

The Effects of Athletic Success on College Enrollment Applications

By

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Abstract

Athletic events take place daily on many college campuses. Some of these events have outcomes that leave a school as a highlight for the day or even more as an iconic moment for a generation. Boston College's Doug Flutie created an iconic moment when he threw a "Hail Mary" pass in the end zone to win a game against the University of Miami in 1984. The result of this event and the winning college football season was an increase in new college enrollment applications at Boston College. This occurrence is now termed the "Flutie Effect." Other universities have claimed to have similar experiences with athletic success and enrollment growth. In 2008, Texas Tech University had a winning football season and an iconic moment of its own. Receiver Michael Crabtree made a nationally televised catch in the last seconds of the game against the number one ranked University of Texas Longhorns, to lead Texas Tech to victory. This study investigated whether Texas Tech University saw similar enrollment growths after its athletic success and iconic moment. Second, the study seeks to modify current college choice models to include athletic success of a college or university as part of a student's college choice decision.

A researcher-developed survey and historical enrollment application data were used to determine if the "Flutie Effect" influences new student enrollments at colleges and universities that have seen athletic success in their collegiate football programs. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to assess the collected data. The survey results indicated that athletic success does have some effect on students'

interest in applying to colleges and universities that have seen collegiate success in their football programs. Enrollment applications consistently grew for the institution with freshmen applicants, but growth was not consistent among transfer and graduate students.

There is limited research on athletic success and the effects it can have on a college and university, especially on new student enrollment applications. The results of the study contribute to the current literature and are a start in looking at college choice decisions when related to athletic success at colleges and universities.

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Chapter I

Introduction

The call by famous sports announcer Brent Musberger sums up the excitement of a November 23, 1984 collegiate football game:

Flutie flushed, throws it down. Caught by Boston College. I don't believe it. It's a touchdown. The Eagles win it. I don't believe it. Phelan was at the bottom of the pile. Here comes the Boston College team. (Musburger, 1984)

This play-by-play call was broadcasted around the world, during the upset of the defending national champions, University of Florida by the Boston College Eagles in the Orange Bowl in Miami, Florida. The star of the game was Doug Flutie, an undersized quarterback for Boston College. In the last play of the game, Flutie threw a “Hail Mary” pass to wide receiver Gerard Phelan in the end zone to lead Boston College to a 47-45 win over the University of Miami (McDonald, 2003).

The event was of great collegiate athletic significance and drew national media attention to Boston College. The play is often shown on television on Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) and Fox Sports as one of the greatest sport moments in collegiate athletics history. It also ranked number five in the Best Damn Sports Show Period’s (BDSSP) “Top 50 Most Spectacular Plays,” constantly reminding the public of the success that Boston College had in 1984 (BDSSP, 2009).

Recently a similar sporting event drew national media attention. In 2008, Texas Tech University was playing a nationally-televised football game against rival and No. 1 ranked University of Texas at Austin. In the last seconds of the game, Texas Tech quarterback Graham Harrell completed a 28 yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Michael Crabtree, as he tip-toed down the out-of-bounds line for the score. ESPN has rated Crabtree's catch as the second most memorable moment in conference history (Griffin, 2010).

Believing that athletic events have an effect on the growth in new student applications for enrollment, some colleges and universities have put more effort and money into their college athletic programs. College and universities receive national exposure from the media attention paid to their athletic programs and for some, it is a positive way to publicize their institutions. Allen and Peters (1982) studied the marketing aspects of college sports in recruiting first-year students to DePaul University. DePaul University saw a rise in student interest following their "Final Four" appearance in 1979. The "Final Four" is one of the last stages of the college basketball playoff bracket, and receives national media coverage each year.

Boise State University is an institution that appears to have seen an influx of increased student interest due to its success in collegiate football. Boise State did not only see growth in its football recruiting and student enrollment applications, but also in the recruitment of new faculty (Domingo, 2010). Boise State President Bob Kustra stated that the university saw an increased interest from potential faculty and some incoming faculty stated they became interested in the institution after the 2007 Fiesta

Bowl. One of those faculty members was Idaho's first astronaut, Barbara Morgan (Domingo, 2010).

The perception that athletic success was a contributing factor to increased enrollment applications for colleges and universities gained exposure after the 1984 football game between Boston College and the University of Miami (McDonald, 2003). Over the last two decades, there has been a tested belief that collegiate athletic success and its accompanying media exposure, has an effect on increased student enrollment applications for the institution.

Between the winning season and the "Hail Mary pass," Boston College received increased media exposure and saw an increase in the number of undergraduate student applications (McDonald, 2003). The name given to the athletic success they achieved and the subsequent increase in an institution's new student applications for enrollment is the "Flutie Effect." Boston College saw an increase of 16% in 1984 and another 12% in the following year (McDonald, 2003). Eventually, the institution saw a drop back to the historical number of applications, but this was accompanied by a losing record and a lack of athletic success on the football field (McDonald, 2003).

Appalachian State University is an institution that saw an increase in new undergraduate applications due to the "Flutie Effect." Trivette (n.d.) studied the increase in undergraduate applications at the university after the football team was successful in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Football Championship Series (FCS) and defeated the fifth ranked Michigan Wolverines in

2007. The study focused on student responses, not just the applications for enrollment. Trivette (n.d.) surveyed 75 students from Freshmen Seminar courses at Appalachian State University. He found that approximately 25% of them were influenced by the successful athletics program of the college. Trivette's (n.d.) survey size was small, but provided an important beginning to future research as it is the only assessment found that has surveyed students.

Frank (2004) contributed to the research on college athletic success and its correlation to increased enrollments of undergraduate students. Frank (2004) prepared research for the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics on the effect of athletic success on prospective students. He found two functions of the exposure, one is some students being sports fans may choose a university that is going to host exciting events, and the second, successful athletics creates institution familiarity. The media exposure of athletic events can serve as a national advertising campaign for the universities and colleges.

When it comes to college choice decisions of students, there are existing theories that address the decision-making processes. College choice models generally follow three steps of how students make their college decisions. Three basic decisions that students must make are who to visit, where to apply, and where to attend (Dembowski, 1980). College choice models are developed to account for many components of what affects the decision making process. These components for example are institution costs, location, and parental influence (Chapman, 1981). There are other measurements that have gone into the structuring of college choice

models and many will look at different aspects such as marketing and ethnicity. None of the current models, however, look at the effect of a successful collegiate football team on a student's decision to attend a specific college or university. A quote from a University of North Carolina sophomore student, Stephen McIntyre, supports college athletics as a factor in college choice decisions of students, "People like me enroll here just so we can watch basketball...The fine education which comes with that is one of the perks" (Braddock, Sokol-Katz, Dawkins, & Lv, 2006, p. 1).

Problem Statement

After athletic success at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) institutions, some saw an increase in new student enrollment applications (Croxford, 2008; Dodd, 1997; McEvoy, 2005). This increase in enrollment applications is often seen for a two-year period following athletic success and media exposure (Potter, 2008). The sport that has seen the greatest correlation in athletic success and media exposure and a corresponding increase in new student enrollment applications is collegiate football. This increase is not always attributed to the success of the football program and its accompanying media exposure (Litan, Orzag, & Orzag, 2003; Roper & Snow, 1976).

The growth in new student undergraduate applications after a winning football season and the subsequent decrease to historical numbers of new student applications after a two year period at Boston College, created a debate on whether athletic success and accompanying media exposure had an effect on increased enrollment applications. This debate still continues, as there is limited research on this topic.

Some research has been done on single institutions to determine if the “Flutie Effect” affected new undergraduate applications (Allen & Peters, 1982; Chressanthis & Grimes, 1993; Potter, 2008; Trivette, n.d; White, 2010). Colleges and universities have cited that this has occurred at their institutions, but they continue to look for other ways to explain the growing interest (Potter, 2008). Those who do not agree with this claim have cited that the university has created other outreach programs concurrently, and those programs are the reasons for the increased interest in the university (Braddock et al., 2006). While this may also be a factor, the existing literature does not support this.

Research Question

The research question guiding this study was:

Does the success of a college or university's football team and the accompanying national media exposure affect the college choice decisions of prospective college students?

Purpose of the Study

There is limited research on the increase of new student enrollment applications at colleges and universities due to the “Flutie Effect.” The limited research that is available focuses on single institutions. Other studies reflect on institutional giving and on the academic success of the students as benefits of having a successful athletic program. These studies do not focus purely on the increase in numbers of applicants, but on other outcomes seen by the university (Humphreys & Mondello, 2006; Trenkamp, 2009; Tucker, 2004).

The current research on college choice decisions neglects to consider the effects of successful athletic programs on students' decisions to attend specific colleges or universities. Athletic success and college choice researchers have not come together to develop or include successful athletic program reputations in a college choice model. There is literature available that provides statistics supporting that athletics do affect college choice decisions, including the effect based on gender (Chressanthis & Grimes, 1993; Potter, 2008; Trivette, n.d.).

The purpose of this research study is to increase and further the current research on how athletic success in collegiate football at colleges and universities, affects the growth in new student enrollment applications. The results of this study will be used to determine how athletic success in college football may affect the college choice decisions of prospective students when applying to a college or university.

Definition of Terms

The following terminology will be utilized in this study:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Athletic Success | An athletic program that reaches national media attention through ranking. An increase in wins from the previous year will have had to occur. |
| College Choice | A complex, multistage process during which an individual develops aspirations to continue formal education beyond high school, followed later by a decision to attend a specific college, university or institution of advanced vocational training |

(Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989, p. 234).

