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CSR Initiatives among College Athletic Programs: A Content Analysis of Community Service Endeavors

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CSR INITIATIVES AMONG COLLEGE ATHLETIC PROGRAMS: A CONTENT
ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ENDEAVORS

by

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B.A., Occidental College, 2013

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Masters of Science in Education

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in the field of Kinesiology

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TITLE: CSR INITIATIVES AMONG COLLEGE ATHLETIC PROGRAMS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ENDEAVORS

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Taeho Yoh

This study investigated the prevalence of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in college athletic program websites. CSR refers to actions that appear to further some social good (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). Sport entities have widely embraced the principles and practices of CSR over the past decade (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Bradish & Cronin, 2009). This particular study builds upon the existing literature by examining CSR practices in NCAA Division I athletic departments. A content analysis was used to collect data and test the research questions. The results suggested that community service activities only appeared on one-third of the 128 FBS schools that were analyzed. However, of the schools that do list community service on their websites, the majority are engaging in socially responsible endeavors that are positively influencing the community. Four major areas of community service emerged from the analysis: Goodwill efforts, Health and Wellness, Youth Development, and Education. The findings of this study will allow collegiate athletic departments and their administrators to develop community service programs that will enhance their respective communities and act in a more socially responsible manner. In addition, it will encourage those athletic departments to exhibit such endeavors on their websites.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Organizations within the sport industry are facing increasing pressure to behave in socially acceptable ways (Walker & Kent, 2009). The impact of college athletics to society is greater than ever, and its role has become very crucial in many aspects of our society (Benford, 2007). The initial notion was that businesses should develop and employ good and responsible actions to society because society is the determining factor in the overall success of a particular business. Carroll (1979) stated, “each organization should carefully assess which social issues it must address as it plans for corporate social performance” (p. 502). Like other entities, it is important for college athletic programs to be socially responsible and become involved in activities that contribute to the well being of the society. In order for an organization to be socially responsible, it should demonstrate the commitment to socially responsible activities and programs (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

There has been a demand placed on corporations to do more aside from making profits. This shift in focus is what is considered to be corporate social responsibility and mark an emphasis on making efforts towards social change. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs in businesses have become a main staple for marketing strategies to solidify their legitimacy within the community and, more broadly, society. The concept of CSR refers to “actions that appear to further some social good” (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001, p. 117). With organizations aware of this, many have acknowledged the importance of CSR and have made significant contributions to

improving the well-being of individuals upon which these organizations operate. Entities in sport have also widely embraced the principles and practices of CSR over the past decade (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Bradish & Cronin, 2009). CSR practices through sport offer a unique opportunity for athletic organizations to give back to the community that supports their teams. For example, nearly all professional sport teams and leagues have established charitable foundations over the past decade (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Godfrey, 2009), such as MLB Stand Up To Cancer, NFL Play 60, and Golden State Warriors Helping Hands.

Within intercollegiate athletics, CSR initiatives have become an important component to community support and the student-athlete experience. NCAA and almost all of its member institutions identify community service as a vital element in their mission statements (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011). However, there is a disparity between the stated mission and community service actions taken by members of the athletic department (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011). It is essential for community service efforts to be visible to the community to ensure the athletic departments are acting in a socially responsible manner. Engagement in community service activities sponsored by college athletic departments has shown significant benefits to the community (Jarvie & Paule-Koba, 2012).

Prior studies have found that CSR provides benefits to firms (Angelidis & Ibrahim, 1993; Capriotti & Moreno, 2007; Clark, 2000; Pomeroy & Dolnicar, 2009), however, one area that is not well understood is the extent to which college athletic departments display involvement with CSR activities and community service initiatives on their websites. Specifically, to our best knowledge, there is a dearth of empirical

studies regarding the effectiveness of collegiate athletic departments' strategic commitment to CSR and its related activities.

This study fulfills such a need by examining the following research questions: **(1)** What percentage of Division I athletic conferences and Division I FBS athletic teams listed community service on their websites? **(2)** Under what link was community service found on the Division I FBS athletic team websites? **(3)** What percentage of Division I FBS athletic teams displayed photos, videos, or news content of community services on their websites? **(4)** Which types of community service were found to be the most frequently used by Division I FBS athletic programs? Answers to these questions will allow collegiate athletic departments and their administrators to develop community service programs that will enhance their respective communities and act in a more socially responsible manner. In addition, it will encourage those administrators to urge their student-athletes to get involved with community services and exhibit such endeavors on their websites.

