending as ties (Parks, 2007). As the 1950s drew to a close, Lincoln's athletic programs were hitting their strides. Football, track, and basketball all concluded with winning records during each of the last five years of the decade (Holland, 1991).

In 1964, Lincoln completed construction of Jason Gymnasium which was to be used as a student center, as well as a home court for the Lincoln basketball team. Soon after, in 1967, the university purchased an additional 10 acres that would eventually be used to construct athletic fields, including the current Dwight T. Reed Stadium which serves as the home of Lincoln football (Holland, 1991).

Twice during the 1960s, the Lincoln football teams reached the 8-win plateau. During the 1960-61 season, Lincoln basketball experienced tremendous success which included a trip to the NAIA Tournament where it finished as runner-up (Holland, 1991). Lincoln basketball would conclude the final two seasons of the decade (1967-68 and 1968-69) by winning 20 games each year.

During the 1970s, the university used previously purchased land to construct a 5,600-seat football stadium that included a track. The university invested over $900,000 to develop a facility that was at the time considered to be one of the best in the region (Holland, 1991). It was also during this era that Lincoln athletics began participating as a member of the MIAA. Lincoln tied for their only conference championship in the football

team's history during the 1972 season, when the Blue Tigers finished with a 9-1 record (Lincoln Athletics, 2019). The 1972 season is the last time the Lincoln football team finished a season with more wins than losses.

Recent Athletic History. The athletic department's shining star for the past 17 years has been its women's track & field program which has amassed 14 NCAA National Championships during that time period. This total includes a combination of indoor and outdoor titles. Our women's track program has earned its reputation of producing some of the top sprinters in the NCAA in Division II, while many of them have placed when competing against schools from Division I.

After being named AD in July 2015, I began a review of the athletic programs from our department. The initial review of scholarship budgets revealed that only three of our sports were being funded at or above the MIAA average. This included men's and women's golf (whose average is less than the equivalency of 2.75 scholarships), and women's track.

In 2015, the university also sponsored the sports of baseball and women's tennis. It was in the spring of 2016 that the university's administration made the decision to eliminate those two sports. The operational money that supported those programs was repurposed to add multiple positions in the department including: the Assistant AD of Creative Content; an additional full-time athletic trainer; an Academic Development Coordinator; and, a Game Operations Assistant. Scholarship dollars that had been used for baseball and women's tennis (totaling an equivalency of 5.15 scholarships) were split between football, men's basketball, women's track, women's basketball, and softball.

During the spring of 2016, university and athletic administrators collaborated with leaders of the university's Student Government Association (SGA) to discuss the potential addition of a student athletic fee that would be used to support facility renovations and construction across athletics, scholarships, and an effort that was coined, "The student experience." The student experience would allow for the SGA to choose two away-from-home contests for students to attend that the athletic department would cover the cost of travel and admission.

Conversations continued into the fall of 2016. After a series of dialogue with the SGA leaders, the SGA sponsored an open forum that included a presentation of the proposed $10 per credit hour fee addition. During this discussion, students were provided the chance to provide support or opposition to the proposed fee. Support for the proposed fee was given by the members of the SGA, which then prompted a vote of the student body. Students voted to support the added student athletic fee, which the university began collecting in the spring of 2017. These funds are housed in a separate account from the department's general operating budget.

With the additional funds, the university began renovations of Dwight T. Reed Stadium, the home of our football and track programs. These renovations included: new artificial turf, LED stadium lighting, a video scoreboard, and a resurfaced track and jump pits. Concurrently, new locker rooms and office space was added for football and track in the lower level of the university's new wellness center. The softball field was relocated at the spot previously used by the baseball team. Renovations to that space were necessary to modify the dimensions to those required by softball.

Facility improvements, coupled with a resurgence in success for men's basketball, contributed in an increase in community support through sponsorships and membership in the Blue Tiger Athletics Club. More members of our local community started wearing Lincoln paraphernalia. We were seeing evidence of what many before us have asserted: the athletic department was serving as the "front porch" of the university.

The information below that refers to the recent history of Lincoln's women's basketball, men's basketball, and football program is a result of conversations with two of our former ADs, who happen to be currently serving as Assistant ADs in our athletic department. Additionally, the Assistant AD for Sports Information annually produces media guides for each of our athletic programs. These guides contain historical information of the respective programs. That knowledge, combined with access to prior budgets, has contributed to this perspective on Lincoln athletics.

Women's basketball. Women's basketball at Lincoln University began during the 1981-82 school year (Lincoln Athletics, 2018). Since this time, the program has a total of eight winning seasons. Four of those eight took place during the first eight years of the program's existence. This means that in the past 31 years, the team has only had one season where they have finished the year with more wins than losses for the entire season. Additionally, only once in the history of the program has the women's basketball team had a winning season in conference play.

Athletic scholarship support at Lincoln has consistently been at the bottom of the MIAA during my tenure as AD. During the 2018-19 season, Lincoln's support for women's basketball was 1.75 scholarships less than the conference average. The NCAA scholarship allowance for women's basketball is 10, while Lincoln contributed 6.67

during the 2018-19 school year. Additionally, Lincoln pays its head coach for women's basketball just over $18,000 less than the average women's basketball coach in the MIAA. Pay for the women's basketball assistant coach is $10,000 less than the average assistant in the conference.

Men's basketball. Lincoln's men's basketball program experienced great success in the late 1970s before its descent to mediocrity (or less). Over the past 25 years, the men's basketball program had six different head coaches. The program achieved success in the 2000-01 and 2001-02 seasons, but that success was overshadowed by NCAA violations that resulted in the program forfeiting the entire 2002-03 season. The period from 2003-2014 culminated with an overall record of 54 wins and 235 losses, with the team never winning more than 8 games in a single season (with a minimum of 26 contests).

Since the 2014-15 season, the program has experienced four straight winning seasons for the first time in over 40 years. This streak began with the 2015-16 season, the program's first winning season since 2002. At the conclusion of the 2019-20 season, the program had earned five consecutive trips to the MIAA's postseason tournament and has won at least one game in four of those five opportunities.

Among our greatest turnarounds has been within the academic success of our men's basketball players. For example, during the fall semester of 2019, nine of the 13 men's basketball players earned a 3.0 GPA or higher. The team's overall GPA has consistently surpassed the 3.0 mark over the last four school years. The program's academic success was highlighted in 2018-19, when a men's basketball student-athlete

was named First Team Google Academic All-American for the first time in the University's history.

This six-year stretch has occurred even though the program has consistently been at the bottom of the MIAA's scholarship equivalencies. The university sponsored just over 6 scholarships during the 2014-15 school year, nearly three scholarships below the conference average. With the redistribution of funds after the 2016 sport reduction by the University, additional scholarship dollars pushed men's basketball equivalency to just over 7 scholarships. With the collection of the Student Athletic Fees that began during the spring of 2017, men's basketball scholarships have now increased to 8.33 during the 2018-19 school year. Though scholarships have increased, Lincoln's total still remains less than the average MIAA school's support for men's basketball.

It is difficult to assess Lincoln's pay for its head basketball coach because of the duality of roles being held. Lincoln's assistant basketball coach is now paid close to the conference average, falling only $700 less than other MIAA schools' average salary.

Football. Lincoln University ended its football program at the conclusion of the 1989 season. During the 10 seasons prior, the program's overall record was 13-93-1. Even with this dismal record, this decision was met with great opposition from LU's alumni, who lost the opportunity for the football game to be a focal point of their return to campus during its annual Homecoming activities. This decision was reached while Dr. Wendell Rayburn served as the University's President. After Rayburn's departure in 1996, Dr. David Henson became President of Lincoln University in 1997.

Dr. Henson was a fan of the University's band, the Marching Musical Storm. Early in his tenure as President, he opened discussions of bringing football back to

Lincoln because of his desire to have the band perform at its games. The AD at the time objected to the return of football because of the cost associated with football, and the department's already strained operating and scholarship budgets. As a result of this objection, the AD lost his job at the university and the decision to restart the football program was announced in 1999. Judging from the seat that I currently occupy, this decision was made without a plan to adequately fund the football program at a level that they could realistically expect to repeat. The other programs that the university sponsored were required to give up a portion of their budgets, which were already lower than their peers, to support the football program.

Since the program's return in the fall of 2000, the program has compiled an overall record of 35-172, and an even more dismal conference record of 9-88. Over this now 20-year period, the program has never won more than two conference games in a single season. During this span, there have been eight different head coaches for the football program.

The football team returned to the MIAA in 2011. The MIAA is notoriously considered the best (or certainly one of the best) football conferences in all of NCAA Division II. Over this same 20-year period, MIAA schools have appeared in 10 National Championship games in football and have won five National Championships over that time.

The NCAA allows for 36 scholarships in the sport of football. Many of the schools in the MIAA sponsor the sport at the maximum allowed amount, with the conference average being 33 scholarships per school. However, Lincoln has sponsored between 18.74-21.56 scholarships since the 2014-15 school year. The university's

general operating budget contributed 16.67 of the 21.7 scholarships that the university awarded for football during the 2018-19 school year. The other scholarships were supported by the Student Athletic Fee.

Lincoln's Head Football Coach's salary is over $32,000 less than the average head coach in the MIAA. The salary pool that is allocated for assistant coaches is more than $135,000 less than the average MIAA football staff.

Organizational Analysis

The Lincoln University Department of Athletics consists of many dedicated professionals and student-athletes. The department is led by the Director of Athletics, the position that I currently hold in addition to coaching responsibilities for men's basketball. The AD is responsible for the oversight of the entire athletic department, which includes ensuring adherence to all university, conference, and NCAA policies and procedures. The current university budget for athletics is approximately $3.5 million, which includes funding for personnel, benefits, athletic scholarships, travel, equipment and supplies, utilities, game operations and contractual services. Fundraising is also a key role for the AD, which led to the creation of the Blue Tiger Athletics Club, a booster club for athletics. This group has grown from 157 members during its inaugural season in 2015-16, to over 400 members during the 2019-20 school year.

The Athletic Director (AD) reports directly to the University's President and serves on the President's Cabinet. In this role, the AD prepares written reports that are submitted to the President for presentation to the University's Board of Curators. During the Curators' meetings, the AD provides an update of the highlights of the department since the board's last meeting and is available to answer any questions that may arise.

The AD has four Assistant Athletic Directors that each serve the department in a different area: compliance, administration, sports information, and creative content. Each of the Assistant Athletic Directors serve as sport administrator responsibilities to assigned sports. In this role, they oversee game operations, budgeting, personnel, and program operations. The Assistant AD conducts an end-of-the-year evaluation of the coach and the team, and that information is reviewed with the AD and the head coach during their annual evaluation. Serving as a sport administrator provides the Assistant AD's with experience that can help prepare them for the role as AD.

Lincoln currently sponsors 12 athletic programs: football, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's indoor track & field, men's and women's outdoor track & field, women's cross country, men's and women's golf, women's softball, and women's bowling. There are eight head coaches within the department overseeing these 12 teams. The head coach for track oversees both the indoor and outdoor teams, as well as cross country.

In addition to the administration and coaches, there are four positions that serve in support roles for our athletic programs. Three full-time athletic trainers help manage the physical well-being of our athletes, conducting prevention and rehabilitation throughout the day. There is a full-time strength & conditioning coach that maintains oversight of the physical conditioning of all our teams.

Nearly 180 student-athletes participated in the 12 athletic programs during the 2019-20 school year. Athletics is represented by students from across the United States, as well as several International Students from the likes of Jamaica, Bosnia-Herzegovina,

Australia, and Malaysia, to name a few. During the 2019 fall semester, more than half of our student-athletes earned a 3.0 or better GPA, with 22 earning a perfect 4.0 GPA.

Bolman and Deal (2013) believe there are four frames through which an organization can be researched and understood: political, structural, human resources, and symbolic. A university consists of many different departments that include a diverse combination of faculty, staff, and students. Because of previous experiences that I have encountered, I view the university through the political and human resource frames.

Political Frame

Politics are at the center of decision-making and determining how scarce resources are allocated (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Whether it is the university working to secure funding from the state or the university's administration trying to push their agenda, politics play a huge role in the outcome. In our case, we are advocating for an increase in support for athletics to put us in a position where we can realistically expect to consistently compete. As it currently stands, our football program has not had a winning season since 1972 but has also been at the bottom of funding for its program as compared to its peers in the various conferences that it has competed since that time.

University administrators and faculty are typically weak players in the political game because they often lack interest in trying to improve in this area (Bolman & Gallos, 2011). Knowing this, I have been purposeful in learning more about the political landscape that exists on the various campuses where I have worked. Each situation that arises provides an opportunity for campus leaders to acknowledge and utilize the political advantages that exist. The success of the organization is the responsibility of many different parties and each party their own purpose (Manning, 2013). The politics of

athletics involves many stakeholders, including student-athletes, alumni, fans, donors, sponsors, university administrators, and coaches.

Success in higher education requires that leaders learn to navigate the political landscape (Bolman & Gallos, 2011). Even in my short time (4 years) as an athletic director, I have served under presidents with very different philosophies as it relates to athletics on a college campus. One president believed that athletics had the potential to unite a campus, its alumni, and the local community. Another had experienced athletics at the highest level of NCAA Division I, where athletics were able to be self-sufficient to the point that the athletic department actually provided money back to the academic-side of the university. And yet another president felt that athletics was a necessary-evil that took away from funding that could be utilized to ensure student success in academics.

The academic world assumes the expectation that their organization possesses or should possess, well-defined, and consistent goals that are established by those in charge (Bolman & Deal, 2013). There has been an on-going battle between the academic and athletic worlds on many campuses, as both seek to secure funding that is scarce. Agendas advance when leaders step back for a moment to analyze the political landscape and determine where the advantages are in their favor (Bolman & Gallos, 2011). Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that crafty politicians can create their agendas, map out the political environment, build a network of support, and bargain with both allies and opponents.

The first suggestion would be for the leader to identify their agenda by creating a vision of where they want to go and develop a plan for how they get there (Bolman & Deal, 2010). The world of politics that exists within my organization requires me to engage in a variety of environments that differ between full support for athletics and

those that wish athletics would go away. It has been beneficial to keep the three pillars of our department (graduate students, compete for championships, and invest in our community) in the forefront, so as to guide our decision-making.

While good leaders communicate their visions, they must also possess the political savviness to address multiple constituents' needs (Bolman & Gallos, 2011). As an athletics director, I often find myself addressing a variety of constituents. While my message is consistent across groups, the delivery of the message varies depending on the group with whom I am speaking. Agendas impact stakeholders within and outside of the organization. It is critical that leaders know who the major players are, these players' interests, and how much power each of them possess (Bolman & Gallos, 2011). While proponents of athletics understand my plight to secure additional funding for athletics scholarships, those who share a similar need for academic scholarships express their difference of opinion.

Success as a leader requires the development of a significant number of informal bonds (Bolman & Deal, 2010). It is because of this that I spend a great amount of time building relationships with those inside and outside of the university. I feel that it is important to establish relationships with those that can carry your message in your absence. Individuals who realize they can do more together than they can do alone is how alliances are created (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Seeking additional funding for athletics scholarships will require the work of many, and the outcome of this study will be used to guide future conversations. While it is my responsibility as athletics director to build the athletics program, this requires buy-in from student-athletes, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and fans.

Human Resource Frame

The human element of an organization plays a significant role in its success or failure (Levi, 2017). Motivated, skilled employees are tremendous assets to a department and university. One challenge that I see for leaders of an organization is how does one encourage employees to take ownership in the success of their respective area and the institution? Levi (2017) suggested giving power to employees and investing in their development, as well as sharing the wealth. But how does university leadership share the wealth on a college campus as budgets tighten and money goes away? This dilemma directly affects university faculty and staff, impacting their ability to communicate, make decisions, and solve problems within and across each of the areas.

Communication is a fundamental component in the performance of a group, especially in decision-making and problem solving (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Levi, 2017). Effective leaders help group members communicate and work together. This is important because groups bring varying skills, more knowledge, differing perspectives, experience, and energy (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Levi, 2017). Leading a diverse group of coaches, administrators, and student-athletes, it is important that I am able to understand communication skills, verbal and nonverbal, and their impact on the group. I have learned a great deal about the difference in communication approaches of different genders. There's a tendency for women's communication to project connection while men personify status (Levi, 2017). This difference in communication styles is important to remember as I strive to be inclusive of our diverse collection of talented colleagues while working towards group decisions that will impact our campus.

Communication builds trust and helps creates a cohesiveness that is essential to a team successfully functioning (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Levi, 2017). Messaging is crucial to the success of a leader in effectively communicating with the team. As a leader, it is important that I am careful not to dominate the group and push for my ideas to be accepted. Providing a platform where members can openly share their ideas is more beneficial as groups seek consensus, where members are willing to accept and support the decision of the group. Teams that show empathy towards different points of view are more likely to reach consensus decisions (Levi, 2017).

One benefit of a team that effectively communicates is the comfortability of the group's members to dissent. Conflict among a group is viewed as a good thing (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Janis, 2005; Levi, 2017). This conflict provides teams an opportunity to identify and discuss potential concerns with a suggested resolution. Avoiding difficult conversations could potentially lead to groupthink, where members dodge being too critical of others' ideas to maintain a healthy relationship (Janis, 2005; Levi, 2017). During my time on the President's Cabinet, we have been encouraged to openly share our concerns regarding the issues that we have encountered.