Flutie Effect	An increase in admissions applications and donations at a college or university due to a successful collegiate football season.
Iconic Moment	An event that brings national media exposure to a school as a highlight for the day or even a generation.
NCAA Division I	The highest level of intercollegiate athletics sanctioned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association.
NCAA Division III	The lowest level of intercollegiate athletics sanctioned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Significance of Study

This study is significant because it will provide information to college and university administrators and enrollment management personnel on what effect athletic success and subsequent national media exposure may have on recruiting and enrollment of new students. The information will add to the existing literature on college choice decisions of students, as well as contribute to existing college choice models.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations.

The study had the following limitations:

1. The period for data collection was limited to two weeks.
2. The study institution has recently changed head football coaches, under

media scrutiny. The former football coach was popular with fans and had a successful football program throughout his tenure. The new head football coach has also seen success in his coaching career. It is difficult to quantify how the media attention paid to the changes in head football coaches affected students' interest in the institution.

3. The distribution of the web-based survey for data collection purposes was sent out through the university's TechAnnounce message system. TechAnnounce is a communication mechanism utilized by the university to post announcements regarding events, activities, policy changes, requests, and other university-related announcements to all campuses. These responses to the survey were dependent on those that participated in and read those announcements.

Delimitations.

The delimitations of this study were:

1. The study was conducted with only one collegiate football program at one university.
2. The study did not address the influence that financial aid and scholarship awards had on a student's decision to attend the university.
3. Only those students that enrolled at the university between fall 2009 and fall 2010 were asked to participate in the study.

Summary

With the increasing media exposure with 24-hour sports media and the replaying of significant athletic events on television and the Internet, athletic success could be a contributing factor in the college choice decisions of prospective college students. This chapter provided an explanation for the rationale for the study. Chapter II provides an overview of the existing literature used to ground the study in the effect athletic success has on institutions that experience athletic success and the college choice process. Chapter III will provide an in-depth description of the research design of the study. Chapter IV presents the findings of the study, and Chapter V, the conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter II

Literature Review

College choice models focus on different aspects of what could influence student college choice and provide a different lens on how the decision process is made. There are numerous ways to look at college choice. Some models address the whole college choice decision, while others focus on each step of the decision individually. With this variety of college choice models, no model includes aspects of athletics. The remainder of this literature review will focus on what college choice models are currently available for college and university administrators and staff to understand college choice decisions of prospective college students. In addition, the limited research on the effects of collegiate athletic success on growth in new student enrollment applications at colleges and universities will be discussed.

College Choice Models

In college choice models there are three sets of research that provide a large amount of background into what is known about student college choice. Jackson's (1978) research focused on financial aid and how it affected students considering college. The research highlights the changes in federal policies that have altered how financial aid is given as part of a recruitment package to students. Jackson (1978) identified three general steps to college choice. The three stages are assessment of factors, choice among institution options or non-institution options, and assessment of options and economic or investment terms.

In a different view of college choice, Litten (1982) looked at the marketing

that college students observe. The research showed that advertising to specific groups had more benefit than a broad all encompassing advertising message.

Chapman (1981) looked at a two stage model. The first area of influence focused on student characteristics. These characteristics included high school performance, educational aspirations and socioeconomic status. The second area of influence looked at outside influences. These included financial aid, majors offered, parents, and information disseminated from the college. These aspects work together to form an expectation of what college will be for these students. The first set of influences is used by colleges to determine whether a student can be offered admittance and the second set of influences is in regards to the student's choice of colleges. The influence sets work together to ultimately determine if a student enters a given college.

A Comprehensive College Choice Model

Not all college choice models are constructed the same way. Each model was built to find a different answer to a certain question (Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989). There are a few different models that explore student college choice. A prominent model, Hossler and Gallagher's (1987), is used as a basis in most college choice research and is comprised of three stages. These three stages are predisposition, search, and choice. Predisposition is the phase of deciding whether a student wants more education post high school. This stage focuses on a wide variety of factors that help to influence aspirations for college attendance. Search is finding characteristics that not only draw in the attention of the student, but it is where he or

she identifies the correct attributes to consider. Finally, choice is where prospective students choose their institutions. The choice stage has received the most attention and as a result is the least ambiguous of the three stages when it comes to decision making (Hossler, et al., 1987). This research is a basic starting point for much of the current research on college choice. Current studies on college choice have tested and altered the model, attempting to develop a more comprehensive model (Bergeson, 2009).

McDonough and College Choice

McDonough (1997) studied 12 private school high school students from differing backgrounds to assess how they went through their college choice process. Her main focus and contribution to the literature was her study on the effect of guidance counselors in the decision making process (Hossler, 1998). McDonough (1997) proposed that college choice research could be covered in three areas. The first is psychosocial, which can include predisposition or search factors like campus climate, cost, and location. The second area is economic studies. Economic studies cover a student's rational choice of what college or non-college choice yields the most benefit. The final area is status attainment, which involves assessing how someone's social status affects his or her aspirations to attend higher education.

Psychosocial.

Some psychosocial research can be found in the first two stages of the comprehensive college choice model called predisposition and search. Predisposition has a larger base of current research and is the most ambiguous. Hossler et al. (1989)

collected 12 different variables that are connected with this phase. These are: 1) family socioeconomic status; 2) student academic ability and achievement; 3) race and ethnicity; 4) gender and its lack of impact; 5) parental levels of education and their effect on the student's choice; 6) family home, urban versus rural; 7) parental encouragement; 8) peer encouragement; 9) high school counselor and teacher encouragement; 10) student aspirations and career plans; 11) high school quality; and 12) labor market and rates of return. These variables are present in a variety of studies, but the weight of their importance is not consistent.

When assessing predisposition and the effects of athletics on prospective students, the influence parents or peers have on student college choice could be affected by where the parents went to school or peers were going to school. Parents have a strong influence on their student's choices and as the student succeeds, the parents encourage their student more to seek additional education (Carpenter & Fleishman, 1987). When it comes to the close proximity to home and when a parent is an alumnus of the prospective college or university, the location students are encouraged to attend may also be influenced. Hossler and Vesper (1993) found the saving habits of parents for college had an effect on the parent and student's aspirations for college. This habit was found to have an effect not only on the predisposition phase, but also on the search phase.

A model developed by Alwin and Otto (1977) looked at the social connections that are made when searching and choosing which college to attend. The study has two stages. The first stage looks at the background information of the high school

and its students, focusing on for example gender, academic ability, and socioeconomic background. These are all considered factors in students' academic success from their high schools because of the educational background. The second stage looks at the social influences high school students have when looking towards college. If the students did well in high school, college could be expected by parents, teachers, and peers because of their past successes. That success is also considered in conjunction with their socioeconomic status and the availability of funds to go to college. The students also will reflect on their academic prowess as they consider a college future (Alwin & Otto, 1977).

Morgan (2002) built a model that focuses on the rational choices of students and their commitment to their educational goals. The model shows how students work toward their future and the actions they take to make their dreams a reality. Morgan (2002) developed three dimensions of commitment: purposive, normative, and imitative. Purposive commitment is the decision that college is or is not in the student's best interest. Purposive commitment is influenced by the information the student gathers. The more information gathered, the more commitment to the future and college attendance decision the student will have. Normative commitment is based on the influences in life like family, teachers, and peers. Imitative commitment is based on the decisions of peers or those who are similar to the student. Normative and imitative commitment provides influence as the student develops the most important of the three, purposive. This research would fall into predisposition as it is about the students developing and preparing themselves for a college future.

The search stage is an active stage for the individual. Lewis and Morrison (1975) found that students often look at college materials and seek help from their college counselors. This stage is where students begin to focus in on what is important to them, including costs and locations. During this stage, the effect of the 12 predisposition factors change and notably the influence of parents do not have as strong an effect according to Hossler et al. (1989). The set of factors that become important are in rank order: 1) special academic program; 2) tuition costs; 3) financial aid ability; 4) academic reputation; 5) location; 6) size; and 7) social atmosphere. These rankings were compiled by Hossler et al. (1989) after assessing a variety of research that was a proponent for each of the factors being the most important.

A newer model is one that is built on a cultural framework. The model states that education, family, community, and out-of-class assignments all have an equal weight on the college choice decision process (Tierney & Venegas, 2009). The model allows for different factors to influence students instead of claiming that the field of play is equal for all students when looking to acquire information for a choice on college attendance. The model allows for different populations to be represented. This model and research is new and has had limited exploration, but is highlighted as a way to view college choice through an access and equity lens (Bergeson, 2009).

Economic studies.

Economic studies can be present in all three stages of Hossler et al.'s (1987) college choice model. One stage it is present in is the choice stage. The choice stage begins toward the end of the junior year of high school and again as some of the

student's priorities shift. Students have made decisions and now are making compounding decisions as they head toward their final choice of attending a college or university. Financial aid has an increased importance as students look to make sure they can afford the education. This stage is complex and needs more study to better understand all the factors that affect a student when considering a college choice decision (Hossler et al., 1989).

Another name for an economic study is the econometric model. These models focus on the costs and risks of pursuing a college education (Young & Reyes, 1987). These models can also be called rational choice models (Bergeson, 2009). When considering going to college, both monetary and nonmonetary efforts that would go into college are counted as costs (Young & Reyes, 1987). These efforts or costs include financial aid, money not earned by going to college, and the failure to earn a degree. This model weighs the costs and benefits of going on to college or finding a non-college choice. The return on the investment also shapes the decision of further education. This model can affect any stage of the college choice decision. Young and Reyes (1987) found that monetary costs have the greatest influence on the choice stage for the prospective student.

In a college choice model based on rational choice, Breen and Goldthrope (1997) developed a model that bases student decisions on risk aversion. This model assesses three factors that students consider: education cost, chance of academic success, and the belief of meeting their expected goals. The authors found that students in the middle and upper social class make decisions that will keep them at

this status or elevate them, keeping them from falling to a lower social class. The lower social class estimates their chances of succeeding in higher education. They look at the possible outcomes and will avoid spending their limited resources on an action that may not bring them a return on investment. This is another set of research that could fall in any stage, but could have the greatest effect on the final college choice decision for the student.