Although community services have become one of the main research streams in many academic areas, such as marketing, consumer behavior, management, and communications, there has not been much research regarding the use of CSR practices in intercollegiate athletics. The purpose of the present study was to explore the extent to which NCAA Division I athletic programs are engaging in community service activities. This investigation was done through a content analysis of community service-related activities found on each of the athletic programs' websites. Moreover, the researchers examined the frequency of community service web content in FBS schools and if there were any significant differences among FBS and FCS conferences.

Collegiate athletic programs are seen as separate entities from the Universities with which they are affiliated. This separation includes regulations, budgets, personnel, and engaging in socially responsible activities within the community. Within the general literature, there seems to be absence of understanding the frequency and extent to which FBS Division I collegiate athletic programs are engaging in community service activities. Studies such as the current one may provide a significant growth to this emerging literature of community service in college athletics and offer valuable insight for leaders in the sport industry and athletic directors wishing to have a greater presence within their respective communities and geographical regions.

In the following section, a review of existing literature on CSR and community service within the context of sport as well as the research hypotheses will be provided. The subsequent section describes the research design and empirical analyses used to test the research hypotheses. Next, the results are provided, and in the final section, the researcher offers discussions, conclusions, and implications. Avenues for future research will also be addressed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In today's world, corporations are fully aware of the demands placed by society to do more than just make profits. Society demands corporations make significant efforts to give back and improve upon communities in which they are highly visible. CSR has yielded tremendous interest over the past several decades from corporations in the business world looking to be more socially responsible in the community. In order to gain a better grasp on community service in NCAA Division I athletic programs, an extensive review of the literature must first be completed. Thus, this chapter will begin with a broad view of CSR, including definitional history of the concept and benefits of engaging in CSR. Next, a concept under the umbrella of CSR, community service, will be introduced and defined. Then, the most prominent issues in the literature addressing CSR and community service from a sport context will be examined. Lastly, the gap in the sport management literature on community service among college athletic programs will be addressed.

Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR has been a relevant concept in the academic literature over the past several decades. A general search of CSR in academic literature yields thousands of articles from definitions to conceptual models and theories associated with CSR. Attempting to untangle the confusion and broadness of CSR research can be a daunting undertaking.

The following literature review will use Carroll's (1999) article as a backbone for outlining the definitional history CSR from the 1950's to 1990's by highlighting past researchers' views of CSR.

Carroll (1999) refers to the 1950's as the beginning of the modern era of social responsibility. This particular decade marked a relevant beginning to the definitional history of CSR because of the importance to center our focus on more recent concepts of CSR. For that reason, we begin in 1953, when Howard R. Bowen proposed social responsibility "refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society" (p. 6). This was the most notable definition from the 1950s and Carroll (1999) argued that Bowen should be called the "Father of Social Responsibility." While the objectives and values of our society are in a constant state of flux, Bowen's definition seems to confirm the notion that socially responsible corporations will meet the necessary societal demands to appease consumers, and most importantly, stakeholders.

In the 1960's, Carroll (1999) discussed "a significant growth in attempts to formalize or, more accurately, state what CSR means" (p. 270). One of the leading researchers of CSR during this decade was Keith Davis (1960) who argued social responsibility refers to "businessmen's decisions and actions taken for reasons at least partially beyond the firm's direct economic or technical interest" (p. 70). Davis' claim was that CSR was more of a vague concept. Davis essentially believed that as socially responsibility increases among businessmen, so does their social power (Forester,

2009). Nonetheless, Carroll viewed Davis's contributions to be significant towards the growth of CSR behind the work of Bowen.

Another definition of CSR from a prominent researcher also emerged in the 1960s as Joseph W. McGuire (1963) suggested businesses not merely focus on meeting their social needs and interests but be concerned with going beyond with what is simply expected. Furthermore, Carroll (1999) asserts McGuire's (1963) definition is more precise in that he defined it as "extending beyond economic and legal obligations" (p. 271).