Leadership Analysis

My career took an unexpected turn in the summer of 2015 when Lincoln's university administration decided to make a change in the leadership of the athletic department. Initially I was asked to serve as the interim athletics director until they hired a permanent replacement, which they expected to do so by October 2015. At first, I was hesitant to take on such a role because I was one of the newest members of the department's staff, and I wondered whether I was capable of succeeding in the role. It

was then that I reached out to a previous boss who told me that I was prepared for this opportunity and that I had demonstrated leadership in many of my previous jobs. Northouse (2016) defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 6). When comparing being a coach to being an athletics director, you go from coaching kids to coaching coaches. The athletics director role would allow me to challenge our coaches to run the best program possible. I would approach this with the mentality of striving to be the best version of myself.

Authentic leaders are original versions of themselves and not a duplicate of someone else (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007; Northouse, 2016). According to Northouse (2016), people are looking for honest and trustworthy leaders because of the uncertainty that surrounds their lives. Authenticity results from leaders influencing followers and followers reciprocating through their interactions with one another. Major life events heavily influence authentic leaders (Northouse, 2016). This form of leadership is displayed through four interconnected characteristics: self-awareness, an internal moral compass, transparent relationships, and the ability to objectively analyze data before reaching a conclusion (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008).

Self-Awareness

For one to become self-aware, they must understand their own strengths and weaknesses, along with knowing their influence on others (Northouse, 2016). It is my belief that self-awareness, as defined by Walumbwa et al. (2008), is similar to George (2003) who noted that authentic leaders understand their purpose; knowing where they are going and using goals to help guide their steps to get there. Passion for their work is evident in all that they do.

Life stories play an essential role in the lives of authentic leaders (Northouse, 2016). Through these critical events, leaders increase self-knowledge and gain a better understanding of who they are. Experiences allow individuals to find greater meaning and are valuable to the growth of an authentic leader (George et al., 2007). Self-awareness requires one to spend time reflecting on who they are as a person. This knowledge of self allows an individual to have a clear understanding of who they are and what they believe in.

My growth as a person and as a leader over the past 6 years has been tremendous. My passion is helping people and teams become the best versions of themselves. I think back to the coaches and teachers that influenced my life and I try to emulate the actions that they took that motivated me. Through self-reflection and a continuous desire to grow, I am confident of who I am and where I am going. Leadership is way more than a title one possesses or a paper that one writes. I see leadership as action, and I believe that I have the ability to bring out the best in others.

As I read the stories of sacrifice from the soldier's that founded Lincoln University, I was drawn to play my role, to the best of my ability, to ensure that their dreams continue to be realized. Seeing the soldier's memorial on our campus is a visual reminder for me to continue to strive for excellence in all that I do with hopes that my actions will result in a more positive perception for Lincoln University.

Strong Moral Compass

Northouse (2016) notes that core values often guide authentic leaders. Individuals can create a list of what they value, but until they find themselves in a challenging time, they cannot definitively state what it is they truly value (George et al., 2007; Northouse,

2016). In the midst of challenges, authentic leaders choose to strengthen their values instead of compromising the things they believe in (George, 2003).

Life events also allow the leader's values to be tested to determine if they hold up during trying times (George et al., 2007). Those with a strong moral compass do not allow outside pressures to compromise what it is that they believe in (Northouse, 2016). Others view this authenticity through the leader's ability to make their actions match words and stated beliefs.

For me, it is extremely important that I keep the student-athletes at the center of our decision-making. We work to provide them with the best experience possible. This includes ensuring that we equip them with the tools needed to be successful as students, as athletes, and as members of their communities.

This causes me great concern as I look to the future because I have been unsuccessful in convincing our administration of why they should invest more in our athletics department. It becomes more challenging now that we are in the midst of the pandemic, COVID-19. With the recent news that Missouri's Governor announced the withholding of funds for higher education, schools all across the state are faced with budget issues. In anticipation of budget cuts and enrollment declines due to the pandemic, I am not heavily involved in discussions as to how the institution can best position itself to continue to meet the needs of our students.

I am currently struggling with our lack of competitiveness in the sports of football and women's basketball. This struggle has led me to seek answers through this study to determine how funding impacts success in these sports. I feel a personal responsibility to put our student-athletes and coaches in a position where they can realistically expect to

compete. Our scholarship deficiencies, as compared to our peers in the MIAA, makes this a huge challenge. Unfortunately, the university's current funding challenges make it unlikely that additional funding will be awarded to address these shortfalls. In fact, there is an even greater possibility that budgets will be reduced or entire athletic teams will go away.

Transparent Relationships

Authentic leaders can display a level of vulnerability that allows for strong, supportive relationships (George, 2003). This requires that leaders are open and honest with others, and this includes sharing both strengths and weaknesses (Northouse, 2016). For mutual trust and respect to grow between leaders and followers, highly-effective communication is required.

George et al. (2007) note that authentic leaders have at least one close friend with whom they can expose their deepest thoughts and feelings without fear of being judged. Transparency allows the leader's inner circle to hold them accountable for being the same person across the various roles in the leader's life. I am confident enough in myself as a leader to surround myself with people who can be comfortable in challenging my position on various issues.

Relationships have always been important to me. Being that I wear multiple hats as basketball coach and athletics director, I feel an even greater need for transparency in relationships with the other coaches in our department. After men's basketball started to realize success, there were whispers that it was because I was providing them with resources that other sports were not receiving. I felt that it was important to call a meeting with our entire staff and fully reveal how our money has been dispersed from the year

before I became athletics director through the present time. Our coaches, many of whom predated my arrival at Lincoln, appreciated my honesty in this situation and I think we grew as a department because of it.

Now our department is facing uncertainty regarding the funding that we receive from the university to support athletics. My personal goal in this ordeal is to ensure that our staff and coaches are informed about all that is taking place. It is important that we avoid surprising anyone with decisions that are being made. Though not all of the news that I have to provide is positive, it is necessary to relay the facts so that everyone is on the same page.

Balanced Processing

Balanced processing refers to one's ability to objectively utilize available information, along with the opinions of others, to make the best decision possible. One of the keys to balanced processing is one's willingness to hear the concerns of those with dissenting viewpoints (Northouse, 2016). Authentic leaders possess self-discipline that provides the determination and focus when faced with pressure situations (Northouse, 2016).

As the leader of a college athletics department, many of my decisions become the topic of conversation in many public spaces. One such decision was eliminating men's baseball and women's tennis from the sports that we sponsored at the NCAA Division II level. It was important to look at the pros and cons of such a decision to determine what was best for the athletics department and ultimately, for the university. While this was an extremely difficult situation, we felt that narrowing our focus on the remaining sports

would give us the best chance to succeed. This decision allowed us to redistribute funding that had gone to baseball and women's tennis to the remaining sports.

Now we find ourselves in a similar position, with the prospect of additional sports being eliminated to assist with the university's budget issues. The experience that I gained through the earlier cuts should be beneficial as we go through this process. I remain committed for standing up for what I believe to be right, but I am open to hearing the opinions of those who contradict my position. It is important to allow the data to drive the decision. As much as possible, we are best served by removing personal feelings from the decision. Our ability to do so will best serve the institution address the budget shortfall.

Implications for Research in the Practitioner Setting

The two studies that guided this study resulted in positive, significant relationship between spending and success in football (Jones, 2013) and baseball (Caro & Elder, 2017), but both studies examined Division I universities. Armed with this knowledge, it is important to determine if a similar relationship exists at the Division II level as administrators determine where to invest funding as budgets tighten across the country. On the other hand, it was noted earlier in this study that Division II prides itself on providing an experience that balances academics and athletics for athletes competing at this level. Learning of the relationship between spending and academic success will contribute to athletic administrators' working knowledge as they examine how funds should be distributed.

The implications of this study will directly impact my role as the athletic director at Lincoln University. Our conference, the MIAA, does a great job of providing its

athletics directors with information on its conference institutions related to the salaries of its coaching staff and athletics administrators, along with scholarship equivalencies. This information has revealed a tremendous deficit in scholarships given by Lincoln University, especially in the sport of football. While the NCAA allows Division II football schools to provide 36 scholarships, the average MIAA school provides just over 33 (excluding Lincoln). Lincoln University only provides 18 scholarships for football, 12 below the next lowest MIAA school (which gives the equivalency of 30 scholarships). While not as egregious, men's basketball and women's basketball also fall at or very close to the lowest in the MIAA. The same can be said for the salaries of the head coaches, as well as the salaries of the assistant coaches, of the three sports included in this study.

It is expected that the results of this study will be used to guide decisions pertaining to the financial support provided to athletics at Lincoln University. In my current role as Director of Athletics, I feel that it is my responsibility to put our student-athletes in a position to succeed in the classroom and in competition. Being that football, women's basketball, and men's basketball are the only three sports that are considered revenue sports at Lincoln University, this research will be important to ensure that we are developing a product that will represent our university, its alumni and students, and the local community, in a positive light. Knowing where Lincoln Athletics currently stand in relation to their peers in the MIAA, and coupling that with knowledge gained from this study, will help direct our steps as we continue to advocate for funding to support our programs.

Outside of Lincoln University, I feel strongly that the results of this study will be used by athletics directors across the NCAA Division II landscape. Very simply, this study seeks to determine if spending on athletics impacts graduating and winning. Should a school expect to be spending a specific amount of money in order to graduate a certain percentage of students? If a university expects to compete for athletic championships in the sports included in this study, how much should they expect to invest financially? Athletics directors, along with other stakeholders that are concerned about their university's athletics program, will be better versed in knowing the cost of success for schools that compete at the NCAA Division II level. University presidents will have access to information that could assist with directing their support of athletics on their campuses. Administrators will have a better understanding of the cost of competing and will be able to use that information as they work to seek support from alumni, donors, sponsors, students, and fans.

Summary

This study seeks to influence college presidents and athletic directors across the landscape on NCAA Division II athletics, within the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association, and most specifically at Lincoln University. Athletics at many universities is a big investment at a time where funding is becoming more and more difficult to attain. This study aims to provide actual costs to put teams in a position to graduate their student-athletes and compete for athletic championships. Athletic directors will have access to actual data that demonstrates what NCAA Division II universities who have been successful have invested and be able to determine how their institution stacks up against the competition. In addition, the fact that a majority of student-athletes

who participate in football and men's basketball are Black should lead administrators to become more intentional about developing athletic leaders, whether coaches or administrators, from backgrounds reflective of their student-athlete population. Supporting and nurturing our student-athletes should remain a prevalent part of life in Division II athletics as we continue to strive to provide our students with "Life in the Balance."

SECTION THREE: SCHOLARLY REVIEW FOR THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between athletic spending on the athletic success of teams and the academic success of student-athletes in NCAA Division II institutions. This scholarly review will examine how NCAA members are currently funding athletics on their campuses. Determinants of athletic success at the college level will guide this current study, including previous findings on the relationship of total athletic expenditures on overall athletic success, as well as the relationship of athletic spending to the success within single sports.

Next, this review will explore the determinants of academic success through the various divisions of the NCAA. The review will particularly focus on the academic achievement of student-athletes participating at the NCAA Division II level. Compared to their peers at the NCAA Division I level, limited research has explored the challenges facing universities and athletic departments in Division II (Nite, 2012). Baucom and Lantz (2001) noted that while Division II student-athletes face many of the same challenges as their Division I peers, scholars found that research often overlooked the lower divisions of the NCAA. From there, we will discuss the overall benefits of successful athletic programs to their universities.

The Resource-Based View (RBV) is the conceptual framework being used to guide this study. A discussion on the value of money in college athletics and a review of how finances connect to the four tenets of the RBV is included. The current study aims to build on previous research that has been conducted at the NCAA Division I level through a focus on the Division II level. Outcomes from this study will help guide universities

and athletic departments as they evaluate budgetary spending on college athletics at the Division II level.

The Funding of College Athletics

Public colleges and universities receive the bulk of their financial resources from revenue generated from tuition and fees, along with federal and state funding (Kim, Kim, & Lee, 2019). According to the *U. S. News & World Report*, the average in-state tuition for public universities has increased from $3,508 in 2000-01 to over $11,000 for the 2019-20 academic year (Boyington & Kerr, 2019). As the cost of college continues to rise (Slaper & Foston, 2013), students are taking on increased debt and yet many universities still find themselves with financial shortfalls (Lipford & Slice, 2017). Though tuition rates have increased, reductions in state support and endowment income have contributed to a decline in cost-containment at some universities (Desrochers & Kirshtein, 2012).

Even at the top level of Division I athletics, few departments can fully fund themselves, requiring athletic departments to turn to their university to provide financial support (Desrochers, 2013). In 2010, more than 80% of Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) athletics revenue was generated through ticket sales, donations, and conference payouts; while Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) schools received more than 70% of their revenue directly from the university (Morton, 2017). In a study of 201 public NCAA Division I institutions that reviewed a five-year period, more than $10 billion was committed to support athletic programs from mandatory student fees and other subsidies (Wolverton, Hallman, Shifflett, & Kambhampati, 2015). Denhart and Vedder (2010) determined that institutional athletic support (direct government support, direct

institutional support, indirect facilities support, and combined athletic fees) was greater at universities with lower enrollment, less institutional wealth, and a greater proportion of low-income students.

In a 2014 report on Division II athletics, the NCAA stated that university allocated funds were used to provide 80% of the total revenues for football-playing schools. Non-football playing schools received nearly 85% of their income from university allocated funds (Fulks, 2015). It is more difficult for Division II schools to operate self-sufficiently as compared to their Division I peers who benefit from greater ticket revenue, donations from larger alumni bases, and a more significant share of post-season basketball distributions, as well as television revenue (Fulks, 2013). The majority of funding for Division II athletics comes from institutional subsidies, with ticket sales, sports camps and cash contributions accounting for less than 9% of total revenues (Burnsed, 2015).

Earlier research has examined the value that universities receive from their investments in athletics when compared to the university's mission (Denhart, Villwock, & Vedder, 2010; Desrochers, 2013; Eitzen, 2006; Gerdy, 2006, Orszag & Orszag, 2005). Critics of athletics believe that athletic administrators and coaches diminish the focus of academics while overemphasizing the importance of sports (Denhart et al., 2010). Gerdy (2006) noted that college athletics was all about games and lacked an emphasis on the educational experience for the students. Eitzen (2006) suggested that universities align their athletic departments more closely with the academic mission of the respective institution, while calling for the elimination of admissions exceptions for athletes.

Spending on athletics has increased at a much higher rate than institutional spending in other areas of universities (Orszag & Orszag, 2005). This finding was supported in a later study of Division I universities which found that the amount spent by universities to support their athletic department was double the amount spent on academics (Orszag & Israel, 2009). Desrochers (2013) asked whether spending on athletics was appropriate in the current financial climate and raised issues with university priorities when comparing spending on athletics and academics. According to Sobel (2013), the NCAA is aware that most college and university athletic programs failed to make money for their institutions. Sobel (2013) concluded that while tuition dollars from current students were used to support athletics, students received no direct benefits to their education. Those who believe that college athletics provide a financial windfall to universities are often misguided (Descrochers, 2013).

Occasionally, college presidents allude to the indirect benefits of athletics when attempting to defend the use of student fees to support their athletic departments (Morton, 2017). University presidents, coaches, and athletic directors justify their spending by arguing that spending leads to greater success athletically, which in turn provides additional benefits to the institution (Suggs, 2003). These indirect benefits include increased applications to public institutions (Perez, 2012; Smith, 2008), general greater advertising effects (Chung, 2013), and increased donations (Stinson & Howard, 2007).

The three divisions of the NCAA each have distinct characteristics that distinguish between them, beginning with the minimum number of sports that institutions are required to sponsor: Division I: 14, Division II: 10, and Division III: 5 (NCAA, n.d.-c). Another significant difference between the three divisions is the athletic scholarship

structure. The Division I model is designed to provide full athletic scholarships, Division II provides partial athletic scholarships, and Division III provides no athletic scholarships (Feezell, 2009). Specifically, the Division II model is designed for universities to offer partial athletic scholarships that allow student-athletes to combine athletic aid, academic aid, federal financial aid, and grants, along with personal money (Feezell, 2009; Fulks, 2010).

Feezell (2009) discovered that faculty at Division II institutions do not view athletics as a financial endeavor but as a student-driven activity similar to other campus student activities. As funding for athletic departments becomes more and more scarce, many universities are being forced to consider reclassification to align their resources better (Hosick, 2009). Though expenses for the Division II athletic scholarship model are often less than their peers in Division I, the overhead and operating costs can be very similar (Dwyer et al., 2010).

While Division I institutions benefit significantly from the revenue generated by the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, only $42.1 million of the $821 million received by the NCAA goes to support Division II institutions (NCAA, n.d.-g). Limited resources, as compared to their Division I peers, has forced Division II schools into tough decisions regarding their ability and desire to invest in college athletics (Dwyer et al., 2010). Previous research indicated that success at the highest level of college athletics, NCAA Division I, is more likely to provide additional benefits than success at Division II or Division III (Goff, 1995; Stinson & Howard, 2008).

Determinants of Athletic Success

College presidents have expressed concern about the rising costs associated with athletics (Knight Commission, 2009). In a report by the Knight Commission (2009), it was noted that institutional spending on athletics had reached a point where some institutions were nearing a decision of whether their schools would have to make cuts to athletic programs or academic classes. Others see the competitiveness of a university being contagious throughout the campus, demonstrated by administrators' expectations that all areas of their schools are winners (Drape & Thomas, 2010).

Athletically, this expectation is demonstrated through coaches' contracts with incentives for conference championships and national tournament participation. In addition to salaries for coaches increasing dramatically in the past 20 years, many programs have also doubled the money spent on the recruitment of student-athletes (Sander, 2008). Orszag and Israel (2009) found that for every dollar that a university increased spending on football and men's basketball, their conference peers increased spending by $0.55. This is characterized by the phenomenon referred to as the athletics arms race (Caro & Elder, 2017; Hoffer et al., 2015; Tsitsos & Nixon, 2012).