Status attainment.

Comprehensive college choice models provide a great basis for research. Some researchers in the field believe the models are not productive. One article sought to address the futility of comprehensive college choice models and the strains it has on students of color. Hurtado, Inkelas, Briggs, and Rhee (1997) found barriers in place for these students of color, that the experiences they had differed for them from white students. The experiences differed in preparation, application and enrollment in college. They found the differences in academic success caused the students to see a different array of college options available to them. Hurtado et al. (1997) concluded that comprehensive college choice models do not account for all the effects on students and the need for a variety of predisposition phases to account for the differences in each student population.

Some research was developed that focused on the specific race of the student. As stated by Hurtado et al. (1997), the playing field for entrance into college is not equitable. One study found that both the ethnicity of Asian Pacific Americans and their socioeconomic statuses had a direct effect on the experience of selecting a

college (Teranishi et al., 2004). Asian Pacific Americans were found to not have similar college choice processes and neither did other sub-groups identified within this ethnicity. The different ethnic backgrounds altered their college choice processes. Teranishi et al. (2004) argued that having a college choice model for this population would not help explain the choices made by each of the sub-groups represented in this population.

Similar studies have been conducted about other college going groups. A study done on the African American community found these students sometimes suffered from misinformation (Muhammad, 2008). The research found that a trusted counselor's expectations had a positive effect on the predisposition of the student. The effect rivaled the support of a parent. Bouse and Hossler (1991) found parents' education, encouragement and conversations about college were factors in the predisposition for white males and females, as well as black females. For black males, only encouragement altered their predisposition about attending college.

Pitre (2006) developed a rational choice model. This study looked at African American students and the interaction between aspirations and subjective norms and how they led to their enrollment decisions. The model first examines the interaction between individual beliefs and the evaluation of possible outcomes of educational attainment. These factors help develop a student's attitude and expectations about college. The student at the same time is affected by normative factors such as parent or peer support of seeking higher education. The interaction of these two norms leads to student decision behaviors, such as applying to a college

Other College Choice Models to Consider

Perna's (2006) conceptual model of college choice examines four levels of influence on student college choice. This model strays away from the three stage model that is common in the previous stated research. Perna's (2006) first stage addresses the background of the individual. It focuses on for example race, social class, and ethnicity to shape the aspirations of attending college. It also takes into account the personal lens of the individual, allowing the individual to choose a comfortable situation. The second layer examines the school and community context. This layer takes into account things like the size and the community's ideas about higher education. The final layer takes into account the external forces of the region. The layer takes information about nearby institutions, regional culture and norms, and the region's philosophy about not only higher education, but K-12 education, as well. This model takes into account social and economic contexts and policies that support or discourage college enrollment. It also accounts for individual differences and the various shapers of college choice. The Perna (2006) model is, however, rather new so limited studies have been conducted to test or refine it.

Hendrickson's (2002) college choice model uses a format of having two different groups or agents. These agents are the students and the institution. Hendrickson (2002) stated that there are two choices for each group, whether to enroll in the institution and whether to admit the student. The model focuses on the agent relationship and the peer group influence. This model is very similar to one of the basic models in college choice researched by Chapman (1981). Bergeson (2009)

found Hendrickson's college choice model lacking. The model does not account for individual or social identity groups, which Chapman does include in the student's process.

Athletic Success

There has been a variety of research done in the area of collegiate athletic success and the effects it has on colleges or universities. In addition, there are reports that assess how athletic success contributes to the quantity of new student applications and subsequent enrollments, the academic quality of the applications, and the increased foundation giving that result from this athletic success. Currently, no college choice model accounts for athletic success as a factor for choosing a specific college or university.

New Student Enrollment and Applications

A recent article stands as a key note for understanding the growth collegiate athletic success can have on increasing student enrollments at colleges and universities. Pope and Pope (2008) performed research that not only covered quantity of new applications received, but also looked at how universities used the growth in their enrollment applications. Pope and Pope (2008) cited that a successful college football program leads to an increase in the number of new student applications, and the top programs increase their applications from 2 to 8%. The research also found private institutions saw their new applications rates grow by two to four times higher than public institutions (Pope & Pope, 2008). Pope and Pope admit that the effect of this athletic success lasts only a few years, but experts say it is all that is needed to

have a positive effect on the university (Potter, 2008).

Pope and Pope's (2008) findings are supported by Murphy and Trandel (1994). Their study examined winning percentages within conference play and freshman applications, while controlling for factors such as income of students and tuition costs. The results showed that successful football programs that had an increase in winning percentage of 25% saw an increase in applications for enrollment at approximately 1.3%.

McEvoy (2005) found similar results in his study; a positive relationship between football success and new applications for undergraduate enrollment. McEvoy also studied men's basketball, women's volleyball and basketball, as well. He found no connection between their successes and applications for enrollment. Dramatic decreases in applications because of poor athletic success was also studied by McEvoy, but there was no significance discovered in the four sports studied.

A four sport study conducted by Jain (2004) evaluated men's football, basketball, baseball, and soccer at NCAA Division I and Division III institutions. Jain (2004) controlled for institution quality and individual institution factors. The study included 38 institutions that had similar application numbers, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, and matriculation rates. The study found that results varied between Division I and Division III institutions, with greater impact found in Division III schools. Division I institutions saw impact from football, but did not see any positive effects from soccer, basketball or baseball. Division III had a more diverse response. Increasing a football or basketball team's winning percentage or

reaching the playoffs was determined as beneficial. Baseball had an adverse effect, however. Jain (2004) found that a good baseball team increased enrollment and the student quality at the Division III schools. Soccer once again had no effect. The weakness of this study; however, was the measure of student quality. Some of the data that was consistently needed by the researcher was said not to be available; however, the data that was needed was not elaborated on.

A study of high school seniors who were planning to attend a four-year university was conducted on the choice stage of college student choice that included athletic success as a factor. The study had the participants rank 19 characteristics on a three-point scale. The research was separated by gender to account for possible differences in what mattered. Each gender placed different values on factors. Males more than females, found athletic reputation to be an important consideration (Braddock et al., 2006). The article suggested that prospective students are placing more value on the chance of having an active social life. Braddock et al. (2006) argued that college admissions staffs do not see athletic reputation as important, but it is as important as academic and career-related importance.

A 13 year study conducted by Toma and Cross (1998) examined the applications for enrollments at institutions who won football or men's basketball national championships between 1979 and 1992. The results of the study showed that winning a national championship resulted in an increase in new student applications. This increase in applications was found to extend up to five years after winning the championship. The increase in applications exceeded peer institutions who did not

win the championship.

A more empirical study was performed by two professors from Mississippi State University. Chressanthis and Grimes (1993) performed a 21-year study that worked to control for a number of factors that influenced enrollment application growth. The factors evaluated included tuition costs, television appearances, the average personal income of students, football team winning percentages, and the quality of faculty at Mississippi State. The study found the football team's winning percentages to be a predictor of new student first-year enrollment. Chressanthis and Grimes (1993) found an increase in student enrollments at Mississippi State of 3.8% per 1% increase in winning percentage. Due to the time frame of when the study began, some statistics were not quantified that the researchers were looking for. An example of this missing information was data on television appearances. Some of the information that was gathered showed there could be some positive effects on student interest in a university (Chressanthis & Grimes, 1993).

In agreement with the possibility of winning television appearances having a positive effect on enrollment applications, Allen and Peters (1982) studied the marketing aspects of college sports in recruiting first-year students to DePaul University. DePaul University saw a rise in student interest following their "Final Four" appearance in 1979. Males were most likely to be effected as opposed to females by athletic success.

A different type of study was conducted in 2006 by McEvoy. Instead of looking at a collegiate team's success as a whole, the study focused on the individual

athletic performance of a player. McEvoy's (2006) main choice of study was institutions that had a top five Heisman finalist between 1998 and 2003. The study found an increase of 6.59% in undergraduate applications in the following year. Elite performance is not only restricted to the football field. Georgetown University won national basketball championships in 1982, 1984, and 1985. These championships were accomplished largely in part to the play of star player, Patrick Ewing. Georgetown saw an increase in their applications of 45% after their series of basketball championships (Croxford, 2008).

Football is not the only sport that has an effect on the number of new student applications received by a college or university. NCAA men's basketball has been shown to have a large effect on the number of applications, as well. Pope and Pope (2008) found that when a team makes the NCAA tournament, the institution the team represents sees an increase of approximately 1% in new student applications. They found that as a team advances in the tourney, there is an average percentage that increases with the team's success. If the team advances to the "sweet sixteen," their institution sees a 3% increase, to the "final four" a 4 to 5% increase, and if they win the NCAA tournament, the institution sees a 7 to 8% increase. With basketball ending three months after the college football bowl season, depending on when applications are due for the college or university, an admissions department of a winning institution may not see the initial effect. The increase may occur in the following years after success. The research does show that for private institutions' men's basketball teams, the period of increased applications last multiple years. The

same statement could not be substantiated about football (Pope & Pope, 2008).

A study on men's basketball and football was conducted evaluating seven NCAA Division I conferences, looking specifically at their new student application rates. Over the 10 year period, the study by Chu (1989) found athletic success had a significant positive effect on applications of first-year students.

In 2006, George Mason University advanced to an unlikely appearance in the NCAA college basketball tournament. The event gave the institutions national media attention and the effects were felt across the campus. The institution saw an increase in admissions inquiries of 350%, a 22% increase in applications for enrollment, and an 8% increase in out-of-state freshmen (Potter, 2008). The institution saw an academic increase as the average freshman ACT score increased and the retention rate into the sophomore year increased by 2%. Robert Baker, Director of George Mason's Center for Sport Management, said these effects could have eventually happened, but the Cinderella season was a catalyst (Potter, 2008).