Among the reasons that universities spend more on athletics is the perceived need to keep up with a rival that is contributing more to athletics (Orszag & Israel, 2009). An increase in athletic spending has been referred to as an athletics arms race with schools trying to construct new facilities and keep up with coaching contracts (Hoffer et al., 2015). Schools try to keep pace with their peers, thus creating this ripple effect that has contributed to an increase in spending at the Division I level. Capital investments across

the Division I landscape have become more acceptable because of the arms race theory (Kim et al., 2019).

Expenditures' Relationship on Athletic Success

Previous studies have looked at the relationship of spending to a university's finish in the NACDA Director's Cup standings. The Director's Cup is an annual competition among schools at each of the three divisions of the NCAA, as well as the NAIA (Learfield, n.d.). Points are awarded based on a university's performance in individual sports, with total scores reflecting success across all of the sports that are offered at a particular school. Winners are recognized for having the country's best overall athletics program.

Earlier studies on the relationship between spending and success discovered results ranging from a positive and significant relationship to no relationship. Litan et al. (2003) found no significant relationships between athletic spending and team performance while examining 100 NCAA Division I football and men's basketball programs. Orszag and Orszag (2005) followed with a similar study of NCAA Division II schools and acknowledged similar findings. Orszag and Israel (2009) followed that study with a look at the relationship between spending and success in football and men's basketball at the Division I level. They found that a $1 million increase in spending on football at FBS schools resulted in a statistically significant 1.8% increase in a team's overall winning percentage, a slightly positive relationship between the variables. However, there was no relationship among outcomes in men's basketball.

Studies in the last 10 years have resulted in findings that suggest increases in athletic expenditures positively and significantly influence scoring in the Director's Cup

standing. Lawrence, Li, Regas, and Kander (2012) examined over 400 schools from NCAA Division I, II, and III, as well as NAIA. Only among NAIA institutions was there a significant and positive relationship between athletic expenditures and scoring in the Director's Cup standings. Spavero and Warner (2013) used data from two nonconsecutive years to evaluate institutions from Division I and III and found a positive relationship between athletic expenditures and Director's Cup scoring among Division I schools. Tsitsos and Nixon (2012) compared the salaries of Division I football and men's basketball coaches with Top 25 finishes between 2003-04 through 2010-11 for those programs. Researchers found minimal relationships between wages and success, though nearly 50% of the 25 highest-paid coaches had Top 25 teams during that period.

More recently, Caro and Elder (2017) found a minor relationship between spending and winning in Division I college baseball. They identified a more significant relationship when examining out-of-conference winning percentages. One important finding from their study was that on average, teams that earned the opportunity to play in the NCAA tournament spent close to a million dollars more than those that did not make it.

While much of the research explored football, men's basketball, and baseball, some have analyzed the success across all sports at the university (Beaudin, 2017; Jones, 2013; Katz, Pfleegor, Schaeperkoetter, & Bass, 2015). When controlling for subdivisions within Division I (Football Championship Subdivision (FCS), Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), and non-football playing schools), Jones (2013) determined there was a positive, statistically significant relationship between athletic expenditures and on-field success among FBS programs. These findings provide support for the investment from

universities and their athletic departments into athletic facilities, which has contributed to the arms race in much of the college athletics landscape (Jones, 2013).

Another recent study utilized the institutional theory to examine the role of institutional and athletics factors on the athletic success of Division III institutions (Katz et al., 2015). This study found that a $100,000 increase in athletic expenditures contributed to a 6% increase in the number of championships an institution won. While some Division III institutions could afford to invest the additional resources to position their athletic teams for better success, other universities cannot afford such an investment. To compete for more championships and to perform better in the NACDA cup standings, institutions must allocate more significant amounts towards their total operating budgets (Katz et al., 2015).

Beaudin (2017) used a panel approach to examine the relationship between athletic expenditures and Director's Cup scores for Division I schools. This study examined spending across all sports that a university offered which was different from earlier studies that focused on football and men's basketball. Beaudin (2017) found that increased spending on men's and women's sports had a positive relationship on Director's Cup scoring for Division I programs. Increased spending on women's sports had a greater influence on elevating a university's scoring in the Director's cup standing.

Determinants of Academic Success

The academic success of student-athletes has been the focus of several previous studies (Berry, 2014; Foster & Huml, 2017; Huml et al., 2015; Navarro, 2015; Nite, 2012). The first area that is influential in academic success is the availability of resources to support the educational mission. Nite (2012) explored the challenges which influence

the academic development of student-athletes at Division II institutions. Unlike many schools in Division I, Division II schools often lacked the necessary resources to construct facilities dedicated to academics, as well as to provide additional academic programming for student-athletes. While the pressure to win is similar to that of Division I, a lack of financial resources creates a significant challenge to the academic success of student-athletes participating in Division II.

At universities with smaller athletic budgets, the relationship between the coach and their student-athletes is more significant, according to Nite (2012), who found that many Division II institutions employed one or fewer people to oversee academics within the department. Two primary impediments to student-athletes' academic success were limited resources and the pressure they face to win. While some Division I institutions have a similar number of student-athletes as their Division II peers, Division I schools are employing multiple people to perform duties assigned to one employee at a Division II school. Cunningham and Ashley (2001) found similarities in the general operating budget regardless of the division in which the athletic department competed. They noted characteristics that are specific to NCAA Division II, which make it more challenging to supply academic support similar to those in Division I. Funding inequities required many members of Division II athletic departments to perform duties outside of the expected scope of their position.

Coaches and others within the athletic department often work to identify academic resources available that can contribute to their student-athletes' academic success (Huml et al., 2015). Resources include finding tutors, mandating study hall hours, and serving as the academic advisor. Student-athletes often identify their coach as the

university official with whom they have the most contact (Bruening & Dixon, 2007). Relationships between student-athletes and coaches begin developing during the recruiting process, which often occurs long before a prospect has even applied to an institution (Shulman & Bowen, 2001). Frequently student-athletes view their coach as a member of their extended family because of the closeness of this relationship and the respect that they have for one another (Bruening & Dixon, 2007). Weight, Cooper, and Popp (2015) determined that the coach/athlete relationship extends beyond the sport and includes conversations related to academics and life events. Student-athletes benefit by playing for coaches that vocally express concern for the academic success of their athletes (Navarro, 2015). Though coaches may lack the necessary skills, limited departmental support often demands that coaches play a role in the academic lives of their student-athletes (Nite, 2012). Coaches considered to be supportive, driven, and caring, contribute to the academic success of individual student-athletes and the team as a whole (Smith, 2019). The potential impact on eligibility drives coaches to have a greater interest in the academic success of their athletes.

To help student-athletes maintain their academics, it frequently requires collaboration between coaches, administrators, faculty, student support services, and tutors (Weiss & Robinson, 2013). Student-athletes participating at the NCAA Division II level would prefer more involvement from their professors. Stress levels often increase during student-athletes' in-season activities because of an increase in the time demands and expectations that result from participation in college athletics (Judge, Bell, Theodore, & Simon, 2012). The importance of winning in their sport can be a contributing factor for a coach to push athletes to focus on athletics over academics (Navarro, 2015; Nite, 2012).

Foster and Huml (2017) found that student-athletes' emphasis on their athletic responsibilities can negatively influence their academic performance. Additionally, on-field success, as well as the coach's focus on maintaining employment, can negatively influence a student-athlete's academics (Berry, 2014). Nite (2012) stated that the culture within a team often contributes to the academic success of the student-athletes by providing accountability within the group.

Athletics takes up a significant amount of time for student-athletes, and this participation separates them from regular college students (Paule & Gilson, 2010). The balance of the student-athlete experience is a significant focus in NCAA Division II, providing student-athletes with highly competitive athletics while maintaining support for the academic mission of the institution (Fulks, 2010). To align the student-athlete experience with Division II's strategic positioning platform of integrating the athletic experience of student-athletes into higher education, the NCAA President's Council initiated a review of the time spent by student-athletes in team-related activities (NCAA, 2010). This review resulted in the creation of the "Life in the Balance" (LITB) initiative, which includes: (1) a later reporting date for student-athletes participating in fall sports; (2) no team-related activities for seven days over the winter holiday break, and (3) a reduction in the number of athletic contests in all sports except football. Presidents and chancellors view LITB as a way of creating better work/life balance for student-athletes by providing more time to spend on academic and social activities (NCAA, 2010). Smith (2019) noted that a healthy balance of academics and athletics could lead to a successful experience for a student-athlete.

The emphasis on winning remains steady at the Division II level (Nite, 2012). A coach's win-loss record is frequently the primary factor in their performance evaluation (Weight et al., 2015). While there are coaches who receive stipends based on the athletic success of their teams, there are fewer coaches that received financial bonuses based on the team's academic performance (Wilson & Burke, 2013).

Academic Success Rate

The Academic Success Rate (ASR) was specifically created as a measure of academic success for NCAA Division II programs (NCAA, n.d.). Originally the NCAA established the Graduation Success Rate (GSR) for both Division I and Division II but then realized that the model only accounted for scholarship athletes. The difference between the GSR and the ASR is that the ASR cohort includes all freshmen athletes who are on the team's roster during their first year regardless of whether or not they receive athletics aid (NCAA, n.d.-e) The ASR is calculated by totaling the number of graduates and dividing that by the total number of first-time, full-time freshmen on athletics aid, 2- and 4-year transfers on athletics aid, mid-year enrollees on athletics aid, and all non-scholarship athletes. Students that transfer into an institution for athletics are entered into the cohort that corresponds to the first year they enrolled as a full-time student at a 2- or 4-year college. Students that are academically eligible and transfer from an institution are removed, thus reducing the denominator for their cohort (NCAA, n.d.-e).

Benefits of Successful Athletics to the Institution

There has been a vast amount of research conducted on the value that winning athletics programs provides an institution. Previous literature on the financial and non-financial benefits of college athletics reflects inconsistent conclusions. There have been

studies that have found significant, positive benefits in admissions, student body profile, student experiences, relationships with stakeholders, and donations to the university. In contrast, other studies have found mixed evidence or no significant relationship with athletic success.

Athletics have often been used to promote the school and led to an increase in admissions applications to a school (Bale, 1991; Pope & Pope, 2009). Pope and Pope (2009) examined football and men's basketball, determining that successful programs contribute up to an 8% increase in applications to the university. Anderson (2017) noted that FBS universities in Division I saw applications increase by 3% if the football team improved their win total over that of the prior two seasons. Frank (2004) found short-term increases in applications after championship seasons, but the long-term advantages did not exist.

Smith (2009) determined that winning football programs contributed to additional advertising which helped the school attract better students, but noted that this relationship was typically experienced when the team improved on its past performance. FBS programs that increased their win totals benefited by an increased number of in-state students, as well as a greater number of incoming students that scored in the 25th percentile on the SAT (Anderson, 2017). Success in athletics has shown to positively influence graduation rates at the university (Mixon & Trevino, 2005; Stinston, Marquardt, & Chandley, 2012).

Mixon and Trevino (2005) argued that universities with successful football programs contributed to the positive transition of new students by aiding in their social and psychological adjustment. In a study on faculty at Division II schools, Feezell (2013)

noted that faculty view athletics as a tool to recruit new students and as a way of providing an activity for a portion of the student body. At smaller schools, athletics is a tool to attract those who seek the opportunity to extend their competitive playing career, and this contributes to the university reaching its enrollment goals (Feezell, 2009). The chance to compete is an essential factor in a student-athlete's decision to attend an institution (Cooper, 1996). Toma (2003) noted that athletics had the potential to improve the climate of the campus, as well as promote pride in the university. Both are essential for attracting and retaining students.

Arguments have also supported the belief that athletics bring communities together, create loyal alumni bases, and provide life skills that benefit the athletes away from competition (Denhart et al., 2010; Kelly & Dixon, 2011). Toma, Dubrow, and Hartley (2005) added that athletics contributes to a stronger relationship between individuals and the institution, which leads to a deeper connection. This connection supports Daughtrey and Stotlar (2000), who noted that college athletics has a positive relationship on the number of donors and the amount given to athletics, including Division I institutions.

Athletic department giving increased for public universities that participated in a postseason football game or the NCAA men's basketball tournament (Humphreys & Mondello, 2007). Stinson and Howard (2007) went a step further to note that donations for academics remained consistent when the university had success in athletics, while donations for the athletic department increased during this same time. Daughtrey and Stotlar (2000) found that while giving for Division I athletics increased when teams won football championships, the same could not be said for giving at the Division II level.

Anderson (2017) determined that universities that increased their win total by three games over a two-year period could expect that athletic donations would increase an average of 17%.

Research by Kim et al. (2019) determined the most important motivator for individuals who give to Division II athletics was due to the donor's desire to associate with a successful organization. Such attachment to a winning athletic program helps boost the donor's status within their community. Donors were motivated to give to demonstrate their connection to the institution or the athletic program. As universities seek to continue to find external sources of revenue to support the institution and their athletic programs, this research highlights the importance of building winning athletic programs.

Other research contradicts the previously discussed findings. Justification of athletic spending often is supported by an unfounded belief that successful programs contribute to the enhancement of the university's academic profile; an increase in private giving; and an increase in the quality and quantity of applicants to the institution (Frank, 2004). Frank (2004) argued that because of the 'winner-take-all' mentality that surrounds college athletics, there were no long-term benefits for most programs. Zimbalist (2010) concluded that benefits from successful athletics dissipated when teams underperformed.

Conceptual Framework: The Resource-Based View

Penrose (1958) was one of the first to introduce the Resource-Based View (RBV) to describe organizations as a collection of productive resources. Organizations' ability to gather critical resources, and use those resources effectively, create a competitive advantage according to the RBV (Barney, 1991). This theory recommends that

organizations acquire resources, spend those resources wisely, and develop strategies based on a review of the utilization of said resources (Won & Chelladurai, 2016).

The goal of the resource-based approach is to identify gaps in resources that can be filled to replenish and upgrade the organization. This replenishment allows the organization to be more effective than its rivals (Grant, 1991). Within the RBV, resources are defined into four different categories: financial capital resources (e.g., equity and debt); physical capital resources (e.g., space and equipment); human capital resources (e.g., personnel); and organizational capital resources (e.g., relationships, past success, and culture).

Financial Capital Resources

Financial capital contributes to enhancing physical capital, human capital, and organizational capital of an athletic department (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). The RBV implies that organizations with enhanced reputations, better employees, more dedicated customers, and enhanced facilities have a competitive advantage over their competition (Barney, 1995; Mahoney, 1995). Barney (1991) noted the central tenet of the RBV as an organization's ability to control and utilize resources to create a competitive advantage. Wolfe, Wright, and Smart (2006) used the RBV to analyze the Oakland Athletics' use of an innovative player evaluation technique to overcome their organizations disparity in financial resources from some other Major League Baseball teams. This current study will focus on the influence of financial capital in the acquisition of physical capital, human capital, and organizational capital.

According to Won (2004), financial resources are required to operate college athletic departments successfully. These resources allow colleges to sponsor individual

athletic teams, participate in athletic competition, recruit athletes, and provide those athletes with scholarships to attend the university. Orszag and Israel (2009) found that universities who spend more on athletics put pressure on their rivals to invest more in their athletic programs to keep pace with the competition.

Smart and Wolfe (2000) used the RBV to analyze a single sport (football) in the Big Ten Conference. This study implied that it would be beneficial for universities who achieved success in a single sport would play a role in the success of the athletic department. Similar research by Caro and Elder (2017) evaluated the relationship of athletic expenditures on winning baseball games.

Physical Capital Resources

Because NCAA rules prohibit institutions from providing student-athletes with payment for their services, universities feel more pressure to provide better athletic facilities to attract top prospects to their campuses (Hoffer et al., 2014). According to Saunders (2010), a university's athletic reputation, as well as its athletic facilities, attract students to attend. A study by Andrew, Martinez, and Flavell (2016) revealed that athletic facilities were the fourth most important factor in a prospective student-athletes' college selection. Within the athletic realm, physical resources include gameday and practice facilities, strength training facilities and equipment, as well as academic facilities for athletes.

Previous research characterized the recent trend of increased spending on facilities (Orszag & Orszag, 2005) and coaching salaries as an athletics arms race (Hoffer et al., 2015). One factor in the arms race in college athletics is universities trying to keep pace with their peers in the construction of facilities to attract the top students and

student-athletes. This concept of an arms race between institutions has been researched numerous times over the years (Frank, 2004; Getz & Siegfried, 2010; Orszag & Orszag, 2005). These days, some of the Power-5 Division I schools are creating athletic villages (Weaver & Tegtmeyer, 2018). Clemson University created a facility for their football program that houses an arcade, a bowling alley, a barbershop and barber, a miniature golf course, a full movie theater, and many other luxuries.

Even in Division II, some conferences have seen evidence of this arms race for facilities. The Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA), a Division II conference in the Midwest, had several of its schools invest in new athletic facilities over the past few years (Boyce, 2018). In a partnership with the Kansas City Chiefs from the NFL, Missouri Western University constructed an indoor football practice facility that is also available to its other sports that play outside. Pittsburg State University was the first in the conference to build an indoor track facility that also houses a turf field for use by its football team, among others. Northwest Missouri State soon followed suit with a similar facility, and now Washburn University is the latest to break ground on an indoor facility of its own. Administrators feel the pressure to keep up with their conference peers.

The University of Central Oklahoma, an MIAA school, recently completed the construction of a $14 million Sports Performance Center. This facility houses its football team (coaches' offices and team locker room), a weight room, an athletic training room, and an academic center used for labs and team study halls (Boyce, 2018).