Boise State University, after their football team's improbable victory over the University of Oklahoma in the Fiesta Bowl, saw an increase in interest at the institution. Before the game was played, Frank Zang, Boise State's Director of Communications, contacted George Mason University and the University of Utah about the media beast that comes with the Flutie Effect. This was done to better capitalize on the window that athletic success opens to reach out to the market of prospective students. Shortly after the victory on a trick play, the institutions saw an increase in inquiry to their institution of approximately 135% (Croxford, 2008).

A study that most closely relates to this research study is the one conducted on Appalachian State University. Over a span of 2005-2007, the university was successful both in men's basketball and football. The basketball team made it to the NCAA National Invitational Tournament (NIT) and the football team was back-to-back Football Championship Series (FCS) National Champions. The keynote game for the Appalachian State was a football win over the fifth ranked Michigan Wolverines in 2007. The university, after having this success, saw an increase in applications of 24.42% (Trivette, n.d.). Such an increase is unlikely under normal circumstances, which points to the athletic success as a contributing factor of enrollment application growth (Trivette, n.d.). The study surveyed 75 freshmen who were admitted in the fall 2008 semester on what influenced their decisions to apply at Appalachian State. The study found that approximately 25% of the students were affected by the athletic success when it came to applying to the institution (Trivette, n.d.).

Similar to the multiple sport success that Appalachian State University had, West Virginia University (WVU) saw an increase in enrollment. After winning the 2006 Sugar Bowl in football and the men's basketball team making it to the "Sweet Sixteen," the institution saw their enrollments increase from 26,051 to 27,115 in the fall of 2006 (White, 2010). To add clarity as to why some of the students may have chosen West Virginia, President Jim Clements had a story. After advancing to the "Sweet Sixteen," he received a text message from a family friend's son that read, "OK, now I'm going to WVU." He was on the fence between going to West Virginia

and another institution (White, 2010).

There are other colleges and universities that have seen positive effects from athletic success on increasing enrollments. In 2005, Northwestern University saw an increase of 21% from football success, Gonzaga University had an increase in applications of 59% after appearances in the NCAA tournament from 1997 to 2000, North Carolina State University saw a 40% increase in applicants from a men's basketball championship, and the University of Missouri in 2007, after rising to number one in the country, had an application increase of 20% to the university (Croxford, 2008; Dodd, 1997; McEvoy, 2005).

Showing more emphasis and the belief that athletics can help aid an institution's enrollment, the University of Southern Colorado (now Colorado State University-Pueblo), a small institution in Pueblo, Colorado, voted to revive their football program. The University of Southern Colorado (USC), in an effort to save money, closed its football program in 1985. A drop in the USC enrollment from 4,900 students to only 3,600 the year after the decision to cut the team, put the institution in a poor position enrollment wise (Dexheimer, 2000). In order to increase their student body to their goal of 6,000 students, USC officials believed it was time to bring back the team (Dexheimer, 2000). The team had its inaugural season opener in 2008 (Thunderbowl, 2008). In 2009, Colorado State University – Pueblo announced an 11% increase in total enrollment and 65% increase in new freshmen enrollment (Perez, 2009).

Seeing the success of other colleges and universities in their athletic programs

affecting an increase in new student enrollments, as well as addressing the demands from students for more of a “traditional” college experience, some community colleges are turning to athletics to gain student enrollments (Ashburn, 2007).

Originally, many institutions made cuts due to financial issues, but with a want to increase enrollment, colleges are beginning to re-invest in athletics. As the President of Rockingham Community College stated, “We live in an athletics-minded world” (Ashburn, 2007, para. 18).

An admissions counselor from the University of Florida brings in a different angle to the importance and effect athletic success can have. Starkey (2009) said that state schools are no longer “safety schools” or schools that students apply to as back-ups, with the increases in tuition and current economic downturns. With the success in winning national championships in football and men’s basketball, the application numbers will continue to grow. With the increase of applications comes the increase of standards for acceptance into the university.

In 2003, the NCAA commissioned a study to assess the empirical effects of college athletics on universities. The study assessed seven questions that were facing college athletics and institutions. One of the effects that were discussed was the relationship between athletics success and benefits for the university (e.g., higher quality students, graduation rates, higher application rates). The report found that there was no “robust” relationship between athletic success in football or basketball and university benefits (Litan, Orzag, & Orzag, 2003; Roper & Snow, 1976).

Another angle that has been focused on in some literature pertaining to

collegiate athletics is the amount of quality institutions can acquire through the quantity of applications. Pope and Pope (2008) cited the use of athletics as an opportunity to increase the number of students, while also increasing the overall academic quality of new applicants. They found the students who applied were of both high and low SAT scores, allowing institutions to increase and diversify their enrollments (Pope & Pope, 2008). Similarly, Tucker (2004) found that athletics had a positive impact on the quality of freshmen and the graduation rates of an institution with a successful football program.

When increasing the face value of an institution's degrees, Lovaglia and Lucas (2005) questioned the importance of athletic programs, working under the assumption that increased athletic success also meant an increase in the value of the degree. The research found there was a correlation between a successful athletic program and the perceived prestige of the university's graduates. While Lovaglia and Lucas (2005) believed that it was counter-intuitive to have this connection because of the amount of money that athletic budgets drain, the study was consistent with other research conducted in this area.

Academic Quality

In another study analyzing the athletic success and academic quality among Division I institutions, Trenkamp (2009) found that athletic success in football improved the graduation rates and the median SAT scores of applicants. Basketball did not have an effect on either of these areas. Trenkamp (2009) found that schools that had quality athletic programs in basketball and football also were ranked on

average, higher in the *US News & World Report Best Colleges*. The findings show that administrators respond more than to academics alone, and are persuaded by the advertising of athletic success (Trenkamp, 2009). While focusing on the effect on academics, Domingo (2010) reported that Boise State University saw an increase in quality faculty due to the success. Faculty were surveyed and it was found that the football program's success did affect their decision to teach at Boise State.

University Funding

The third type of research that has been conducted is on the financial backing that athletic success provides for a college or university. It has been established that for many universities, football funds the majority of the remaining athletic programs. Humphreys and Mondello (2006) studied the amount of donations an institution receives from successful athletic programs. They found that Division I institutions who make the men's basketball postseason and/or play in the college football bowl season, saw significant increases in giving to the university. Private institutions, however, only saw increases when their teams were successful in basketball (Humphreys & Mondello, 2006). Tucker (2004) found that a successful football team has a positive impact on the alumni giving rate to a college or university.

Summary

Chapter II presented a thorough review of the existing college choice models that are utilized by higher education institutions to determine how students make their decisions on what college or university to attend. Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) research is the basis for much of the research that is available today about college

choice decisions of prospective students. There are some newer models being developed, but these college choice models are not comprehensive. In addition to the discussion of existing college choice models, this chapter presented the limited research available on how collegiate athletic success affects colleges and universities, specifically in increasing new student enrollments. No current college choice model includes athletic success as a factor. Chapter III will discuss the research design of this study.

Chapter III

Methods

The third chapter of this study provided the methodology and the plan for implementation for this research. This chapter restated the reasons for the study, outlined the research design and procedures, the subject population, the instrumentation, how data was collected, and analysis strategies.

Research Problem Restatement

After athletic success at NCAA institutions, colleges and universities saw an increase in student enrollment applications (Croxford, 2008; Dodd, 1997; McEvoy, 2005). This increase is often seen for a two year period following athletic success and national media exposure (Potter, 2008). The sport that has seen the greatest correlation in athletic success and national media exposure and an increase in new student applications, is collegiate football. This increase is not always attributed to the success of the football program and its exposure (Litan, Orzag, & Orzag, 2003; Roper & Snow, 1976).

The growth in new student applications after a winning football season and the subsequent decrease to historical numbers of new student applications after a two year period at Boston College, created a debate on whether collegiate athletic success and accompanying national media exposure had an effect on increased enrollment applications. This debate still continues, as there is limited research on this topic. Some research has been done on single institutions to determine if the “Flutie Effect” influenced new undergraduate applications (Allen & Peters, 1982; Chressanthis &

Grimes, 1993; Potter, 2008; Trivette, n.d; White, 2010). Colleges and universities have cited that the “Flutie Effect” has occurred at their institutions, but they continue to look for ways to explain the growing interest (Potter, 2008). Those who do not agree with this claim have cited that the college or university has created other outreach programs concurrently, and those programs are the reasons for the increased interest in the institution (Braddock, Sokol-Katz, Dawkins, & Lv, 2006). While this may also be a factor, the existing literature does not support this.

Restatement of Significance of Study

This study is significant because it will provide information to college and university administrators and enrollment management personnel on what effects athletic success and national media exposure may have on recruiting and enrollments of new students. The information will add to the existing literature on college choice decisions of students, as well as contribute to existing college choice models.

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative methodology due to the type of research being conducted. This method was selected because data was being collected from a researcher-developed web-based survey where participants were being asked questions that they then assigned a number to signify the importance of the given variable. This method is applicable because according to Creswell (2009), “These variables...can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures.” (p. 4)

Restatement of Research Question

The research question guiding this study was:

Does the success of a college or university's football team and the accompanying national media exposure affect the college choice decisions of prospective college students?

Study Institution and Population Sample

The population for this study consisted of students from Texas Tech University, a NCAA Division I institution that had achieved athletic success in its football program in 2008. This institution was selected from among successful football programs in Texas. Football was the sole sport selected because of the national media coverage that accompanied the season and the bowl postseason. The university was selected for its academic reputation, as well. This institution is seeking both increased enrollments and Tier One research status. These facts are important because they help demonstrate the debate between college student personnel on whether athletics plays a role in the recruitment of students.