Strength training is an essential aspect of student-athletes' success in a given sport. Among the factors determining the type of programming offered by strength

coaches is the size of the space provided to workout (Judge et al., 2012). The amount of funding impacts the quantity and quality of the equipment available for athletes to improve their physical strength that a department has to invest.

Similar to strength training, student-athletes spend a lot of their time with the department's athletic trainers, working on injury prevention and recovery. These facilities house rehabilitation equipment, cold and hot tubs, taping tables, and other items that speed up the athletes' ability to return to play after an injury. In a study on athletic training facilities and staffing, nearly 60% of respondents reported that their school had completed some renovation of their athletic training facility within the previous five years (Gallucci & Peterson, 2017).

A perceived lack of academic resources for student-athletes led to the creation of academic support centers (Huml, Hancock, & Bergman, 2014). While some schools construct independent facilities for their student-athletes, others may designate space for academic centers within existing facilities (N4A, 2013). Research by Hazzaa, Sonkeng, and Yoh (2018) noted the importance of providing quality academic facilities to meet the needs of student-athletes.

Human Capital Resources

Within the landscape of college athletics, Smart and Wolfe (2000) termed human resources as the experience of the coaching staff and student-athletes' athletic ability. The relationship between the two is intertwined, with better coaches attracting better athletes, and better athletes often resulting in better coaches. According to a study by Andrew et al. (2016), two of the top five reasons that a prospective student-athlete chose to attend a university was because of the head coach and the assistant coaches. Coaching experience

and diversity amongst the staff were significant predictors of success in a study on Division I football (Cunningham & Sagas, 2004).

Coach's salaries have continued to rise, resulting in substantial increases in the athletic department's operating budget (Jones, 2013). College administrators' beliefs often support rising wages for coaches because of expectations that an increase in spending will result in more successful athletics (Tsitsos & Nixon, 2012). Cunningham (2003) studied the relationship of coaching salaries on the scoring in the Sears' Director's Cup standing. Several researchers of the athletics arms race have examined the compensation for Division I football and men's basketball head coaches (Brady & Upton, 2007; Wieberg et al., 2009).

Better coaches and quality facilities attract better recruits; therefore, schools justify spending to provide the best in these areas. Seeking to maintain high performing athletic programs, universities often justify their spending because of the necessity to attract top athletic talents (Hoffer et al., 2014). The high-stakes world of college athletics is impacted tremendously by a coach's ability to attract the best athletes to their school. Langelett (2003) found that signing better prospects contributes to success on the field, which in turn contributes to luring better prospects.

Coaches use athletic success, academic prestige, facilities, and scholarships to recruit the best athletes to attend their schools. In the world of scholarship athletics, the amount of athletic-related financial aid a prospective student-athlete would receive weighed significantly when that athlete made their college selection (Schneder & Messenger, 2012).

Other examples of human capital within an athletic department include the athletic director, other administrators, and support staff. It is vital to have the personnel to conduct academic support services such as tutoring and advising. Athletic department staff positively contribute to the academic performance of student-athletes by showing concern for their students' well-being (Rankin et al., 2006).

Strength coaches and athletic trainers are other key personnel within an athletic department. The number of coaches, and the quality, are impacted by budgetary constraints. Schools with larger budgets can have more full-time staff, as well as more graduate assistants and interns, to serve the athletes in strength and conditioning (Judge et al., 2012).

Organizational Capital Resources

Barney (1991) characterized organization resources as the culture, relationships, and history that surrounds a firm. Smart and Wolfe (2000) argued that the history of success and the culture that surrounded the Penn State football program contributed to providing a consistent competitive advantage. Included in the Penn State study was the belief that individual coaches represented human resources but the totality of the coaching staff led to a greater culture among the organization. A program with a storied past has an advantage over a program that is trying to establish itself (Barney, 1995). This history of success is attractive to prospective student-athletes, coaches, and support staff. As previously discussed in this section, universities' athletic departments benefit from both physical capital resources and human capital resources, and programs that are successful contribute to a positive brand identity that often represents the culture and history of their organization.

According to a study that included the perceptions of prospective student-athletes, a university's academic reputation is increased if they have a winning athletic program (Sperber, 2000). In a later study, Hoffer et al. (2014) found that investing in athletics, which they defined as money spent on salaries for coaches and total athletic expenditures, contributed to the prestige of an institutions' athletic program. By investing more, they also put pressure on their peers at rival institutions to increase the level of support for their athletics programs.

Pulter and Wolfe (1999) found that the support of fans and alumni hinged on four perceptions of an athletic department: (a) the number of wins and losses, (b) whether the student-athletes were graduating, (c) the presence of any NCAA ethical violations; and (d) the ability to operate within the budget provided. Gladden et al. (1998) shared that the university's brand equity results from on-the-field results, the perception of the school's academic status, its ability to play by the rules, and the amount of support from its fans.

Summary

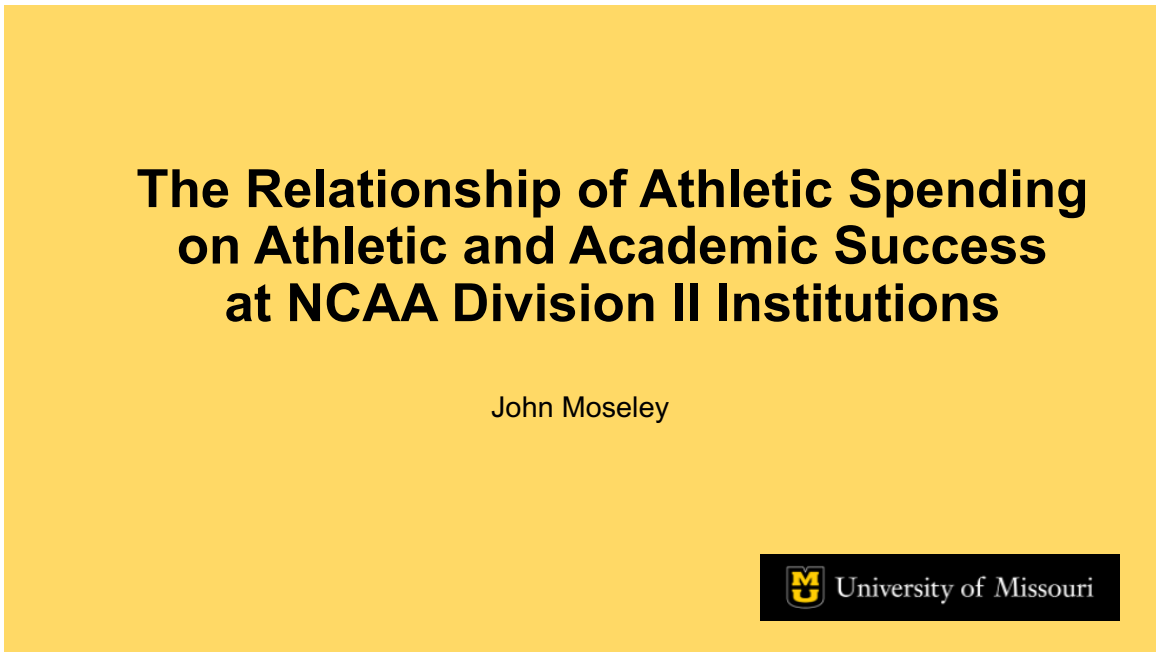
To summarize, previous research has examined the relationship between athletic expenditures and on-field success. There has also been research that explored the academic success of student-athletes and factors that play a role in student-athlete achievement. The majority of research has been conducted on NCAA Division I institutions. This research looks to evaluate the relationship between athletic spending and wins in football and men's and women's basketball, along with the academic success of student-athletes at NCAA Division II schools in those same three sports.

The prevailing thought is that coaches believe they need more money to win, despite the financial struggle of many athletic departments. Increased pressure to win has

forced many athletic departments to invest more with hopes of gaining more (Jones, 2013). The outcome of this study will help guide Division II athletic administrators as they seek to increase the athletic success and academic success of the teams included in the current research.

SECTION FOUR: CONTRIBUTION TO PRACTICE

The results and subsequent recommendations of this study are to be shared via an in-person presentation to athletic directors and conference administrators during their summer 2021 meetings. This audience was chosen because of the role they play in determining the amount of investment their school makes in the sports included in this study. This presentation will provide the group with an overview of what other NCAA Division II schools are spending to support their football, men's and women's basketball teams, and how this spending is reflected in their ability to field competitive athletics programs. It is possible that the conference commissioner could refer this research to other conference commissioners across the country which could lead to similar presentations for interested parties. While I prefer to speak in-person, the presentation will be molded to allow for an online presentation through the use of Zoom or a similar online platform. The presentation slides are provided below.



- Welcome

  Good morning! I'm John Moseley, Director of Athletics and Head Men's Basketball Coach at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri. Over the past 26 years, I have spent 21 of them involved in college athletics in various capacities, ranging from being a student assistant to the men's basketball team to serving as an athletic director, a role that I have now held for nearly 6 years.

  Lincoln University was my first experience in NCAA Division II, and I struggled in my first year to understand the differences between where I came from, which was Division I. The scholarship structure was so different because in Division I we decided whether to give a young man a full scholarship or nothing. In Division II, the scholarship can range from very little to a full ride.

  It was during my second year at Lincoln that I became the interim, and then permanent, athletic director. This is where I became aware of Lincoln University's athletic budget compared to those other schools in our conference. Since that time, I became interested in knowing whether money influenced success.

- Typically, each year our budgets start in July, but how much time do we spend thinking about whether our expectations can be met by our expenses?
- As an athletic director, among our greatest responsibilities is ensuring that we operate our athletics programs within the budget that we are given. Each year we receive financial reports that contain scholarship equivalencies from our peer-institutions within the conference for the sports that we sponsor.
- Have you ever taken the time to see what your peers are spending on the sports that you offer? Do you ever look back after a team has won a championship and ask yourself how your university compared in spending?

Research Questions

- Is there a relationship between total team expenses and athletic success in football and men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions?
- Is there a relationship between total team expenses and academic success in football and men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions?

University of Missouri

- Total team expenses include game guarantees, athletically-related student aid, contractual services, equipment, operating costs, promotions, recruiting, salaries and benefits, supplies, travel, and other related expenses
- Athletic success is defined as overall and conference winning percentages, conference championships, and postseason appearances
- Academic success is measure by the Academic Success Rate for each institution

Resource-Based View

Penrose (1958) portrayed organizations as an accumulation of beneficial resources.

Won and Chelladurai (2016) defined the RBV into four categories:

- **Physical Capital Resources**
- **Human Capital Resources**
- **Financial Capital Resources**
- **Organizational Capital Resources**

University of Missouri

- The RBV created a competitive advantage for organizations that were able to assemble and use critical resources effectively (Barney, 1991).
- Physical capital resources in athletics include gameday facilities, practice facilities, weight rooms, training equipment, and athletic training rooms
- The most notable human capital resources in college athletics are student-athletes and coaches, as well as administrators and support staff
- Financial resources include funding to support operating costs, recruiting costs, the funding of scholarships, and salaries. They are also necessary to have better facilities, better coaches, and better athletes
- Organizational culture includes the culture, relationships, and history of an organization

Previous Research

- **Litan et al. (2003), Orszag and Orszag (2005), and Orszag and Israel (2009) found no significant relationship between spending and athletic success in football and men's and women's basketball.**

- **Katz (2015) found that a $100,000 increase in athletic expenditures contributed to a 6% increase in the number of championships a university won in NCAA Division III**

University of Missouri

- Much of the previous research has been done on Division I athletics
- The majority of studies used the NACDA Cup Scores as the measure of athletic success, but as you know these scores reflected a university's success over all of its sports
- Katz's 2015 study on Division III sports determined that $100,000 increase in athletic expenses increased the school's chances of winning an athletic championship
- The NCAA commissioned two earlier studies; one by Orszag and Orszag in 2005 and another by Orszag and Israel in 2009, and neither found a significant relationship between spending and winning in Division II football or men's and women's basketball.
- Caro and Elder did a sport-specific study on Division I baseball in 2017 and noted that an increase in spending gave teams a better chance to increase their win percentage and make postseason play

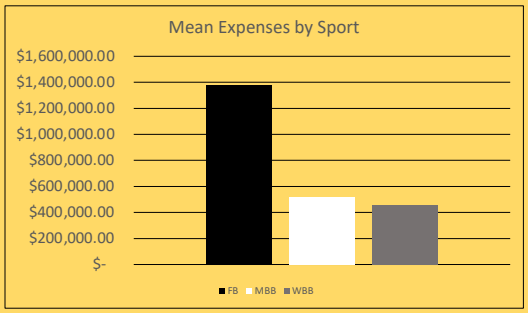
- Twenty-four Division II conferences were represented in this study
- Schools that moved to Division I or III were not included
- Schools like Morehouse, which is male only, are not required to report their financial data to the Department of Education to be included on the EADA report. Therefore, schools that did not report via the EADA report were removed

- The number of participants in football ranged from 163 to 167, men's basketball had 300 schools included, and women's basketball ranged from 300 to 301 in a given year.

- The EADA report is collected by the Department of Education on an annual basis to measure gender equity as required by Title IV.
- The NCAA Academic Success Rate measures the retention and graduation rates for Division II athletes, including those that do not receive athletic-related aid
- Conference and institutional websites were used to verify winning percentages, as well as conference championships and postseason appearances.
- IPEDS was used to collect enrollment and admissions statistics on the schools included in this study

How much money do we spend?

- Average Total Team Expenses for all D2 football and men's and women's basketball teams



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- For the 6-year period of this study, football programs' average total team expenses were $1.38-million
- Men's basketball average total team expenses were $523,196
- Women's basketball average total team expenses were $460,524

- Think about your own programs and where they may stack up against the averages

- Fulks (2013) found that it was more difficult for Division II schools to operate self-sufficiently as compared to their D1 peers who benefit from larger alumni bases ad a greater portion of television revenues.

How do we measure athletic & academic success?

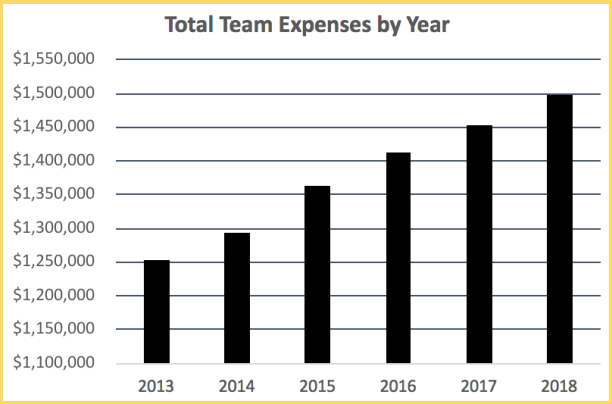
- Athletic success: overall win percentage, conference win percentage, conference champions, and postseason appearance

- Academic success: The 4-year rolling average of Academic Success Rates (ASRs)

University of Missouri

- Overall winning percentage includes all regular season and postseason games, while excluding any scrimmages or exhibitions
- Conference winning percentages includes the wins and losses of each team versus other members of the conference only
- Conference championships were identified on the conference websites and any ties resulted in multiple teams being labeled as conference champions
- Postseason appearances were identified on the NCAA site with teams appearing in the NCAA brackets.

The Growth of Football Expenses



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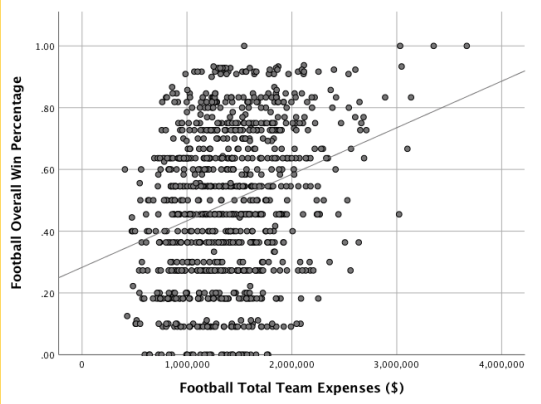
- This is where we really dive into the financial piece related to sponsoring athletic programs in Division II. As we talk about how much schools are spending, think about your own programs and where you may stack-up against the average program in Division II.
- Average spending increased from nearly $1.25 million in 2013 to $1.5 million in 2018

Key Takeaways – Football



- A $100,000 increase in total team expenses results in an average increase of 1.1% in overall win percentage and a 1.0% increase in conference win percentage
- A $100,000 increase in total team expenses is associated with 1.7% increase in chances of winning a conference championship and a 2.2% better chance of making the postseason tournament

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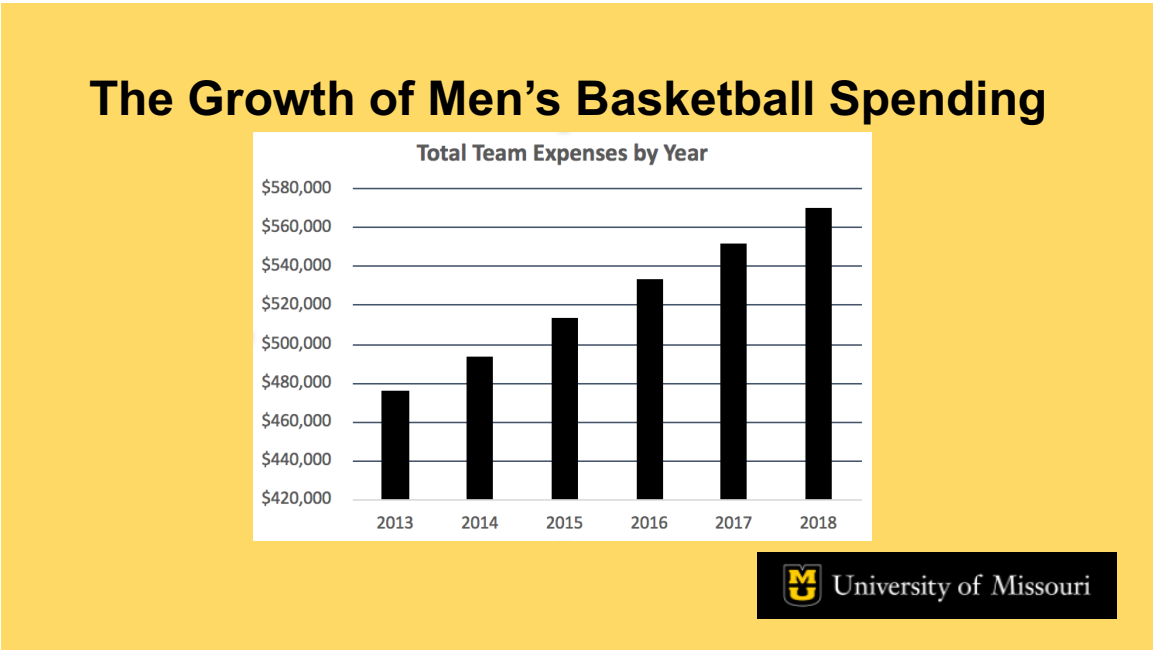
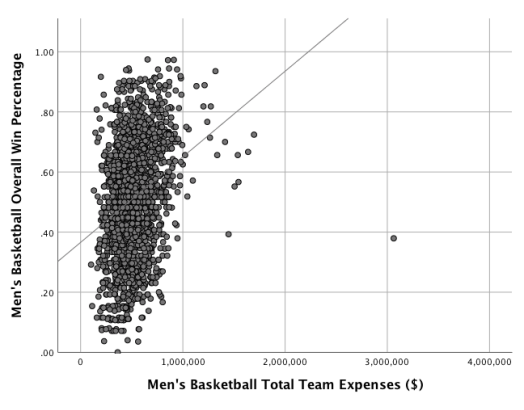
- This scatterplot represents the relationship between Football Total Team Expenses and Football Overall Win Percentage. Of the four teams that went undefeated during the time period of the study, three of them spent more than $3-million during that season.
- Orszag and Israel (2009) found that a $1-million increase in spending on football at FBS schools resulted in a statistically significant 1.8% increase in a team's overall winning percentage.
- Schools with larger budgets can contribute more to athletic scholarships to sign better players, and can also pay their coaches more which would likely help attract and retain better quality coaches.



- Average spending increased from nearly $475,000 in 2013 to $570,000 in 2018

Key Takeaways – Men's Basketball



- A $100,000 increase in total team expenses results in an average increase of 0.3% in overall and conference win percentages
- A $100,000 increase in total team expenses is associated with 0.3% increase in chances of winning a conference championship and a 0.6% better chance of making the postseason tournament

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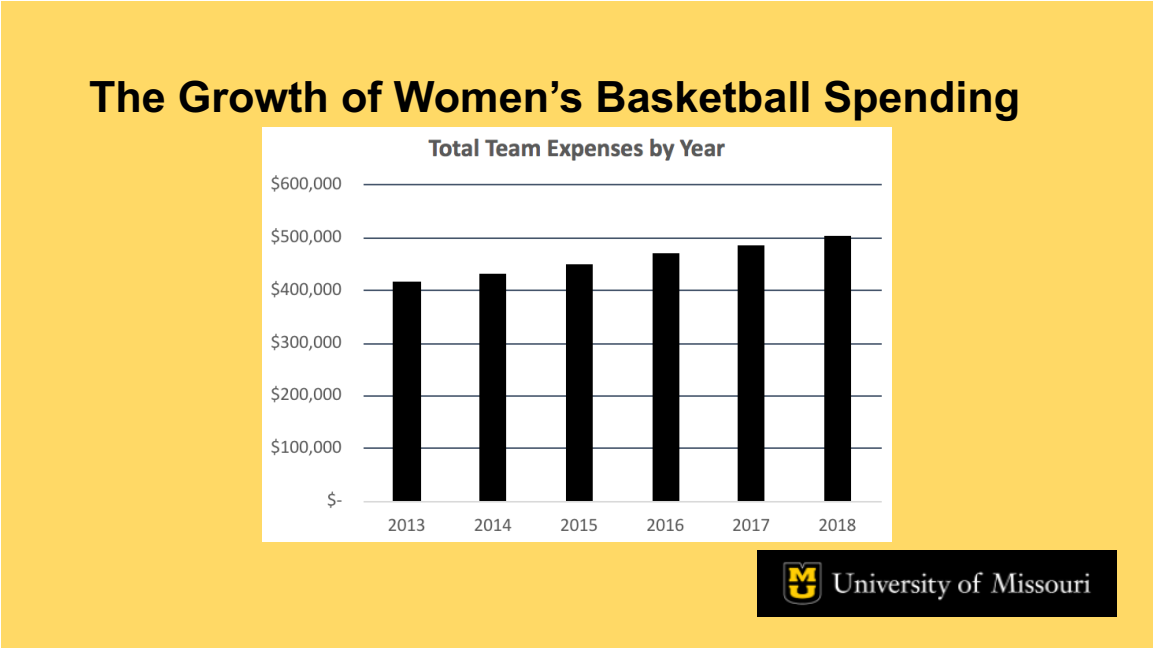
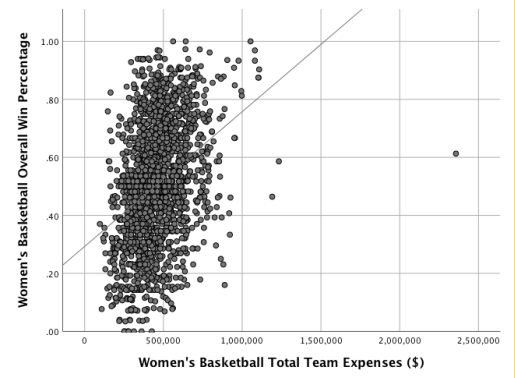
- Budgets for men's basketball were more closely aligned with one another than football budgets.
- A previous study by Orszag and Israel (2009) found no statistically significance between spending and winning in FBS basketball
- The same as football, more spending can contribute to better players and coaches to help you win.



- Average spending increased from nearly $418,000 in 2013 to $504,000 in 2018

Key Takeaways – Women's Basketball



- A $100,000 increase in total team expenses results in an average increase of 0.4% in overall and conference win percentages
- A $100,000 increase in total team expenses is associated with 0.3% increase in chances of winning a conference championship and a 0.6% better chance of making the postseason tournament

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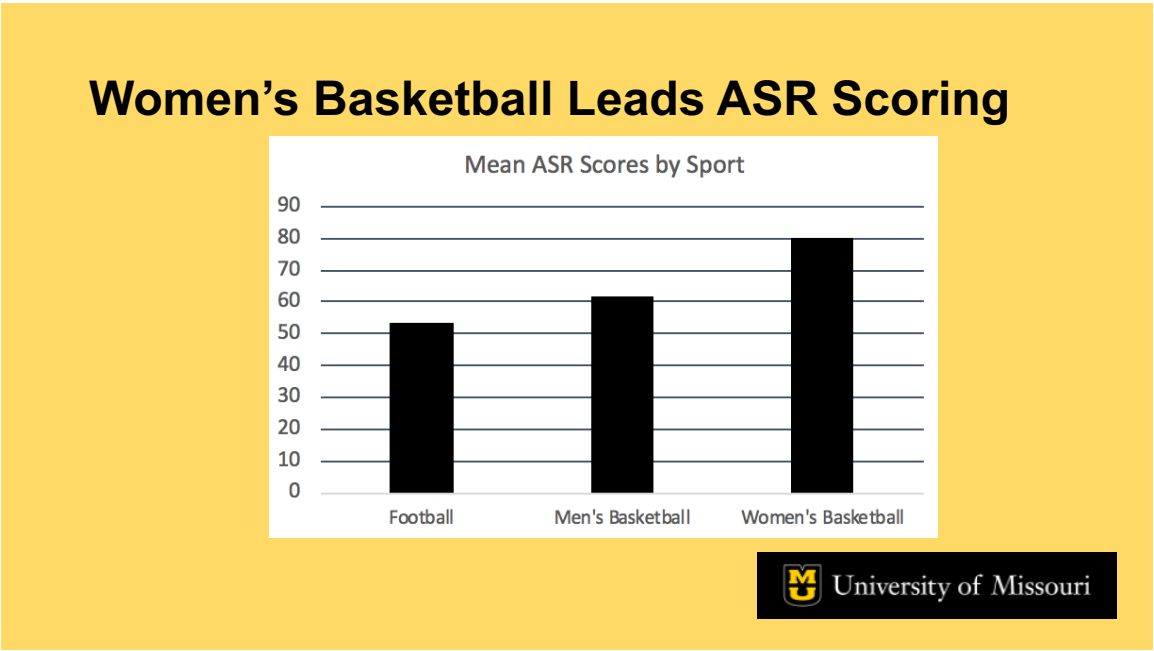
- Here we once again see a positive relationship between Total Team Expenses and Overall Win Percentage for women's basketball. Similar to men's basketball, the budgets are more closely aligned than football.
- While exploring previous research, I was unable to find literature that had examined the relationship between spending and winning in women's basketball.



- Mean ASR scores for women's basketball (80.39), men's basketball (61.82), and football (53.42)

Academic Success Takeaways

- A $100,000 increase in spending is associated with a 2.3% increase in ASR scores in women's basketball
- The total number of undergraduates was associated with a 0.64% increase in ASR scores for football, while negatively affecting ASR scores in men's basketball (-0.88%) and women's basketball (-0.50%)

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- Universities that can afford to spend an additional $100,000 in total team expenses for women's basketball can expect a 2.3% increase in ASR scores
- An interesting finding in this study was that universities with more students had higher ASR scores in football, while higher enrollment negatively impacted ASR scores for men's and women's basketball
- Do you have any thoughts on why that would be the case?

Recommendations

- **University and athletics administrators are advised to evaluate their current level of funding to determine if they should expect to win, compete for conference championships, and postseason appearances**
- **University and athletics administrators can use this information to choose which sports they should invest in to give their school the best chance to raise its athletic profile**

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- It is my hope that you can evaluate where your current spending is compared to the average for each sport included in this study
- Is your university spending above or below the average? Should you expect to be winning at a high level based on your current spending?
- Could this information be valuable to inform future decisions on where your department would be best-served to expect a greater return on your investment?

- If you know where you stack up compared to your competition, could you share this data with potential donors who may help you close the gap?

- While researching the current topic, there's was a lot of talk about the arms race in college athletics. This term is used to describe how universities feel pressure to keep up when their peers construct or renovate athletic facilities (Hoffer et al., 2015). These expenses are not included in the total team expenses that were used in this study.

Potential Further Research

- **Examine the relationship of overall athletic department expenses and Academic Success Rates across sports offered at Division II universities**

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- This would be necessary because often times the individual team budgets do not support academic programming. Total athletic department spending may provide better insight on a department's investment in the academic success of its student-athletes.

- After hearing this presentation, what other studies do you think would be of interest to this group or our peers across the NCAA?

SECTION FIVE: CONTRIBUTION TO SCHOLARSHIP

At the conclusion of this study, I am striving to publish the results in the *Journal of Sports Economics* which specializes in a variety of applied, theoretical, and empirical research topics related to sports. This publication's aim is to "further understanding of the economy, economic decision-making by individuals, both consumers and workers, and by firms, and the interaction of individuals and firms within the marketplace" (https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/journal/journal-sports-economics#aims-and-scope, Sage, n.d.).

While conducting my scholarly review on the relationship of athletic spending on athletic and academic success at Division II institutions, I discovered two articles that were influential in my desire to pursue this subject and they were both published in the *Journal of Sports Economics.* The first was a study by Jones (2013) that examined the relationship of athletic expenditures and team on-field success among NCAA Division I teams. Beaudin (2017) used a panel approach to examine the relationship between athletic expenditures and athletic program success among NCAA Division I institutions. Both studies used the EADA report to capture athletic expenditures and NACDA Director's Cup scoring to measure athletic success.

Those seeking to publish their works in the *Journal of Sports Economics* should prepare a manuscript not exceeding 30 single-sided pages with 1-inch margins. The document is to include a title page with the author's contact information, an abstract of less than 100 words, and 4-5 keywords, prior to the text of the study. This publication requires that you work not be under review elsewhere during this process.

The Influence of Spending on Success in Division II Athletics

Athletics at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) schools has played a major role in the educational experience of students, alumni, and surrounding communities since they were first introduced to college campuses (Dwyer, Eddy, Havard, & Braa, 2010). College presidents and NCAA officials often refer to athletics as the university's front porch, providing the community and prospective students with a glimpse of what the university has to offer (Suggs, 2003). Coaches, athletic directors, and university presidents at NCAA Division I schools have justified their athletic expenditures by insisting that investment in athletics leads to winning through large benefits to the university (Suggs, 2003).

Previous studies have reported that Division I schools with winning football programs experience an increase in alumni athletic donations, as well as in the number of admissions applicants and in-state students attending the institution (Anderson, 2017; Pope & Pope, 2014). While success in athletics at the NCAA Division I level brings about off-field benefits for the respective institutions, there is a shortage of literature related to Division II athletics.

With over 300 schools currently participating in Division II athletics, there has been little research to evaluate whether a university's investment is at a level that contributes to producing winning teams or assisting their student-athletes with satisfactorily meeting the standards for the NCAA's Academic Success Rate (ASR). This study sought to identify whether NCAA Division II universities who spend more to support their football and men's and women's basketball programs should expect to have a better winning percentage and achieve higher ASR's than their peers.

Prior research on the relationship between athletic spending and academic success has generally occurred at the university level (e.g., Comeaux, 2013; Desrochers, 2013; Foster & Huml, 2017; Huml, Hambrick, & Hums, 2015; Navarro, 2015; Smith, 2019; Weiss & Robinson, 2013). For administrators who view athletics as a marketing department for the university, knowing the level of funding necessary to graduate students and compete for championships can help determine the level of investment necessary for academic and athletic success.

This study seeks to provide administrators with a better understanding of the relationship of athletic spending on winning and graduating their student-athletes, which could support Division II administrators' justification of whether or not to provide funding for athletics on their campuses. Specifically, the research questions guiding this study are:

1. Is there a relationship between athletic department spending and team athletic success in the sports of football and men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions?
2. Is there a relationship between athletic department spending and team-level student-athlete academic success for the sports of football and men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions?

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There is a vast amount of previous research on NCAA athletics. As part of the research for this study, the researcher examined studies directly related to attributes of Division II athletics specifically. In addition, a review was conducted on literature related to the relationship of expenditures on athletic and academic success across all divisions

of the NCAA. It was also important to understand the benefits of successful athletics programs to the institution. Lastly, the researcher reviewed prior studies that utilized the Resource-Based View to as the conceptual framework to evaluate the use of financial capital resources, physical capital, human resources, and organizational resources.

NCAA Division II

The three divisions of the NCAA each have distinct characteristics that distinguish between them, beginning with the minimum number of sports that institutions are required to sponsor: Division I: 14, Division II: 10, and Division III: 5 (NCAA, n.d.-c). Another significant difference between the three divisions is the athletic scholarship structure. The Division I model is designed to provide full athletic scholarships, Division II provides partial athletic scholarships, and Division III provides no athletic scholarships (Feezell, 2009). More specifically, the Division II model is designed for universities to offer partial athletic scholarships that allow student-athletes to combine athletic aid, academic aid, federal financial aid, and grants, along with personal money (Feezell, 2009; Fulks, 2010).

It is more difficult for Division II schools to operate self-sufficiently as compared to their Division I peers who benefit from donations from larger alumni bases and a greater portion of television revenue (Fulks, 2013). Additionally, Division I institutions benefit significantly from the revenue generated by the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, while only $42.1 million of the $821 million received by the NCAA goes to support Division II institutions (NCAA, n.d.-g). In a 2014 report on Division II athletics, the NCAA stated that university allocated funds were used to provide 80% of the total revenues for football-playing schools. Non-football playing schools received nearly 85%

of their income from university allocated funds (Fulks, 2015), while ticket sales, sports camps and cash contributions account for less than 9% of total revenues (Burnsed, 2015).

Limited resources, as compared to their Division I peers, has forced Division II schools into tough decisions regarding their ability and desire to invest in college athletics (Dwyer et al., 2010). Though some university administrators point out the benefits of athletic, critics argue that athletic administrators and coaches diminish the focus of academics while overemphasizing the importance of sports (Denhart et al., 2010). Gerdy (2006) noted that college athletics was all about games and lacked an emphasis on the educational experience for the students. Eitzen (2006) suggested that universities align their athletic departments more closely with the academic mission of the respective institution, while calling for the elimination of admissions exceptions for athletes.

Expenditures' Relationship on Athletic Success

Litan et al. (2003) found no significant relationships between athletic spending and team performance while examining 100 NCAA Division I football and men's basketball programs. Orszag and Orszag (2005) followed with a related study of NCAA Division II schools and failed to discover a relationship between spending and athletic success. Orszag and Israel (2009) followed that study with a look at the relationship between spending and success in football and men's basketball at the Division I level. They found that a $1 million increase in spending on football at FBS schools resulted in a statistically significant 1.8% increase in a team's overall winning percentage, a slightly

positive relationship between the variables. However, there was no relationship among outcomes in men's basketball.