The participants were students that first enrolled at the institution between 2009 and fall of 2010, and who were currently enrolled at the university. The participants included first-time college, transfer and graduate students. These groups were selected because they provided a broad selection of opportunities for assessment on student college choice decisions. Information was requested from participants on their race, residency status, and gender.

Instrumentation

Survey research was chosen as the data collection method for the study. A researcher-developed questionnaire was used. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section contained questions pertaining to participant demographics and year of first attendance at the university. Section two contained 12 questions relative to college choice decisions. The purpose of this section was to collect the data necessary to understand the influences of certain factors in students' college choice decisions. The third section asked two open-ended questions to allow the participants to share additional information about the research or to clarify any of their statements. One question specifically was written for students who transferred to the university to find out further information on their reasons for transferring. This was to provide the participants an opportunity to explain what other factors played a role in their decision to attend the university. The second open-ended question provided the participants an opportunity to share further information about their college choice experiences and offer any information that was not asked of them that they felt was pertinent.

The survey instrument was hosted and administered through SurveyMonkey™, a web-based tool for creating and implementing surveys. SurveyMonkey utilizes Secure Socket Layer (SSL) technology to “protect user information using both server authentication and data encryption, ensuring that user data is safe, secure, and available only to authorized persons.” (SurveyMonkey, 2010, para. 2) These security measures provided additional measures to ensure the safety

and privacy of participant information. The data collected contained no personal identifying information of the individuals. The information collected was secured and all hard copies of survey data were kept within the researcher's lockable workspace.

A web-based survey (see Appendix A) was chosen because of its ability to reach many students and it allowed them to casually complete the survey. Because the survey was web-based, it allowed the participants to participate in the study at the time most convenient to them. The survey was piloted with a limited group of undergraduate students to ensure the questions were clear. No changes were needed after their evaluations. In addition, face validity was provided by university faculty.

Data Collection Procedures

After receiving permission from the Institutional Review Board of Human Subjects at Texas Tech University (see Appendix B), the research study participants were solicited through two mediums. The first medium of communication was the Texas Tech University TechAnnounce system. TechAnnounce is a communication mechanism utilized by the university to post announcements regarding events, activities, policy changes, requests, and other university-related announcements to the campuses. All members of the Texas Tech community received these announcements in their TechMail e-mail address through the university's Microsoft Exchange server. Two announcements were sent through TechAnnounce (please see Appendices C and D). The announcements ran two times during the survey period and consisted of a brief explanation of the rationale behind the study, contact information for the

researcher and supervisor to direct questions and concerns, instructions for how to participate, and a link to the survey.

The second method of soliciting participants was through a message on the online social network, Facebook™. Facebook™ is a privately owned website that allows anyone to create a profile and interact with others throughout the world. The survey information was sent through Facebook's message function by 10 Texas Tech current student leaders who agreed to help disseminate the study information. These ten student leaders sent the survey link to fellow students and campus organizations that they were affiliated with (please see Appendix E). They targeted students that fit the search years of entering the college between fall 2009 and spring 2010. In both solicitation messages, participants were provided information on the research study, who to contact in case of questions, and a link that they clicked-on to take the survey.

The next data collection step was collecting the enrollment application numbers from the university. This step was necessary to draw comparisons and conclusions to other research, and to determine how athletic success affected new student enrollment applications to the university. The Texas Tech University Department of Institutional Research was contacted and asked for data regarding the enrollments from fall 2006 to fall 2010. The data included the fall semester enrollments through the period specified.

The time frame of interest of student entrance into the university was from 2009 to 2010, as stated previously. However, the enrollment application data that was collected for assessment of trends included data from 2007 to the fall of 2010.

This provided data for assessment of the growth rate in applications at the university and to analyze if there were any significant changes, specifically in the enrollment numbers following the 2008 football season, when Texas Tech experienced an iconic moment and its greatest athletic success in college football.

Data Analysis Procedures

PASW 18.0, statistical analysis software, was used to analyze the quantitative data collected. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to answer the research question. Sproull (2002) stated that descriptive statistics are, “used to describe and summarize data such as measures of central tendency, variability, and relationship.” (p. 260) Frequencies were used to evaluate the responses of the participants. One-way analyses of variances (ANOVAs) were used to test whether or not the means of multiple groups were equal (Prins, et al, 2010). Significance was further tested through the Tukey HSD post hoc test, which was used to determine if the differences between the groups were deemed statistically significant. Significance was established at the $p = .05$ level. The Tukey HSD post hoc test compares means and finds a confidence coefficient for each set (Prins, McCormack, Michelson, & Horrel, 2010).

The historical enrollment data was assessed through two different formulas. The first that was used was the basic growth rate formula. It was used to show the rate of change in applications from semester-to-semester and year-to-year, to observe changes in the number of enrollment applications. The following is the basic growth rate formula (Parker, 2002):

$$X = a(1+b)$$

The “X” is the application number in the second year, “a” is the number of applicants from the first year, and “b” is the rate of growth in applications. The analysis solved for the rate “b.” The new equation was:

$$b = X/a - 1$$

Summary

This chapter provided information about the strategies that were utilized in the research design and implementation of this study. This chapter restated the purpose of this research and the question to be answered, the development of the instrument used, and the tools used to collect and analyze the data needed to address the research question. Chapter IV will provide the results of the data collected for the study.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this research study was to increase and further the current research on how athletic success in collegiate football at colleges and universities, effects the growth in new student enrollment applications. The research question that guided this study was:

Does the success of a college or university's football team and the accompanying national media exposure affect the college choice decisions of prospective college students?

To answer the research question, a web-based survey was developed by the researcher. Participants were solicited through TechAnnounce (please see Appendices C and D) and through a peer-leader message on Facebook (please see Appendix E). In both solicitation messages, participants were provided information on the research study, who to contact in case of questions, and the link to take the survey.

Study Institution and Sample Population

The target population for this study was new students who enrolled between the fall of 2009 and fall of 2010 at Texas Tech University (TTU). A total 125 responses were received to the survey. Fifty of these responses were removed due to enrollment dates outside of fall 2009 through fall 2010. This reduction resulted in 75 completed surveys. Incomplete surveys were not removed from the analysis. The

methods for solicitation of participants were not conducive to participant follow-up reminders.

Data Analysis

PASW 18.0, statistical analysis software, was used to analyze the quantitative data collected. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to answer the research question. Frequencies were used to evaluate the responses of participants. One-way analyses of variances (ANOVAs) were used to test whether or not the means of multiple groups were equal (Prins, et al, 2010). Harmonic means were used due to unequal sample sizes among the groups. Significance was further evaluated through post hoc testing using the Tukey HSD. Significance was established at the $p = .05$ level.

Participant Demographics

Participants were asked to identify their enrollment classification, gender, ethnicity, and whether they were in-state or out-of-state residents. The participants' gender consisted of 54.7% ($n = 41$) female and 45.3% ($n = 34$) male (see Table 1).

Table 1: Participant Gender

Gender	n	Percentage
Female	41	54.7%
Male	34	45.3%
Total	75	100.0%

The enrollment classification of participants was comprised of 36% (n = 27) freshmen, 25.3% (n = 19) sophomores, 13.3% (n = 10) juniors, 1.3% (n = 1) seniors, and 24% (n = 18) graduate students (see Table 2).

Table 2: Enrollment Classification

Classification	n	Percentage
Freshmen	27	36.0%
Sophomore	19	25.3%
Junior	10	13.3%
Senior	1	1.3%
Graduate Student	18	24.0%
Total	75	100.0%

The ethnicity of the participants included 68% (n = 51) Caucasian, 12% (n = 9) Hispanic, 4% (n = 3) African American/Black, 2.7% (n = 2) Native American, 1.3% (n = 1) Asian American, and 12% (n = 9) other (see Table 3).

Table 3: Participant Ethnicity

Ethnicity	n	Percentage
Caucasian	51	68.0%
Hispanic	9	12.0%
African American/Black	3	4.0%
Native American	2	2.7%
Asian American	1	1.3%
Other	9	12.0%
Total	75	100.0%

The participants were asked to identify if they were in-state or out of state residents. Eighty-four percent (n=63) identified they were from Texas (in-state) and 16% (n=12) identified themselves as out-of-state residents.

Table 4: In-state/Out-of-State

In-state/Out of State	n	Percentage
In State	63	84.0%
Out of State	12	16.0%
Total	75	100.0%

College Choice Responses

To address the research question, participants were asked to respond to 12 questions pertaining to college choice. Participants were asked if when looking at Texas Tech University (TTU) as a possible institution to attend, if the reputation of its academic programs influenced their decisions to apply. A large percentage of the participants, 86.5% (n = 64), indicated that the academic programs offered did affect their decisions to attend the university, and 13.5% (n = 10) stated they did not.

When asked whether TTU's pursuit of Tier One status as a research university affected their decisions to apply to the university, 28.4% (n = 21) said it positively influenced their decisions to apply, and 71.5% (n = 53) said it did not have an effect on their decisions. Participants were asked whether TTU's participation in NCAA Division I athletics played a role in their decisions to attend the university. A majority of the participants indicated that this did not play a role in their decisions to attend the university (56.8%, n = 42), and 43.2% (n = 32) indicated it did have an effect on their decisions.

Participants were asked to evaluate the effects of the 2008 successful college football season at the university. The successful football season positively affected 25.7% (n=19) of the application decisions of the participants, and 74.3% (n = 55) stated it did not effect their decisions. The geographical location of TTU positively affected 55.4% (n = 41) of the participants' decisions to apply to the university, but did not influence 44.6% (n = 33) of them.