Other studies have looked more broadly at the relationship of spending to a university's overall finish in the NACDA Director's Cup standings. The Director's Cup is an annual competition among schools at each of the three divisions of the NCAA, as well as the NAIA (Learfield, n.d.). Points are awarded based on a university's performance in individual sports, with total scores reflecting success across all of the sports that are offered at a particular school. Winners are recognized for having the country's best overall athletics program.

Lawrence, Li, Regas, and Kander (2012) examined over 400 schools from NCAA Division I, II, and III, as well as NAIA. Only among NAIA institutions was there a significant and positive relationship between athletic expenditures and scoring in the Director's Cup standings. Spavero and Warner (2013) used data from two nonconsecutive years to evaluate institutions from Division I and III and found a positive relationship between athletic expenditures and Director's Cup scoring among Division I schools. Katz et al., (2015) found that a $100,000 increase in athletic expenditures contributed to a 6% increase in the number of championships an institution won. While some Division III institutions could afford to invest the additional resources to position their athletic teams for better success, other universities cannot afford such an investment.

Expenditures Relationship with Academic Success

The academic success of student-athletes has been the focus of several previous studies (Berry, 2014; Foster & Huml, 2017; Huml et al., 2015; Navarro, 2015; Nite, 2012). The first area that is influential in academic success is the availability of resources

to support the educational mission. Nite (2012) explored the challenges which influence the academic development of student-athletes at Division II institutions. Unlike many schools in Division I, Division II schools often lacked the necessary resources to construct facilities dedicated to academics, as well as to provide additional academic programming for student-athletes. While the pressure to win is similar to that of Division I, a lack of financial resources creates a significant challenge to the academic success of student-athletes participating in Division II.

At universities with smaller athletic budgets, the relationship between the coach and their student-athletes is more significant, according to Nite (2012), who found that many Division II institutions employed one or fewer people to oversee academics within the department. Two primary impediments to student-athletes' academic success were limited resources and the pressure they face to win. While some Division I institutions have a similar number of student-athletes as their Division II peers, Division I schools are employing multiple people to perform duties assigned to one employee at a Division II school. Cunningham and Ashley (2001) found similarities in the general operating budget regardless of the division in which the athletic department competed. They noted characteristics that are specific to NCAA Division II, which make it more challenging to supply academic support similar to those in Division I. Funding inequities required many members of Division II athletic departments to perform duties outside of the expected scope of their position.

Coaches and others within the athletic department often work to identify academic resources available that can contribute to their student-athletes' academic success (Huml et al., 2015). Resources include finding tutors, mandating study hall hours,

and serving as the academic advisor. Though coaches may lack the necessary skills, limited departmental support often demands that coaches play a role in the academic lives of their student-athletes (Nite, 2012). The potential impact on eligibility drives coaches to have a greater interest in the academic success of their athletes. While there are coaches who receive stipends based on the athletic success of their teams, there are fewer coaches that received financial bonuses based on the team's academic performance (Wilson & Burke, 2013).

Benefits of Successful Athletics to the Institution

While Orszag and Israel (2009) found that athletics spending grew at nearly twice the rate of academic spending, college presidents often allude to the indirect benefits of athletics when attempting to defend the use of student fees to support their athletic departments (Morton, 2017). Presidents, coaches, and athletic directors justify their investment in athletics by arguing that spending leads to greater success athletically, which in turn provides additional benefits to the institution (Suggs, 2003). These indirect benefits include increased applications to public institutions (Perez, 2012; Smith, 2008), general greater advertising effects (Chung, 2013), and increased donations (Stinson & Howard, 2007).

There has been a vast amount of research conducted on the value that winning athletics programs provides an institution. Previous literature on the financial and non-financial benefits of college athletics reflects inconsistent conclusions. There have been studies that have found significant, positive benefits in admissions (Anderson, 2017; Pope & Pope, 2009), student body profile (Anderson, 2017; Smith, 2009), student experiences (Stinston, Marquardt, & Chandley, 2012), relationships with stakeholders

(Denhart et al., 2010; Kelly & Dixon, 2011), and donations to the university (Daughtrey & Stotlar, 2000; Humphreys & Mondello, 2007).

Other research contradicts the previously discussed findings including Daughtrey and Stotlar (2000) who found that while giving for Division I athletics increased when teams won football championships, the same could not be said for giving at the Division II level. Additionally, justification for athletic spending often is supported by an unfounded belief that successful programs contribute to the enhancement of the university's academic profile; an increase in private giving; and an increase in the quality and quantity of applicants to the institution (Frank, 2004). Frank (2004) also argued that because of the 'winner-take-all' mentality that surrounds college athletics, there were no long-term benefits for most programs.

Conceptual Framework: The Resource-Based View

Within the Resource-Based View (RBV), resources are defined into four different categories: financial capital resources (e.g., equity and debt); physical capital resources (e.g., space and equipment); human capital resources (e.g., personnel); and organizational capital resources (e.g., relationships, past success, and culture). While each of the four resources play a role in winning, this study focused on financial capital resources because of their influence in the acquisition of physical capital, human capital, and organizational capital. The goal of the resource-based approach is to identify gaps in resources that can be filled to replenish and upgrade the organization. This replenishment allows the organization to be more effective than its rivals (Grant, 1991).

Penrose (1958) was one of the first to introduce the RBV to describe organizations as a collection of productive resources. Organizations' ability to gather

critical resources, and use those resources effectively, create a competitive advantage according to the RBV (Barney, 1991). This theory recommends that organizations acquire resources, spend those resources wisely, and develop strategies based on a review of the utilization of said resources (Won & Chelladurai, 2016).

Financial Capital Resources

Financial capital contributes to enhancing physical capital, human capital, and organizational capital of an athletic department (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). The RBV implies that organizations with enhanced reputations, better employees, more dedicated customers, and enhanced facilities have a competitive advantage over their competition (Barney, 1995; Mahoney, 1995). Barney (1991) noted the central tenet of the RBV as an organization's ability to control and utilize resources to create a competitive advantage. Wolfe, Wright, and Smart (2006) used the RBV to analyze the Oakland Athletics' use of an innovative player evaluation technique to overcome their organizations disparity in financial resources from some other Major League Baseball teams.

According to Won (2004), financial resources are required to operate college athletic departments successfully. These resources allow colleges to sponsor individual athletic teams, participate in athletic competition, recruit athletes, and provide those athletes with scholarships to attend the university. Smart and Wolfe (2000) used the RBV to analyze a single sport (football) in the Big Ten Conference. This study implied that it would be beneficial for universities who achieved success in a single sport would play a role in the success of the athletic department. Similar research by Caro and Elder (2017) evaluated the relationship of athletic expenditures on winning baseball games.

Physical Capital Resources

The importance of facilities has been noted in earlier research on college athletics (Andrew, Martinez, & Flavell, 2016; Hoffer, Humphreys, Lacombe, & Ruseski, 2014; Saunders, 2010). Gameday facilities, practice facilities, weight rooms, training equipment, and athletic training rooms are all examples of physical capital resources within college athletics (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). While some universities can establish stand-alone academic centers for athletics, others utilize space within existing facilities for the same purposes (N4A, 2013).

A prospective student-athletes' decision to attend a university is impacted not only by the school's academic reputation but also by that school's athletic facilities (Andrew et al., 2016; Saunders, 2010). NCAA rules prohibit universities from paying its student-athletes, so athletic departments feel pressure to provide better athletic facilities than their peers when seeking to attract the services of the best student-athletes (Hoffer et al., 2014). This pressure is relative across the landscape of all the divisions of the NCAA. Within Division II, the Mid-American Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MIAA) has seen several of its members invest in athletic facility projects in recent history (Boyce, 2018). Missouri Western University was the first in the MIAA to have an indoor facility constructed for use by its football program (Divino, 2009), followed in the past five years by the construction of indoor track and football facilities at Pittsburgh State University, Northwest Missouri State University, and Washburn University (Boyce, 2018).

Human Capital Resources

The most notable human capital within a college athletic department is its student-athletes and its coaches (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). The sports chosen for this study were football, men's basketball, and women's basketball. Two of the sports included, football

and men's basketball, have been at the center of the exploitation of Black male athletes, whose participation has contributed to the financial gain of many American college institutions (Singer, 2019). In 2019, Black student-athletes accounted for 46% of the participants in Division II football but only 17% of the head football coaches were Black. More staggering is the fact that when you remove the head coaches from HBCUs, there are only eight Black head football coaches at 169 Division II football-playing universities (NCAA, n.d.-i).

College athletic administrators often justify spending on coaching salaries because of the belief that this increase in spending will result in more wins for their programs (Tsitsos and Nixon 2012). However, research has found inconsistencies between the relationship of coaching salaries on team success for Division I football and men's basketball coaches (Brady & Upton, 2007; Wieberg, Upton, Perez, & Berkowitz, 2009). A study by Cunningham and Sagas (2004) did find that coaching experience and diversity amongst the staff were significant predictors of success for Division I football programs. Less is known about metrics predicting athletic and academic success in NCAA Division II universities.

Coaching salaries are also influenced by a coach's ability to attract and retain the best recruits for their programs. A university's head coach, and the assistant coaches, were among two of the top five reasons that a prospect chose to attend a specific college (Andrew et al., 2016). Researchers have found that signing better players had led to success in athletic competition (Langelett, 2003). The amount of athletic scholarship funds provided is an essential factor in a student-athletes decision to attend a university (Schneder & Messenger, 2012).

Organizational Capital Resources

Barney (1991) defined organizational capital resources as the culture, relationships, and history of an organization. Earlier research has explored this notion of organizational capital resources within college athletics (Gladden, Milne, & Sutton, 1998; Pulter & Wolfe, 1999; Smart & Wolfe, 2000). In a study on the Penn State football, researchers determined that the history of success and the culture that surrounded the program provided a competitive advantage over their Big Ten peers (Smart & Wolfe, 2000). Pulter and Wolfe (1999) detailed that the support of fans and alumni of a university's athletic department fans and alumni was impacted by their perceptions of the department's winning, academic success, ethical behavior, and operating within budget.

Empirical Methods

This study aimed to correlate total team expenses with four measures of athletic success: overall winning percentage, conference winning percentage, conference championships won, and postseason appearances. Additionally, total team expenses were correlated with the four-year rolling average of Academic Success Rates. The correlations were conducted using each of the three sports include in this study (football, men's basketball, and women's basketball) independently of one another. The sports included in this current research were chosen because they are considered revenue sports (Jackson, 2018). The EADA report requires that universities report on these sports individually while totaling all other sports into the categories of male sports and female sports (USDE, 2015).

Sample

This current research included NCAA Division II schools that participated in football and men's and women's basketball between 2013-2018. There are 314 Division II institutions located in 45 states within the U.S., as well as Canada and Puerto Rico (NCAA, n.d.-f). This study includes institutions that self-reported as NCAA Division II from 2013-2018. Institutions that moved to a different division during this period and universities that did not sponsor the respective sports included in the current study were excluded from analysis. According to information from the 2018 EADA Report, nearly 29,000 student-athletes participated in the sports included in this study (USDOE, n.d.-b).

Data Sources

The data for this study was compiled by the research from five secondary data sources: the Equity in Athletics Data Act (EADA) report, the NCAA, conference and institutional websites, and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). A description of the respective data source, and the reason it is being utilized, is detailed below.

EADA Report. Athletic spending is measured using the information reported to the Office of Postsecondary Education within the United States Department of Education as part of the Equity in Athletics Data Act (USDOE, n.d.-a). The EADA was created to monitor the progress of gender equity across the intercollegiate athletics' landscape (Yiamouyiannis & Hawes, 2015). Among the resources available to the general public is the EADA Cutting Tool. This tool consists of annually submitted data from co-educational postsecondary institutions that receive Title IV funding and sponsor intercollegiate athletics programs.

The EADA Cutting Tool provides a breakdown of financial resources such as operating expenses per participant, and per team, for each sport the university offers (USDOE, n.d.-a). These resources include funding to operate the entire athletic department and individual athletic teams, recruit student-athletes, provide scholarships to student-athletes, pay coaches' salaries, and host athletic contests. Additionally, the EADA report contains demographic information on each university that includes total enrollment for the respective school.

NCAA Academic Success Rate. The Academic Success Rate (ASR) is the percentage of student-athletes who graduate within six years of initial enrollment in college and includes virtually all Division II student-athletes, including transfers and those not receiving athletics scholarships (Durham, 2015). The ASR for Division II is similar to the Graduation Success Rate that is recorded for Division I student-athletes, with the exception being the inclusion of freshmen student-athletes that do not receive athletic-related aid (NCAA, n.d.-e). Also, the ASR includes student-athletes who transfer schools after their initial enrollment and discards student-athletes that leave school while academically eligible. The current study utilizes the four-year rolling average for APR scores that is reported by the NCAA. This information is received annually from all Division II athletic departments as part of their responsibilities of membership to the NCAA and is available for public access on the NCAA's website.

Athletic Conference Websites. Data was collected from the athletic conference websites for the universities that participate in the sports included in this study. These conference websites provide standings for the years to be evaluated in the current

research. Standings include total wins and losses, as well as wins and losses in conference play.

Institutional Athletic Websites. The final source for data collection is athletic websites that are maintained by the respective Division II institutions. These websites were used to verify information collected from the conference websites pertaining to winning percentages for the sports being analyzed in this current study.

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) operates within the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) which is a part of the United States Department of Education. IPEDS annually collects data in seven general categories: institutional characteristics, institutional prices, enrollment, student financial aid, degrees and certificates conferred, student persistence and success, and institutional human and fiscal resources (NCES, 2014). For this study, IPEDS data was used to collect institutional data pertaining to total undergraduate enrollment, institutional selectivity, and whether an institution is public or private.

Variables and Constructs

Dependent variables. Dependent variables to measure athletic success for this research include the overall winning percentage, conference winning percentage, conference championships, and participation in postseason events. To measure academic success, the Academic Success Rate (ASR) is recorded for each NCAA Division II institution in the NCAA's Academic Success Rate database serves as a dependent variable.

Measures of athletic success. Athletic success often comes down to how much a much a team wins, including conference championships and postseason appearances. Win-loss records were gathered from each of the 24 athletic conference websites that comprise NCAA Division II. To calculate overall winning percentage, first the total number of games is determined by adding the wins and losses together, then dividing the total number of wins by the total number of games played (Ang, 2018). Overall winning percentage includes all regular season and post-season games, while excluding any exhibition or scrimmage games that were conducted. Conference winning percentages, which include the wins and losses of each team versus other members of the league, were collected at the same time as the overall record.

While collecting information from the conference websites, the researcher collected data which denoted the team (or teams) that finished with the best winning percentage within the conference standings. Teams that won the regular season conference championship were identified versus those that did not. If multiple teams finished with identical winning percentages in the regular season, they were each identified as conference champions.

The last dependent variable is post-season appearance. Sixty-four teams make the NCAA Division II Postseason Tournament in the sports of men's and women's basketball (Cavadi, 2020). Football championships in NCAA Division II consist of 28 teams (Cavadi, 2019). For the respective years included in the current study, a dichotomous variable was created to identify teams that made an NCAA postseason event versus those that did not, which is similar to what was used by Caro and Elder (2017). This information was collected from the NCAA Division II website.

Measures of academic success. The NCAA uses the Academic Success Rate (ASR) to measure the academic success of programs competing in Division II. ASR is the percentage of student-athletes who graduate within six years of initial enrollment in college and includes virtually all Division II student-athletes, including transfers and those not receiving athletics scholarships (Durham, 2015). The ASR is calculated by totaling the number of student-athlete graduates and dividing that by the total number of first-time, full-time freshmen on athletics aid, 2- and 4-year transfers on athletics aid, mid-year enrollees on athletics aid, and all non-scholarship athletes. Students who transfer into an institution for athletics are entered into the cohort that corresponds to the first year they enrolled as a full-time student at a 2- or 4-year college. Students who are academically eligible and transfer from an institution are removed, thus reducing the denominator for their cohort (NCAA, n.d.-e). This information was collected from the NCAA's Academic Success Rate website which includes the ASR database, and the scores reflect four-year rolling averages for each institution.

Key independent variables. The researcher used total athletic expenditures to measure athletic spending for these sports. It was necessary to pull financial data from 2004-2018 to include all of the years accounting for the four-year rolling averages of the ASR. Total expenses represents the amount universities spend on salaries and benefits for coaches and staff members, scholarships (including room and board, along with student fees), operating and equipment costs, along with travel expenses and game day operational costs. This information was retrieved using the EADA Cutting Tool.

Control variables. Covariates are used to assist with controlling for confounding factors to reduce bias in the estimated relationship between institutional athletic

expenditures and dependent variables. The same covariates were used to address the relationship between athletic expenditures and ASR. To account for institutional selectivity, the current study controlled for the number of students admitted at the 25th-percentile and 75th-percentile of composite ACT scores, as well as the university's admissions yield. This information was gathered from the IPEDS report. Additionally, the number of participants (as reported on the EADA report) will impact the amount a university spends on equipment, travel, meals, and other operating costs. Team participation represents the number of student-athletes on a respective sport's roster. For the years included in this study, the average football program had 111 student-athletes participating on the squad, while men's and women's basketball had 17 and 15.5 student-athletes, respectively. The number of total undergraduate students at an institution (as reported on the IPEDS report) could impact the amount of university funding provided to the school's athletic department.

Statistical Design

The design for this study is a quantitative correlational analysis to investigate the relationship between athletic department spending and athletic success and academic success of NCAA Division II institutions. This correlational research is used to determine the relationships between two or more variables. According to Mertler (2018), the word *relationship* means "an individual's status on one variable tends to reflect his or her status on another variable" (p. 119). Predicting future conditions is made possible by understanding the strength between multiple variables. Mertler (2018) also states that correlations sometimes suggest that one variable causes the other to occur. Once

correlations are established, regressions are run to understand the relative influence on the outcome variable.

Prior research by Jones (2013) applied a similar design that consisted of a yearly, fixed effects regression analysis measured over 4 years. Caro and Elder (2017) used a similar approach while studying the relationship between athletic expenditures and winning percentage and participation postseason play in NCAA Division I baseball teams.

Results

Results for each of the sports are reported independently of the respective sport: football, men's basketball, and women's basketball. Athletic success outcomes are structured first using a scatterplot to demonstrate the relationship between total team expenses and overall winning percentages, followed by a description of spending on the respective sport. This is followed by tables describing the outcomes of multiple regressions that were run using the dependent variables related to athletic success: overall winning percentage, conference winning percentage, conference championships won, and postseason appearances. Lastly, academic success is reported using a table describing the outcomes of a multiple regression including total team expenses and ASR scores.

Athletic Success

Football. Athletic success for football was measured using four dependent variables: overall winning percentage, conference winning percentage, conference championships won, and postseason appearances achieved. These variables were used to determine the relationship with total team expenses. Figure 1 demonstrates a positive relationship between football overall win percentage and total team expenses, meaning

that Division II universities that spend more on their football teams typically win more games than those who spend less.

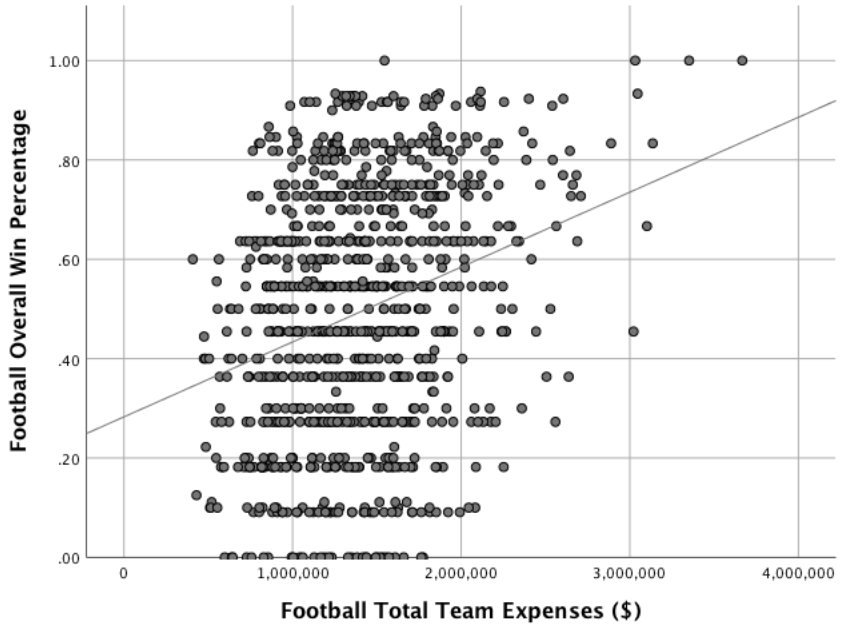

Figure 1. Scatterplot of Football Overall Win Percentage and Total Team Expenses

Table 1 represents mean total football expenses for each of the years included in the current study. For the six-years included in this study, the average football program spent nearly $1.38-million on total team expenses. The average football total team expenses increased each year, with nearly a $250,000 rise for the total period. In the final year of the study, an average football team's total expenses had risen to $1,497,386.

Table 1
Mean Football Total Team Expenses by Year

Year	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation
2013	163	$1,252,343	$436,962
2014	163	$1,294,529	$420,666
2015	164	$1,362,388	$458,627
2016	166	$1,412,060	$484,305
2017	166	$1,452,544	$499,740
2018	167	$1,497,386	$514,461
Total	989	$1,379,332	$477,182

Table 2 presents the multiple regression results between football overall win percentage, as well as football conference win percentage, and variables including total team expenses, total team participation, the number of students admitted to the university at the 25th and 75th percentile of ACT composite scores, the university's admissions yield, and the total number of undergraduates for each university.

Table 2
Linear Regression of Variables and Football Overall Win Percentage and Conference Win Percentage

	Overall Win Percentage		Conference Win Percentage	
Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Expenses	0.011**	0.199	0.010**	0.167
	(0.002)		(0.003)	
Team Participation	0.001*	0.088	0.001**	0.085
	(0.000)		(0.000)	
ACT Composite 25	0.015	0.147	0.021*	0.181
	(0.008)		(0.010)	
ACT Composite 75	-0.015*	-0.170	-0.022*	-0.221
	(0.007)		(0.009)	
Admissions Yield	-0.001	-0.042	-0.001	-0.067
	(0.001)		(0.001)	
Total Undergraduates	0.023	0.278	0.026**	0.272
	(0.003)		0.003	
Observations	814		795	
R-squared	0.158		0.135	

Note. Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05. ** p<0.01.

A statistically significant relationship exists between overall winning percentage and total team expenses (*b*=0.011; p<.01). This demonstrates that a $100,000 increase in spending results in an average increase of 1.1% in overall winning percentage. There was also a statistically significant relationship between conference winning percentage and total team expenses (*b*=0.010; p<.01). This reveals that a $100,000 increase in spending results in average increase of 1.0% to the conference winning percentage.

Overall winning percentage was only slightly impacted by total team participation (b=0.001; p<.05), meaning that teams with larger squad sizes had higher overall winning percentages. A larger number of team members increases the likelihood that there are more talented student-athletes to put on the field for competition. Consistent with overall winning percentage, conference winning percentage was only slightly influenced by total team participation (b=0.001; p<.01).

The number of students at the 75th percentile of ACT composite scores demonstrated a negative statistically significant relationship with both overall winning percentage (b= -0.015; p<.05) as well as conference winning percentage (b= -0.022; p<.05). Meanwhile, students at the 25th percentile of ACT composite scores showed a positive statistically significant relationship with conference winning percentage (b=0.021; p<.05).

Additional measures of athletic success used were conference championships and postseason appearances (Table 3). There was a positive statistically significant relationship between overall team expenses and teams that won conference championships and (b=0.017; p<.01). Similarly, the likelihood of a team advancing to the postseason was positively influenced by total team expenses (b=0.022; p<.01). Each $100,000 increase in expenditures on a university's football team was associated with an increase in their chances of winning a conference championship by 1.7%, and a 2.2% better chance of making the postseason.

Table 3
Linear Regression of Total Expense Variables on Football Conference Championships and Postseason Appearances

	Conference Champions		Postseason Appearances	
Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Expenses	0.017**	0.263	0.022**	0.276
	(0.003)		(0.003)	
Team Participation	0.001	0.001	0.035	0.024
	(0.048)		(0.056)	
ACT Composite 25	0.008	0.059	0.020	0.131
	(0.011)		(0.013)	
ACT Composite 75	-0.020*	-0.174	-0.024*	-0.181
	(0.010)		(0.011)	
Admissions Yield	-0.001	-0.036	-0.001	-0.023
	(0.001)		0.001	
Total Undergraduates	0.009*	0.085	0.025**	0.196
	(0.004)		0.004	
Observations	826		829	
R-squared	0.076		0.135	

Note. standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05. ** p<0.01.

Men's basketball. Figure 2 demonstrates an even greater positive relationship between men's basketball overall win percentage and total team expenses than that of football. This shows that Division II universities that spend more on their men's basketball teams typically win more games.

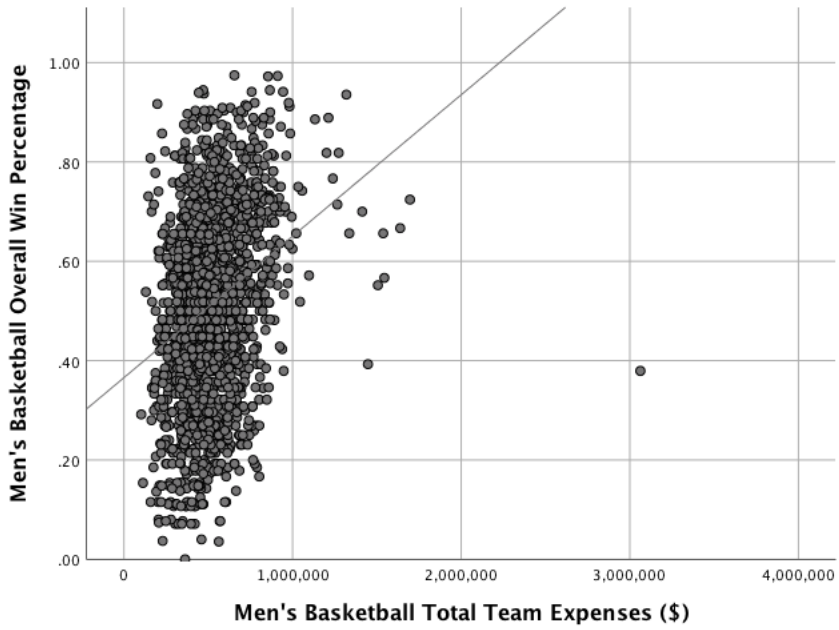

Figure 2. Scatterplot of Men's Basketball Overall Win Percentage and Total Team Expenses.

Table 4 represents mean total men's basketball expenses for each of the years included in the current study. For the six-years included in this study, the average men's basketball program spent over $523,000 on total team expenses annually, with expenses increasing each year with nearly a $95,000 surge for the total period. In the final year of the study, an average men's basketball team's total expenses had risen to $570,404.

Table 4
Mean Men's Basketball Total Team Expenses by Year

Year	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation
2013	300	$475,796	$171,214
2014	300	$493,595	$173,817
2015	300	$513,395	$186,592
2016	300	$533,731	$197,940
2017	300	$552,258	$205,999
2018	300	$570,404	$240,397
Total	1,800	$523,196	$199,794

Table 5 presents the multiple regression results between men's basketball overall win percentage, as well as men's basketball conference win percentage, and variables including total team expenses, total team participation, 25th and 75th percentile ACT scores, the university's admissions yield, and the total number of undergraduates for each university.

Table 5
Linear Regression of Variables and Men's Basketball Overall Win Percentage and Conference Win Percentage

	Overall Win Percentage		Conference Win Percentage	
Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Expenses	0.003**	0.281	0.003**	0.269
	(0.000)		(0.000)	
Team Participation	0.000	0.010	0.000	0.008
	(0.001)		(0.001)	
ACT Composite 25	0.008	0.110	0.005	0.064
	(0.005)		(0.005)	
ACT Composite 75	-0.010*	-0.141	-0.010*	-0.134
	(0.004)		(0.005)	
Admissions Yield	0.000	0.030	0.000	0.011
	(0.000)		(0.000)	
Total Undergraduates	0.006**	0.121	0.007**	0.118
	(0.001)		0.001	
Observations	1440		1420	
R-squared	0.101		0.085	

Note. standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05. ** p<0.01.

A slightly positive statistically significant relationship was discovered between overall winning percentage and total team expenses (b=0.003; p<.01). This demonstrates that a $100,000 increase in spending results in an average increase of 0.3% in overall winning percentage. There was a statistically significant relationship between conference winning percentage and total team expenses (b=0.003; p<.01). This shows that a

$100,000 increase in spending results in average increase of 0.3% to the conference winning percentage.

Other measures of athletic success used were conference championships and postseason appearances (Table #6). There was a positive statistically significant relationship between overall team expenses and teams that won conference (*b*=0.003; p<.01); Likewise, the possibility of a team advancing to the postseason was positively influenced by the total team expenses (*b*=0.006; p<.01). Each $100,000 increase in total athletic expenditures on a university's men's basketball team was associated with an 0.3% increase of winning a conference championship, and a 0.6% better chance of making the postseason.

Table 6
Linear Regression of Total Expense Variables on Men's Basketball Conference Championships and Postseason Appearances

	Conference Champions		Postseason Appearances	
Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Expenses	0.003**	0.187	0.006**	0.263
	(0.000)		0.001	
Team Participation	-0.001	-0.028	-0.003	-0.049
	(0.001)		(0.002)	
ACT Composite 25	-0.002	-0.013	0.020	0.119
	(0.007)		(0.010)	
ACT Composite 75	-0.008	-0.083	-0.021*	-0.148
	(0.006)		(0.009)	
Admissions Yield	0.034	0.055	0.002	-0.001
	(0.016)		(0.078)	
Total Undergraduates	0.001	0.020	0.009**	0.079
	(0.002)		(0.003)	
Observations	1458		1479	
R-squared	0.029		0.083	

Note. standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05. ** p<0.01.

Women's basketball. Figure 3 demonstrates a positive relationship between women's basketball overall win percentage and total team expenses, meaning that Division II universities that spend more on their women's basketball teams typically win more games than those who spend less.

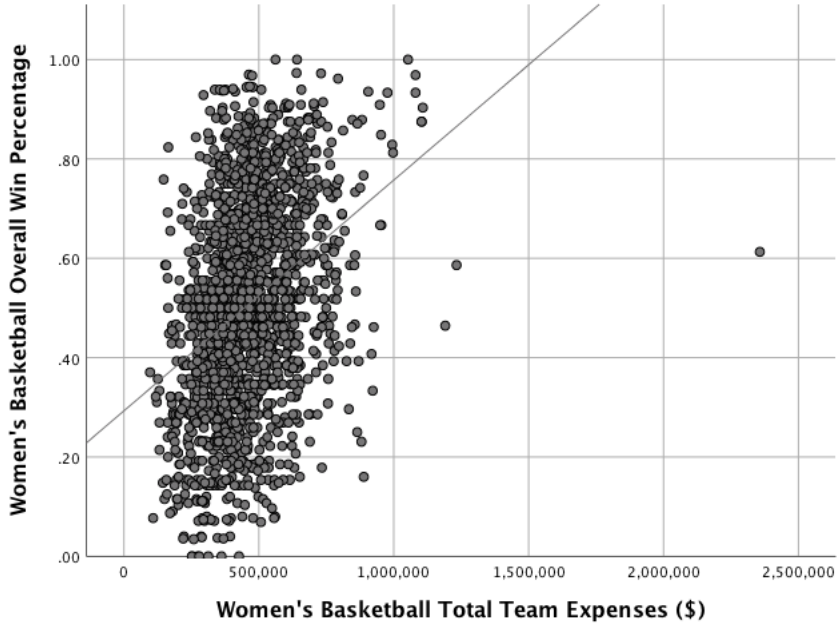

Figure 3. Scatterplot of Women's Basketball Overall Win Percentage and Total Team Expenses

Table 7 represents mean total women's basketball expenses for each of the years included in the current study. For the six-years included in this study, the average women's basketball program spent over $460,000 on total team expenses annually, with the average women's basketball total team expenses increasing each year with nearly a $86,000 escalation for the total period. In the final year of the study, an average women's basketball team's total expenses had risen to $504,426.

Table 7
Mean Women's Basketball Total Team Expenses by Year

Year	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation
2013	300	$418,105	$144,511
2014	301	$432,280	$141,562
2015	301	$449,980	$145,724
2016	301	$471,075	$159,798
2017	301	$487,136	$166,010
2018	301	$504,426	$198,432
Total	1,805	$460,524	$163,132

Table 8 presents the multiple regression results between women's basketball overall win percentage, as well as women's basketball conference win percentage, and variables including total team expenses, total team participation, 25th and 75th percentile ACT scores, the university's admissions yield, and the total number of undergraduates for each university.

Table 8
Linear Regression of Variables and Women's Basketball Overall Win Percentage and Conference Win Percentage

	Overall Win Percentage		Conference Win Percentage	
Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Expenses	0.004**	0.308	0.004**	0.263
	(0.000)		(0.000)	
Team Participation	-0.001	-0.011	-0.002	-0.031
	(0.001)		(0.001)	
ACT Composite 25	0.008	0.095	0.005	0.049
	(0.005)		(0.006)	
ACT Composite 75	-0.002	-0.025	0.001	0.001
	(0.005)		(0.054)	
Admissions Yield	0.001	0.033	0.002	0.009
	(0.000)		(0.005)	
Total Undergraduates	0.005**	0.089	0.005**	0.088
	(0.001)		0.002	
Observations	1453		1443	
R-squared	0.137		0.100	

Note. standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05. ** p<0.01.

A slightly positive statistically significant relationship was discovered between overall winning percentage and total team expenses (b=0.004; p<.01). There was also a statistically significant relationship between conference winning percentage and total team expenses (b=0.004; p<.01). Both findings reveal that a $100,000 increase in spending results in an average increase of 0.4% to the overall and conference winning percentage.

Additional measures of athletic success used were conference championships and postseason appearances (Table 9). There was a positive statistically significant relationship between overall team expenses and teams that won conference championships (b=0.003; p<.01). Similarly, the odds of a team advancing to the postseason was positively influenced by the total team expenses (b=0.006; p<.01). Each $100,000 increase in total team expenditures for a university's women's basketball team increases their chances of winning a conference championship by 0.3% and makes it 0.6% more likely the team participates in postseason play.

Table 9
Linear Regression of Total Expense Variables on Women's Basketball Conference Championships and Postseason Appearances

	Conference Champions		Postseason Appearances	
Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Expenses	0.003**	0.158	0.006**	0.231
	(0.001)		(0.001)	
Team Participation	-0.001	-0.015	-0.001	-0.014
	(0.002)		(0.002)	
ACT Composite 25	0.004	0.035	0.012	0.074
	(0.007)		(0.010)	
ACT Composite 75	-0.002	-0.023	-0.008	-0.055
	0.007		(0.009)	
Admissions Yield	0.000	0.018	0.001	0.018
	(0.001)		(0.001)	
Total Undergraduates	0.001	0.018	0.008**	0.076
	(0.002)		(0.003)	
Observations	1447		1459	
R-squared	0.028		0.069	

Note. standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05. ** p<0.01.