Seven participants had parents who were Texas Tech alumni. Of the seven

participants, 57.1% (n = 4) indicated their parents being alumni affected their decisions to apply, but 42.9% (n = 3) indicated that their parents being alumni did not affect their decisions. Friends positively affected 36% (n = 27) of the participants' decisions to apply to the university, while 64% (n = 48) indicated that friends did not influence their decisions to apply. When considering campus facilities, 54.1% (n = 40) of participants indicated they played a role in their decisions to apply to the institution, while 45.9% (n = 34) said campus facilities did not affect their decisions. Table 5 provides a breakdown of participants' responses.

Table 5: College Choice

Affected your decision	n	Yes	No
Academic Programs	74	64 (86.5%)	10 (13.5%)
Pursuit of Tier One Status	74	21 (28.4%)	53 (71.6%)
NCAA Division I Athletics	74	32 (43.2%)	42 (56.8%)
Successful 2008 Football Season	74	19 (25.7%)	55 (74.3%)
Location, Proximity to home	74	41 (55.4%)	33 (44.6%)
Parents were Alumni	7	4 (57.1%)	3 (42.9%)
Friends	75	27 (36.0%)	48 (64.0%)
Campus Facilities	74	40 (54.1%)	34 (45.9%)

The participants were asked to rate the factors that affected their decisions to apply to TTU on a scale of one to five, with 5 being the most effect and 1 no effect. Academic programs offered and campus facilities had the highest effect on participants' decisions to apply to the university, with 85.3% (n = 64) and 38.7% (n = 29), respectively. When considering to apply to TTU, participants were least effected by having an alumni parent with a combined lower rating of no or low effect of 90.2% (n = 65). Participants were also not greatly influenced by NCAA Division I athletics with no or low effect ratings of a total of 54.7% (n = 51). See Table 6 for a breakdown of the data on college choice factors and ratings.

Table 6: College Choice Factors and Ratings

Affected your Decision	n	None	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
		1	2	3	4	5
Academic Programs	75	2 (2.7%)	1 (1.3%)	8 (10.7%)	12 (16.0%)	52 (69.3%)
Pursuit of Tier One Status	74	39 (52.7%)	10 (13.5%)	3 (4.1%)	10 (13.5%)	12 (16.2%)
NCAA Division I Athletics	75	29 (38.7%)	12 (16.0%)	13 (17.3%)	18 (24.0%)	3 (4.0%)
Successful Football Team	75	29 (38.7%)	11 (14.7%)	13 (17.3%)	12 (16.0%)	10 (13.3%)
Location, Proximity to home	75	18 (24.0%)	14 (18.7%)	19 (25.3%)	12 (16.0%)	12 (16.0%)
Parents were Alumni	72	59 (81.9%)	6 (8.3%)	3 (4.2%)	2 (2.8%)	2 (2.8%)
Friends	75	29 (38.7%)	11 (14.7%)	16 (21.3%)	14 (18.7%)	5 (6.7%)
Campus Facilities	75	18 (24.0%)	8 (10.7%)	20 (26.7%)	12 (16.0%)	17 (22.7%)

One way analyses of variances (ANOVAs) were used to determine if participant demographics (ethnicities, residency status, gender, and semester of enrollment) had significant differences in factors that affected participants' college choice decisions.

When analyzing the effects of ethnicities on college choice decisions, one

significant statistical difference occurred between the groups. When asked if participants' friends affected their decisions to apply to TTU, the results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference among ethnicities ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 1.346$), $F(6, 68) = 2.434$, $p = .034$. Further post hoc testing found that the differences were not significant among specific groups.

An ANOVA was used to analyze the effects of gender and factors influencing college choice decisions found statistically significant differences. When evaluating the effects of TTU seeking Tier One research university status as a factor that affects application to the university, more women than men indicated it had an effect on their college choice decisions, ($M = 2.28$, $SD = 1.582$), $F(1, 73) = 4.737$, $p = .033$. Gender also effected whether participants were in-state applicants to the university or were from out-of-state. More women than men were in-state applicants, ($M = 1.16$, $SD = 0.369$), $F(1, 73) = 5.296$, $p = .024$.

An ANOVA found statistically significant differences when evaluating the effects of enrollment classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate student, and other) on whether a participant was from in-state or out-of-state ($M = 1.16$, $SD = .369$), $F(4, 70) = 10.516$, $p = .000$. Those participants that were graduate students were more likely to be from out-of-state. Enrollment classification also had a notable difference among the groups on the effect that TTU seeking Tier 1 status had on the decision to apply, but the difference was not significant, ($M = 1.72$, $SD = .454$), $F(4, 69) = 2.389$, $p = .059$.

The final group of results analyzed if the term enrolled (fall 2009, spring

2010, and fall 2010) had an impact on the factors that affected participants' college choice decisions to attend TTU. Significant statistical differences were found in three questions. When considering the NCAA Division I athletic programs offered by the university, there was a statistically significant difference between participants that enrolled in spring 2010 and fall 2010 ($M = 1.57$, $SD = .499$), $F(2, 71) = 4.598$, $p = .013$. Participants that enrolled in fall 2010 identified that TTU having NCAA Division I athletic programs impacted their decisions to attend the university.

Participants were asked to consider TTU's academic programs and their impact on their college choice decisions to attend the university. There was a statistically significant difference between those participants that enrolled in fall 2009 and fall 2010 ($M = 1.14$, $SD = .344$), $F(2, 71) = 3.133$, $p = .050$.

The third area that indicated statistically significant differences pertained to the major the students were considering. There was a statistically significant difference in this being identified as a college choice factor for participants that applied and enrolled at the university between fall 2009 and fall 2010 ($M = 4.48$, $SD = .935$), $F(2, 72) = 4.847$, $p = .011$. Those participants that enrolled at the university in fall 2009 indicated that major choice played a more significant role in their decisions to attend TTU than those that enrolled in the fall 2010 term.

Collegiate Athletic Success as College Choice Factor

Participants were asked two questions addressing a specific iconic moment in TTU college football history. The first question asked participants if the 2008 nationally-televised catch by TTU receiver Michael Crabtree in the last seconds of a

football game against rival and number one ranked University of Texas, affected their decisions to apply to TTU. Twenty-four percent (n = 18) said it influenced their decisions to apply, while 76% (n = 57) indicated that it did not affect their decisions. The second question asked participants who were already interested in TTU before the iconic moment, if it had an effect on their decisions to apply. Twenty-six percent (n = 19) said it did, while 74.3% (n = 55) said it did not affect their decisions. Some overlap is present in the numbers. However, of those who were already interested and answered no to the first question, there were seven participants. When combining the responses of the two questions to find a total number of students who were affected by the iconic moment, 33.3% (n = 25) were positively impacted.

Table 7: Athletic Success; Iconic Moment

All	n	Yes	No
Michael Crabtree's Catch Against University of Texas	75	18 24.0%	57 76.0%
Already interested, but played a role	74	19 25.7%	55 74.3%

Enrollment Applications

Table 8 shows total enrollment applications for the fall semesters from 2006-2010. The change in growth rate from 2006-2007 was 1.21% (n = 274), 2007-2008, 13.26% (n = 3,044), and 2008-2009, 9.82% (n = 2,555). The year 2009-2010 saw a decrease in enrollment applications of -2.64% (n = 754). Over the entire span, 2006 - 2010, there was an increase of 22.56% (n = 5,119) in new student enrollment

applications at the university.

Table 8: Enrollment Total Applications

Year	Applications Growth	Growth Percentage Between Years	Total Applicants n
2006			22,688
2007	274	1.21%	22,962
2008	3,044	13.26%	26,006
2009	2,555	9.82%	28,561
2010	-754	-2.64%	27,807
Total	5,119	22.56%	

*2009 is the first year after the Crabtree iconic moment.

When analyzing the application growths for the three groups, freshmen, transfer and graduate students, only one of the applicant groupings maintained constant growth, freshmen applicants (see Table 9). Graduate student applications for enrollment saw the largest overall increase with 25.28% (n = 1,309). Freshmen saw an overall increase of applications of 20.84% (n = 2,878), and transfer students, 25.19% (n = 932).

Table 9: Enrollment Applications and Growth Rate for Freshmen, Transfer, and Graduate Students

Year	Applications Growth	Growth Percentage Between Years	Freshmen Applicants n
2006			13,809
2007	167	1.21%	13,976
2008	2,167	15.51%	16,143
2009*	398	2.47%	16,541
2010	146	0.88%	16,687
Total	2,878	20.84%	

Year	Applications Growth	Growth Percentage Between Years	Transfer Applicants n
2006			3,700
2007	-154	-4.16%	3,546
2008	303	8.54%	3,849
2009	864	22.45%	4,713
2010	-81	-1.72%	4,632
Total	932	25.19%	

Year	Applications Growth	Growth Percentage Between Years	Graduate Applicants n
2006			5,179
2007	261	5.04%	5,440
2008	574	10.55%	6,014
2009	1,293	21.50%	7,307
2010	-819	-11.21%	6,488
Total	1,309	25.28%	

*2009 is the first year after the Crabtree iconic moment.

Summary

Chapter IV discussed the results of the research on what factors affected the college choice decisions of study participants at Texas Tech University. Of specific focus in the discussion of the results was the effect of a successful collegiate athletic football program as a factor of college choice. The demographics were disseminated, responses to questions analyzed, and results discussed. Chapter V will provide a

summary of the findings, recommendations, and implications of this study for colleges and universities.

Chapter V

Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

This chapter examined the findings of the study conducted on whether collegiate athletic success was a factor in the college choice decisions of students at Texas Tech University (TTU). Information was gathered on participant demographics, factors that affected students' college choice decisions, and specifically the effects of collegiate athletic success on students' decisions to attend the university. This study addressed the following research question:

Does the success of a college or university's football team and the accompanying national media exposure affect the college choice decisions of prospective college students?

Summary of Findings

In the summarized literature, there is research that supports the effect athletic success can have on a college or university. This research study focused on the role athletic success, specifically in collegiate football, had on the college choice decisions of students. The results of this study will be used to expand the discussions within higher education of how collegiate athletic success impacts new student enrollment and how collegiate athletics fit into existing college choice models.

The counterpoint to the effect of athletic success on college choice decisions is that Texas Tech University is strategically increasing its enrollments through various marketing campaigns and recruitment measures. The university, as announced by Chancellor Kent Hance, seeks to increase its enrollments to 40,000

students by 2020 (Blackburn, 2007). The university has a strategic goal of growing enrollments, and has put initiatives into place to help recruit students and to ensure the university is more visible nationally. When looking at the time frame that this research coincides with, this is an important consideration to note due to the various initiatives that are occurring at the same time as collegiate athletic success at the university.

This study surveyed participants on the factors that played a role in their decisions to apply to and attend Texas Tech University. The data collected was used to ascertain if a successful athletics program, specifically collegiate football, along with a nationally televised iconic moment in 2008, affected the students' college choice decisions to attend the institution. In addition, these results were evaluated for their application within current college choice models.

Recommendations

College choice decisions.

The participants in the study were asked to discuss the factors that played a role in their college choice decisions. Participants were both undergraduate and graduate students, which led to varying reasons for choosing the university. The results indicated that academic programs were the highest-rated college choice factor at 85.3% (n = 64) and campus facilities were second, at 38.7% (n = 29). The lowest-rated factor was parents who were alumni of the university, at 54.7% (n = 51). This could in part be due to the low number of responses from participants whose parents had graduated from the university. Gender affected whether participants were in-state

or out-of-state. Women were more likely to be in-state residents than the men who participated in this study. Though there was a significant difference between the genders, the effect is not important to the purpose of this study.

There were three significant statistical differences among participants based on the term they enrolled at the university. Students who entered in fall 2009 and spring 2010 had statistically significant differences on whether NCAA Division I athletic programs influenced their decisions to apply to and attend TTU. The reasons for why more students were affected by the successful athletic programs during the fall 2009 term than spring 2010 could be multifaceted. Traditionally, more transfer students apply in the spring semester. Students who first attend in the spring semester enter the university for possibly a different set of reasons than traditional fall entrants. These reasons could be completing requirements at a two-year institution and transferring, or perhaps being relocated due to job or family. Another reason for the differences could be that a higher number of traditional freshmen enter colleges and universities in the fall semesters, and collegiate sports events are oftentimes seen as social activities for students.

Two other differences were found among the participants who enrolled in fall 2009 and fall 2010. Statistically significant differences were found in the reputation of academic programs ($p = .038$) and the majors participants were considering ($p = .007$). These two numbers are similar in that they have to do with academics. This is an example of a class of students placing more weight on academics than another. An interesting point to note about these results is that the participants that enrolled in fall

2009 were more impacted by academic reputation of the university than athletic success. The iconic athletic moment that was nationally televised was in 2008. One would assume that athletic success would have a bigger impact on those students that enrolled in the fall 2009 semester than fall 2010 because it was the first full year of post-athletic success, this however was not the case.

The important point that can be derived from this research is that while the success of athletic programs at the university received some positive responses, it was not the main factor in why students applied to TTU. This could support why athletic success has not been included in existing college choice models. Considering, this research was conducted two years after the iconic moment in 2008, participants who entered the institution in fall of 2009 may not have remembered all of the reasons that affected their interest in the institution. Passage of time could be a reason that supports why athletic success did not receive a higher rating among the more traditional factors that have been identified by Hossler and Gallagher (1987) college choice model.

Collegiate athletic success at colleges and universities.

The participants were asked to consider the effect of a specific iconic moment in the successful 2008 football season of the Texas Tech Red Raiders, in their college choice decisions to attend the institution. The iconic moment was a last second catch by Michael Crabtree to score the winning touchdown against the number one ranked University of Texas Longhorns. Twenty-four percent ($n = 18$) identified that the catch affected their interest in attending Texas Tech University. Through a follow up

question, an additional 9% ($n = 7$) stated it did help them to make their decisions to apply to the university.

The results of the study indicated that 33.3% ($n = 25$) of the participants were affected by the nationally televised 2008 iconic football moment. This indicates that collegiate athletic success could be a viable factor in the college choice decisions of prospective students, but the significance of this factor may be less than others. It would be difficult to assess further the individual college choice decision-making processes of the participants without having opportunities to further this research with interviews and a secondary survey.

This study also asked the participants questions about the role of athletics in their college choice decisions. Participants were asked if TTU being a NCAA Division I athletic program had an effect on their decisions to attend the university. Forty-three percent ($n = 32$) said it positively affected their decisions to apply. In a similar question, but more importantly specifically addressing the winning football team, 25.7% ($n = 19$) of participants said the successful football program at the institution positively influenced their decisions. Trivette's (n.d.) study on students' perceptions of how collegiate athletic success played a role in their college choice decisions, found 23% of the students at Appalachian State were positively affected by the athletic success of the college's sports teams in their decisions to apply.

The results of this study support the findings of Trivette (n.d.), with participants at TTU responding similarly. A total of 43.2% ($n = 32$) of the participants were influenced positively by having a NCAA Division I athletics

program and 25.7% (n = 19) by having a winning football team. These numbers can draw a positive connection to Trivette's (n.d.) study on Appalachian State. He found that 25% of prospective students were influenced by the success of the athletic program and 23% were influenced by the winning teams. These two student populations had their college choice decisions affected at similar proportions. The main thing that can be drawn from these results is that there are some consistencies in the results of the research, which both utilized students as participants. This study adds additional support to the literature that collegiate athletic success may play a role in the college choice decisions of prospective students.

Enrollment application growth.

Enrollment application data were collected for the fall semesters from 2006 to 2010. Over the course of this period, TTU saw an increase in enrollment applications of 22.56% (n = 5,119). Constant growth was seen through 2006-2009 until 2010, when TTU saw a 2.64% (n = 754) decrease in enrollment applications. As stated earlier, TTU's goal of increasing enrollments needs to be considered as a contributing factor to this growth. The university has increased its commitment to recruitment, as evidenced through its 2007 announcement of its strategic goal to increase enrollments to 40,000 by 2020. The 2008 fall applications for enrollment increased by 13.26% (n = 3,044).

The athletic success of the football team and Michael Crabtree's iconic moment occurred in 2008. The growth in enrollment applications continued in 2009 at 9.82% (n = 2,555). The decrease in applications is the more interesting number.

The fall 2010 decrease comes after a good football season and the push for 40,000 students by TTU still ongoing. One possible explanation for the decrease in applications is the controversial dismissal of TTU's head football coach before the end of the 2009 football season. The coach was highly thought of by TTU, the community and alumni, and this controversy could have affected the decisions of some students to attend the university. Other explanations for this decrease include a downturn in the economy and the increasing costs of attending TTU.

Collegiate athletic success in a college choice model.

College choice models can be placed in three different areas, as discussed in Chapter II. Of the three types of college choice models, psychosocial would be the best fit for athletic success (McDonough, 1997). In addition to the traditional factors identified with this type of model, others such as campus climate and location are included. A popular psychosocial college choice model was developed by Hossler and Gallagher (1987). The three separate stages of this model are predisposition, search and choice. This theory will be the basis of the following discussion of where collegiate athletic success fits into a college choice model.

The first stage is predisposition. This stage takes into account what can influence the prospective student's choice whether to attend higher education. These factors include encouragement from peers, teachers, and family, socioeconomic status, and quality of high school (Hossler & Vesper, 1993). This stage would not include athletic success because it would not be considered a factor that would aid a

prospective student into deciding whether to attend higher education or seek other options.

The second stage is search, which is where students have decided to consider higher education and they begin to look at a different set of factors. One of those factors is social atmosphere (Hossler et al., 1989). This one factor is singled out because of the positive atmosphere a winning college football team can bring to a university. It is important to consider that going to athletic events is an important social outlet at universities and colleges. Athletic success can fit into this stage because it can help develop the social appearance and environment of the university.

The final stage of this process is choice. This stage is when students decide between their options for higher education. The choice stage is the most complex and is the least studied of the three stages (Hossler et al., 1989). Athletic success as a factor did not receive sufficient positive responses in this study to have it be evaluated as a variable in this stage. It is possible that collegiate athletic success could play a role, but it is unclear. Further research must be conducted on the choice stage and athletic success to form a determination.

The best choice for where collegiate athletic success can be considered in Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) college choice model is the search stage. This stage is where students begin to define what is important to them or what they are looking for when they look at colleges and universities. Athletic success fits better in the search stage than the choice stage because it is a factor that helps develop interest in a

university. It could be considered a deciding factor in prospective students' decisions, but is more likely a factor that draws attention to a university.

Implications for Practice

This research supports that successful collegiate athletic programs, specifically football, can have an effect on the college choice decisions of prospective students. This information is important for higher education professionals because it can be used as a tool for increasing college and university enrollments, and is a viable way to reach out to prospective college students during recruitment initiatives. With most colleges and universities seeking to expand their enrollments, athletic success can provide national media attention and generate discussions about an institution. Athletic programs are viewed as campus events, perhaps as distractions, and as extensive expenses for a college or university. They seldom are evaluated for their impact on student recruitment. Colleges and universities can showcase their successful athletic programs when presenting to prospective students.