Academic Success

This section explores relationship between the four-year rolling average Academic Success Rate (ASR) to total team expenses through the use of linear regressions, while controlling for variables related to institutional size and selectivity. The ASR is the percentage of student-athletes who graduate within six years of initial enrollment in college and includes virtually all Division II student-athletes, including transfers and those not receiving athletics scholarships. A perfect score for ASR is 100.

Table 10 presents the mean ASR scores by sport. Football's mean ASR score represents 53.42% of student-athletes from those cohorts completed the requirements for graduation within six years of their enrollment. The ASR scores for men's basketball was

slightly higher at 61.82%, while women's basketball performed much better with 80.39% of their student-athletes graduating within six years.

Table 10
Descriptive Statistics on Academic Success Rates by Sport (ASR)

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Football	957	53.42	16.43	0	100
Men's Basketball	1733	61.82	20.16	0	100
Women's Basketball	1731	80.39	15.66	0	100

Table 11, Table 12, and Table 13 present the multiple regression results between ASR scores to total team expenses and variables related to institutional size and selectivity. Women's basketball had the highest mean ASR score (80.39), while also being the only sport that demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between ASR scores and total team average expenses (b=2.328; p<.01). This indicates that the relationship is considered very strong. Thus, each $100,000 increase in total team expenses for women's basketball was associated with a 2.3 point increase in the ASR.

Football ASR scores were positively influenced by the total number of undergraduate students, meaning that football student-athletes performed better at larger universities (b=0.637; p<.01). The opposite held statistically significant in men's and women's basketball with ASR scores being negatively impacted as the number of total undergraduates increased (MBB: b= -0.882; p<.01; WBB: b= -0.497; p<.01). The contrast in a positive relationship in football and a negative impact in each gender's basketball program could be linked to the respective squad sizes for each program. Football programs are allowed 36 scholarships per NCAA rules but the average football team has 110.93 student-athletes, while men's and women's basketball is allowed 10 scholarships and average 20.16 and 15.52 student-athletes respectively. The larger

universities provide a larger number of potential walk-ons from which to select additional team members.

Table 11
Linear Regression of Academic Success Rates for Women's Basketball

Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Avg Expenses	2.328**	0.189
	(0.316)	
Total Undergraduates	-0.497**	-0.114
	(0.102)	
ACT Composite 25	1.311**	0.203
	(0.313)	
ACT Composite 75	0.870**	0.157
	(0.267)	
Admissions Yield	-0.102**	-0.109
	(0.022)	
Observations	1450	
R-squared	0.236	

Note. Standard errors in parentheses
*p<0.05. **p<0.01

Table 12
Linear Regression of Academic Success Rates for Football

Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Avg Expenses	0.014	0.003
	(0.144)	
Total Undergraduates	0.637**	0.117
	(0.180)	
ACT Composite 25	3.081**	0.461
	(0.429)	
ACT Composite 75	-0.230	-0.040
	(0.367)	
Admissions Yield	-0.205**	-0.205
	(0.033)	
Observations	774	
R-squared	0.251	

Note. Standard errors in parentheses
*p<0.05. **p<0.01

Table 13
Linear Regression of Academic Success Rates for Men's Basketball

Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients
Total Avg Expenses	0.556	0.039
	(0.357)	
Total Undergraduates	-0.882**	-0.152
	(0.132)	
ACT Composite 25	2.989**	0.348
	(0.403)	
ACT Composite 75	0.672	0.091
	(0.344)	
Admissions Yield	-0.263**	-0.211
	(0.029)	
Observations	1452	
R-squared	0.277	

Note. Standard errors in parentheses
*p<0.05. **p<0.01

Other variables were related to institutional selectivity were used to evaluate the relationship between athletic spending and academic success. These factors included the number of students a university admitted at the 25th percentile of ACT composite scores, the number of students a university admitted at the 75th percentile of ACT composite scores and the admissions yield for a university. Universities that admitted a higher percentage of students at the 25th percentile of ACT composite scores all scored higher on their ASRs in each of the three sports included in this study. Football scores were influenced the most (b=3.081; p<.01), while men's basketball (b=2.989; p<.01) and women's basketball (b=1.311; p<.01) also presented a positive relationship between these variables. Women's basketball was the only sport that demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between universities with greater percentages of students that scored at the 75th percentile of ACT composite scores and ASR scores ((b=0.870; p<.01).

A university's admissions yield shows a statistically significant negative relationship with ASR scores in all three of the sports included in this study (FB: b= -0.205; p<.01; MBB: b= -0.263; p<.01; WBB: b= -0.102; p<.01). As the admissions yield increases, the standards for admissions decreases, contributing to this negative relationship. Universities that are easier to get into are represented by a higher admission yield.

Discussion

As spending on NCAA Division II athletics has continued to rise in the last 6 years, university and athletics administrators would benefit from knowing if their investments in athletics should lead to expectations of success both athletically and academically. The goal for this study is to examine the relationship of total team expenses and athletics success for the sports of football and men's and women's basketball teams at NCAA Division II institutions, and to evaluate the relationship between total team expenses and academic success of the same teams. While the majority of the previous research reviewed overall athletic department expenses impact on overall athletic success, there was a void in the recent research to examine more specifically the relationship between spending and success in the sports included in this study.

The first research question that guided this study was, is there a relationship between athletic department spending and athletic success (winning percentage, conference championships, and post-season appearances) in the sports of football and men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions. Total team expenditures, as reported to the Department of Education, increased nearly 20% for each of the sports

examined during the time period in this study. Total team expenses peaked in 2018: $1,497,386 (football), $570,404 (men's basketball), and $504,426 (women's basketball).

This study seeks to understand whether an increase in spending on specific teams increases their chances of winning and making the postseason. The results of regression analyses determined that athletic spending had a positive statistically significant relationship with each of the measures used to determine athletic success, across the three sports included in this study. An increase of $100,000 in total team spending contributed to an increase in overall and conference win percentage in football (1.1%, 1.0%), women's basketball (0.4%, 0.4%), and men's basketball (0.3%, 0/3%). Such spending increases gave teams a better chance of winning a conference championship and participating in postseason play: football (1.7%, 2.2%), men's basketball (0.3%, 0.6%), and women's basketball (0.3%, 0.6%).

While Katz et al. (2015) found that a $100,000 increase in athletic expenditures contributed to a 6% increase in the number of championships an NCAA Division III institution won, Litan, Orszag, and Orszag (2003) found no significant relationship between Division I football and men's basketball total team expenses and team success. Orszag and Orszag (2005) followed that by examining Division II teams in the same sports and found similar results, a contradiction to the findings of the current study. Spending has grown across football, men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions over the 6-year period used in this study, potentially creating a gap between those that are able to invest more versus those that are not.

This study was also led by an additional research question: Is there a relationship between athletic department spending and academic success (Academic Success Rates)

of student-athletes who participate in football and men's and women's basketball at Division II institutions? Women's basketball was the only sport that demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between total team expenses and academic success, with each $100,000 increase in total team expenses leading to a 2.3 point increase in the ASR. Of interest to this research was the finding that a larger number of total undergraduates contributed to an increase in ASR scores for football, but a decrease in men's and women's basketball. This could be caused by the difference in squad sizes for the sports included, with football having a much larger roster size than that of men's and women's basketball. There is limited research that explored the relationship of undergraduate enrollment on athletic success, while there has been extensive research that has evaluated how athletic success influences enrollment at NCAA institutions.

The lack of relationship between total team expenses and academic success could be caused by the fact that total team expenses does not include financial resources used for academic programming, tutors, or support staff. Expenses related to academic success are likely to come from the overall athletic department expenses or from student services provided through a university's student affairs department. Also, while measures used to determine athletic success have teams that win and teams lose, academic expectations should be similar across the landscape of Division II athletics with graduation being the goal for student-athletes.

Limitations to this study include the expectation that universities correctly reported their expenses to the Department of Education as part of the EADA report mechanisms. Another potential limitation to this study could be an increase in total team

expenses for teams that win more because this could lead to their participation in more games as part of the postseason.

Implications for Research

Whereas previous research has often used spending across a specific division of the NCAA, future research could evaluate spending across individual conferences to determine the total team expenses for conference champions to learn whether spending was similar in the various conferences or regions of the country. As noted earlier, total team spending increased over the 6-year period for all three sports included in this study. Future research could evaluate whether spending within Division II conferences increased at similar proportions. Orszag and Israel (2009) noted that among the reasons universities spend more on athletics is the perceived need to keep up with their rivals. Additionally, researchers could utilize a similar approach to Orszag and Orszag (2009) to determine the funding necessary to finish in the top-third, middle-third, or bottom-third of a conference, as well as nationally.

Additionally, an increase in athletic spending has been referred to as an athletics arms race with schools trying to construct new facilities and keep up with coaching contracts (Hoffer et al., 2015). Resources to build or renovate athletic facilities are not included in the individual teams' total athletic expenses as reported for this study. It could be beneficial for university administrators to know whether construction or improvements of athletics facilities contributed to athletics success.

Lastly, previous research has found that athletic department giving increased for public universities that participated in a postseason football game or the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Division I level (Humphreys & Mondello, 2007). Knowing

whether those findings held true at the Division II level could help guide administrators' decisions on whether to increase funding for a given sport.

Implications for Practice

This study seeks to determine if spending on athletics impacts graduating and winning. Should a school expect to be spending a specific amount of money in order to graduate a certain percentage of students? If a university expects to compete for athletic championships in the sports included in this study, how much should they expect to invest financially? Athletics directors, along with other stakeholders that are concerned about their university's athletics program, will be better versed in knowing the cost of success for schools that compete at the NCAA Division II level.

The findings of this study could lead university and athletics administrators to determine whether they should restructure their support. Hoffer et al. (2014) stated that universities wishing to improve the perception of their athletics program would need to choose which sports they had the most realistic chance to field winning teams and then invest more in those teams. A decision such as this would likely require a reduction in the investment of another (or other) sports within the department. Administrators will have a better understanding of the cost of competing and will be able to use that information as they work to seek support from alumni, donors, sponsors, students, and fans.

SECTION SIX: SCHOLARLY PRACTITIONER REFLECTION

In the fall of 2016, I was asked to come to dinner with the President of Lincoln University, Dr. Kevin Rome, not knowing that the conversation would eventually turn to him encouraging me to pursue an Ed.D. through the University of Missouri's Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis cohort program. Initially, I was resistant to beginning an additional responsibility because of the workload that I was carrying in my dual role as director of athletics and head men's basketball coach, as well as my desire to be a good husband and father.

It was during this hesitation that my competitiveness kicked in. If I am being honest, I thought about the number of professionals that I had met during my journey in college athletics that had already earned the distinction of being a doctor and I selfishly thought to myself that if some of these folks could earn this degree, I could, too. I would not say that this is the right reason to begin the pursuit of a doctoral degree, but it is what initially gave me promise that I could succeed. It was during this time that Dr. Rome told me that earning a doctorate is as much a test of persistence as it was an academic challenge, so I took the challenge of seeing if I could become the first person in my family, both immediate and extended, to earn this degree.

After advancing through the initial application review, I remember attending the in-person interview at Mizzou where my growth as a person and leader would first begin. While I feel that I have blessed with the gift of gab, I shared my fear of writing with Dr. Sebastian and Dr. Hutchinson. They both offered suggestions on how I could overcome this challenge and helped to ease my transition back to academic work after an 18-year

gap between earning a Master's degree and officially returning to the classroom in pursuit of an Ed.D.

Through participation in this program, I was enamored with the discussion on politics, power, and culture. Politics are central to many of the decisions made on a college campus. Therefore, it is important that the leader engages in activities which better position the intended agenda (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Power distributed across an organization contributes to employees taking ownership, which results in an increase in responsibility and provides confidence in their performance (Levi, 2017). Regarding culture, one question that leaders are consistently trying to resolve is whether a cohesive culture breeds success or does success create a cohesive culture (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Additionally, we were introduced to social justice conversations, including redlining which prevented investments in minority communities which resulted in poorer schools in those neighborhoods. During the first fall, Dr. Sebastian made a statement that has stuck with me since that class when he noted, "History is written by the winner of wars." This statement is closely related to Merriam and Tisdell (2016) who stated that, "the dominant group creates 'truths' that become accepted as the natural and right way to think about something" (p. 214). While my childhood took place in a majority minority community, I had been naïve about such policies that contributed to the suppression of Black and Brown people in the United States. I remember sitting there, as a 40-year old white male that had worked at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) for 8 years, in disbelief as to why this material had not been covered in K-12 social studies classes.

This helped to reinforce that as a leader in higher education, it is vital that I surround myself with a diverse leadership team that can balance my strengths and weaknesses. Organizations that have an eye on the future understand the importance of promoting diversity and remaining focused and persistent in getting the right people in place (Bolman & Deal, 2013). A leader that takes an active role in putting values to actions increases trust and respect from their followers (Mihelič, Lipičnik, & Tekavčič, 2010). I view this as merely being intentional about building your team. A great leader must be willing to surround themselves with those that bring a variety of perspectives to the team. A diverse team allows the leader to understand how their decisions are impacted by privilege and oppression, and this is the beginning of where change can occur (Johnson, 2018). This helps to allow the leader to eliminate blind spots that may not be apparent without others being willing to interject their opinions.

Additionally, ELPA has emboldened me to acknowledge and address systemic racism and individual racists when such situations arise. While researching for my dissertation, I learned of a Lincoln University's racist past dating back to Robert Baxter Foster's desire to start in St. Louis, but being denied that opportunity because of the school's intention to educate Black students. Even when the University settled in Jefferson City, the editor of the local paper wrote an editorial discouraging community leaders from allowing the creation of Lincoln Institute for fear that it would become a cultural hotspot for minorities.

I love being at Lincoln University and I feel a sense of obligation to advocate on behalf of those that are unable to do so on their own. I am afforded an opportunity to be a voice of equality in rooms that others may not have access, and I pledge to use that voice

for positive change. I am a White coach and athletics director at an HBCU and I am married to a woman of color. Even with this being said, it can still be uncomfortable, yet necessary to have difficult discussions related to race. It is important that I continue to grow and develop so that I can fill a need to have athletics directors that are willing to address these issues head-on. I must account for a history of actions that have harmed Black and Brown people, and do my part to confront policies and practices that make it more difficult or impossible for them to succeed.

Another way that this program and the dissertation process has changed me is through a new appreciation for the use of data in the decision-making process. When examining problems of practice, knowing what data will be needed to answer your questions is an important step in determining what methods of research will be conducted (Spickard, 2017). This data tells a story of what really is taking place and assists the researcher in making more informed decisions. For me, increased knowledge of the importance of data has challenged me to reduce how often I make decisions based on instinct alone. I feel that I have grown from being an opinionated person to one who seeks data to support the position that I take on various issues. Finding myself in conversations with leaders that already hold doctoral degrees, it has become important that my thoughts are reinforced by data to be considered legitimate. This growth has allowed me to feel more comfortable in meetings where decisions are being made which influence the direction of the organization.

Next, as I reflect on how this program has changed me, I accept the fact that I have to be open to learning new things and new ways. There is value in questioning things and understanding the need for data to support it. Self-assessment is humbling but

necessary (Chen, 2014). For us to learn, we must acknowledge there are things we are not good at and things that we do not know (Kofman & Senge, 1993). Improving as a leader is very important to me. Though showing vulnerability increases the possibility of criticism from others, I believe that failing to acknowledge where growth is needed is a more significant threat.

I have never been more vulnerable than I have been during the dissertation process. At the beginning I was viewing the dissertation in its entirety, failing to break things down into more manageable parts. Once I was able create a plan to proceed by completing smaller tasks, my hopes of finishing increased. I believe the discipline that is required to stay engaged with the process is also necessary to apply to my career as a leader in an organization.

Lastly, the dissertation process reinforced my belief that we are only as successful as those who surround us. The completion of this dissertation has only been possible because of the help of others. Whether it was those who assisted with providing the necessary data, to co-workers who encouraged me to block time to make progress, to my advisor who committed to weekly Zoom meetings to provide feedback and a road map for the next steps, I am grateful for the support that I have received. Now it is important that I reach back and help others who are faced with what seems to be an insurmountable task.

I greatly appreciate the relationships that have resulted from my participation in ELPA. Going back to Dr. Rome's thought of the doctoral journey being a test of persistence, I have great admiration for those who shaped, challenged, and encouraged me throughout this process. There were times that I felt like giving up, only to be meet

with encouragement from classmates or a perfectly timed visit from a professor who seemed to help settle the frustration. I have received positive feedback from fellow cohort members who have crossed the finish line; now it is my turn to help someone else. We are a part of a special group and I am grateful for all that this program has done to help me become a better leader, student, and friend.

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VITA

John Moseley was born and raised in Warren County, North Carolina. After high school, he attended East Carolina University where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Sports Science in 1998. He also earned his Master of Arts in Education from East Carolina University in 1999.

Moseley served in athletic administration at East Carolina University and Wright State University. He also served as an Assistant Men's Basketball Coach at the University of Delaware, Winston-Salem State University, East Carolina University, and North Carolina Central University. He was named as the Head Men's Basketball Coach at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, in April 2014. In the spring of 2015, he was given the additional responsibilities of being Lincoln University's Director of Athletics. He continues to serve in a dual capacity.

Moseley resides in Jefferson City, Missouri, with his wife, Crystal, and daughter, Jillian.