This information can also be used by athletic departments in defense of their budgets and funding. This is one department that comes under constant scrutiny for its overhead costs. While it can defend its costs to college and university officials, many others do not know or see the other benefits these programs provide to an institution. Growth in new student enrollment applications is a positive way for collegiate athletic departments to demonstrate to their external constituents that they serve their institutions in both generating national media attention for the institution

and providing campus events for the students, which both result in new student recruitments.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study furthers the research on collegiate athletic success and its effect on the college choice decisions of prospective students. This study looked specifically at how students perceived collegiate athletic success in their college choice decisions. The existing research lacks student input and mainly focuses on the number of new applicants for enrollment.

Further research should be conducted on the effects of collegiate athletic success at colleges and universities and its impact on the increase of new student applicants, within two semesters of when the success occurred. This will provide a more focused time period for determining the impact of the success. The research will not be easy, but a nationally televised iconic moment such as the Michael Crabtree catch could help researchers to identify a specific factor tied to generated new student interest. It would be even more beneficial if an institution would support such research by allowing those who apply to the college or university to identify the factors that led them to choose the institution on the admissions application. This addition would enable institutions to collect data on those that are both accepted and not accepted. This type of study could also benefit from a longitudinal process to ensure the researcher is able to establish a trend within enrollment patterns.

Research also needs to be conducted to culminate an understanding of where collegiate athletic success fits within existing college choice models. The current

research does not address this as a factor. By including a discussion of college choice, a researcher can create awareness of the effects of collegiate athletic success and encourage further development of an expanded college choice model. This study sought to provide some insight of where collegiate athletic success could fit within the psychosocial models, but further research needs to be conducted to further confirm this placement.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of athletic success of one collegiate football program at a university, and determine how it affected the college choice decisions of students. This effect was measured by a researcher-developed survey completed by participants at the university who had enrolled as new students between fall 2009 and fall 2010. In addition, growth was evaluated through an increase in new student enrollments between fall 2006 and fall 2010, based on university enrollment data.

The research shows that collegiate athletic success can have an effect on the college choice decisions of students. The results of this study are consistent with the previous research conducted by Trivette (n.d). Athletic success does not appear to have a larger role in the college decision process than traditional college choice factors, such as reputation of academic programs and major choices offered by a college or university.

Collegiate athletic success, as it fits within a college choice model, appears to fit best within the Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) college choice model. Collegiate

athletic success as a factor in the decision-making process belongs in the search stage. More research needs to be conducted, however, to further the research on this important discovery. Colleges and universities can benefit from this information when developing recruitment strategies.

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Appendix A

The Effects of Athletic Success on College Choice Decisions at Texas

Tech University

The purpose of this research study is to find what affects college choice of students who choose to apply to Texas Tech University. One of the factors that will be researched is the effect of athletic success on a student's choice to apply. This study will provide important information to possibly help design or alter a pre-existing college choice model.

Thank you for participating in this research study. Completion of this survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is strictly voluntary. All of the information that will be collected is confidential and you may choose not to answer any question. No personal information will be collected in this survey and all data is collected anonymously and cannot be tracked back to a specific individual.

To participate in the survey, please click on the link below:
www.surveymonkey.com/xxxxxxxxx

If you have any additional questions about this research study, please contact Joshua Hansen at by e-mail at joshua.hansen@ttu.edu. This research study is being supervised by Dr. Stephanie J. Jones, Assistant Professor in the Higher Education Program at Texas Tech University. Any questions or concerns can also be sent to her at (806) 742-1997 ext. 245 or at stephanie.j.jones@ttu.edu.

Survey

Please read each question/statement carefully and select the answer that most accurately reflects your experiences when deciding to enroll at Texas Tech University. Participation in this questionnaire is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with. Thank you for participating in this study.

Part I: Demographics

1. What year did enroll at Texas Tech University?
 - a. 2009
 - b. 2010
 - c. None of the above
2. What is your enrollment classification?
 - a. Freshmen
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior
 - e. Graduate Student
3. Did you transfer to Texas Tech University from another college?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
4. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

5. What is your ethnicity?
 - a. African American/Black
 - b. Asian American
 - c. Hispanic American
 - d. Native American
 - e. Caucasian
 - f. No response

6. Are you a resident of the state of Texas or are you an out of state student?
 - a. Texas resident
 - b. Out of state Student

Part II: College Choice Decisions

7. When applying to Texas Tech University, did the reputation of academic programs offered by the university affect your decision to apply?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

8. When applying to Texas Tech University, did the pursuit of it becoming a Tier One research institution affect your decision to apply?
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No

9. When applying to Texas Tech University, did the NCAA Division I athletics' programs the university participates in affect your decision to apply?
 - a. Yes

b. No

10. When applying to Texas Tech University, did specifically the winning college football program affect your decision to apply?

a. Yes

b. No

11. When applying to Texas Tech University, did the geographical proximity of the university to your home affect your decision to apply?

a. Yes

b. No

12. Are either of your parents Texas Tech University alumni?

a. Yes

b. No

13. If one or more of your parents are Texas Tech alum, did their past attendance at Texas Tech University affect your decision to apply?

a. Yes

b. No

14. When applying to Texas Tech University, did the fact your friends were going to the university affect your decision to apply?

a. Yes

b. No

15. When applying to Texas Tech University, did the campus facilities (Recreation Center, Library, and Student Union) affect your decision to

apply?

- a. Yes
- b. No

16. Number 1 to 5, what helped you choose to attend Texas Tech University? (5 having the most affect and 1 having the least affect.)

- a. The university seeking Tier One status.
- b. A solid athletics program
- c. The winning football program
- d. Offered the major you were seeking
- e. Your friends were going to attend Texas Tech
- f. Parents were alumni of Texas Tech
- g. Geographical proximity to your home
- h. Campus facilities (Recreation Center, Library, Student Union, etc.)

17. Did Michael Crabtree's catch against the University of Texas in 2008 affect your interest in Texas Tech University?

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. If you were already interested in Texas Tech University before Michael Crabtree's nationally televised catch against the University of Texas Longhorns in 2008, did it have an effect on you applying to the university?

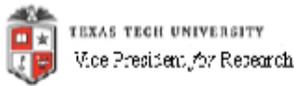
- a. Yes
- b. No

Part III: Open-ended Comments

19. If you transferred to Texas Tech University from another college, what made you decide to leave your last college?
20. Do you have anything else you would like to share concerning why you chose to apply to Texas Tech University?

Appendix B

IRB Approval



December 2, 2010

Dr. Stephanie Jones
Ed Psychology & Leadership
Mail Stop: 1071

Regarding: 502667 The Effects of Athletic Success on College Choice Decisions of Texas Tech University Students

Dr. Stephanie Jones:

The Texas Tech University Protection of Human Subjects Committee approved your claim for an exemption for the proposal referenced above on December 2, 2010.

Exempt research is not subject to continuing review. However, any modifications that (a) change the research in a substantial way, (b) might change the basis for exemption, or (c) might introduce any additional risk to subjects must be reported to the IRB before they are implemented.

To report such changes, you must send a new claim for exemption or a proposal for expedited or full board review to the IRB. Extension of exempt status for exempt projects that have not changed is automatic.

The IRB will send annual reminders that ask you to update the status of your research project. Once you have completed your research, you must inform the Coordinator of the Committee either by responding to the annual reminder or by notifying the Coordinator by memo or e-mail (donna.peters@ttu.edu) so that the file for your project can be closed.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Cogan, Ph.D., ABPP
Protection of Human Subjects Committee

Appendix C

TechAnnounce Message #1

Subject: So why did YOU choose to apply to Texas Tech?

Share why you chose to become a Red Raider!!!

Description:

So why did YOU choose to apply at Texas Tech?

The goal of this survey is to find what affected students to apply to Texas Tech University. The information you provide could lead to altering a college choice model or creating a brand new model!

This survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is strictly voluntary. All of the information that will be collected is confidential and you may choose not to answer any question. No personal information will be collected in this survey and all data is collected anonymously and cannot be tracked back to a specific individual.

To participate in the survey, please click on the link below:

www.surveymonkey.com/xxxxxxxxx

If you have any additional questions about this research study, please contact Joshua Hansen at by e-mail at johsua.hansen@ttu.edu. This research study is being supervised by Dr. Stephanie J. Jones, Assistant Professor in the Higher Education Program at Texas Tech University. Any questions or concerns can also be sent to her at (806) 742-1997 ext. 245 or at stephanie.j.jones@ttu.edu.

Appendix D

TechAnnounce Message #2

Subject: So why did YOU choose to apply to Texas Tech?

Last chance to share why you chose to become a Red Raider!!!

Description:

So why did YOU choose to apply at Texas Tech?

The goal of this survey is to find what affected students to apply to Texas Tech University. The information you provide could lead to altering a college choice model or creating a brand new model!

This survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is strictly voluntary. All of the information that will be collected is confidential and you may choose not to answer any question. No personal information will be collected in this survey and all data is collected anonymously and cannot be tracked back to a specific individual.

To participate in the survey, please click on the link below:

www.surveymonkey.com/xxxxxxxxx

If you have any additional questions about this research study, please contact Joshua Hansen at by e-mail at johsua.hansen@ttu.edu. This research study is being supervised by Dr. Stephanie J. Jones, Assistant Professor in the Higher Education Program at Texas Tech University. Any questions or concerns can also be sent to her at (806) 742-1997 ext. 245 or at stephanie.j.jones@ttu.edu.

Appendix E

Facebook Message

Subject: Why did YOU chose to attend Texas Tech?

So why did YOU choose to apply at Texas Tech?

The goal of this survey is to find what affected students to apply to Texas Tech University. The information you provide could lead to altering a college choice model or creating a brand new model!

This survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is strictly voluntary. All of the information that will be collected is confidential and you may choose not to answer any question. No personal information will be collected in this survey and all data is collected anonymously and cannot be tracked back to a specific individual.

To participate in the survey, please click on the link below:

www.surveymonkey.com/xxxxxxx