In the 1970's alone, Carroll (1999) found there to be more than 18 definitions of CSR, suggesting a tremendous growth during this decade. Most notably, however, was Carroll (1979) who offered a conceptual model to describe the aspects of corporate social performance. He suggested a four-part definition of CSR arguing the need for managers or firms to have "(a) a basic definition of CSR, (b) an understanding/enumeration of the issues for which a social responsibility existed, and (c) a specification of the philosophy of responsiveness to the issues" (p. 499). This multi-part definition alludes to the fact that managers or firms must embrace a full range of responsibilities of business to society. Thus, Carroll's (1979) definition of CSR stated, "The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time" (p. 500). The economic component advocates a corporation's expectations to produce and sell goods and/or services for a profit. From a legal standpoint, it is expected for corporations to obey the law within the legal framework of the legal system. The ethical responsibility refers to corporations going beyond what is simply required, specifically,

norms that society expects businesses to follow. At last, are discretionary responsibilities of CSR. These are responsibilities society does not provide any clear-cut expectations for, however managers must still assume voluntary roles to maintain their social responsibility and awareness. These four responsibilities, as Carroll (1979) states, “can assist managers in understanding that social responsibility is not separate and distinct from economic performance but rather is just one part of the total social responsibilities of business” (p. 503).

A new era for CSR research emerged in the 1980's as alternative concepts and themes were introduced to the literature (Carroll, 1999). Thomas M. Jones provided an interesting perspective to CSR in 1980, according to Carroll. Jones' defined CSR as the “notion that corporations have an obligation to constituent groups in society other than stockholders and beyond that prescribed by law and union contracts (p. 59). Carroll mentioned a major contribution of Jones' (1980) article in that he identified CSR as a process, and not simply be seen as outcomes. This particular new stance on CSR was referred to as a revised or redefined concept because it refers to the process of corporations engaging in CSR practices with daily activities. Essentially, Jones posited that corporations could not perform CSR duties for a short period time and be considered ‘socially responsible.’

One particular researcher to contribute to the emerging themes of the concept during the 1980s was Rich Strand (1983). He created a system paradigm that attempted to illustrate how social responsibility, social responsiveness, and social responses applied to a organization-environmental model. Carroll (1999) noted this particular models importance because it added to the existing body of CSR literature

and could be used as a tool for better understanding the concepts and how they are related (Forester, 2009). As the trend of connecting alternative concepts to CSR continued throughout this decade, Edwin Epstein (1987) attempted to relate social responsibility, responsiveness, and business ethics. He defined CSR as, “achieving outcomes from organizational decisions concerning specific issues or problems which (by some normative standard) have beneficial rather than adverse effects on pertinent corporate stakeholders” (p. 104). It is evident that Jones’ (1980) and Epstein’s (1987) definitions of CSR were conflicting with one another. This particular area of opposing beliefs led to continued confusion on an appropriate description of CSR during this decade.

At the turn of the 1990’s, researchers still sought to continue exploring themes related to CSR. For example, Carroll (1991) revisited his definition of CSR in the form of a pyramid. He placed economic responsibilities at the base of the pyramid for simple reason that it is the foundation upon which all others rest. Next in the pyramid was legal, followed by ethical, and at the top of the pyramid was philanthropic. It is important to note Carroll (1991) emphasized to not view each of his four components of CSR as individual entities. For example, a corporation should not attempt meet the economic responsibility of CSR, and then focus on the legal aspect of obeying the law, and so forth. Rather, Carroll (1991) stressed the importance of corporations viewing the entire pyramid of CSR at all times and being concerned with meeting the necessary demands and responsibilities.

Emphasizing similar concepts of Carroll (1991), Angelidis & Ibrahim (1993) asserted that managers are responsible for maximizing profits, operate within the legal

framework, demonstrate concern for the communities within which their businesses operate and engage in social or philanthropic efforts. The researchers also sought to simplify a definition by stating CSR is “corporate social actions whose purpose is to satisfy social needs” (p. 8). This idea refers to a key component of CSR because it is important for corporations to respond to consumer expectations.

At the turn of the 21st century, CSR continues to be an ever changing and ever evolving concept. McWilliams & Siegel (2001) defined CSR as efforts beyond what is required by law to further some social good. For example, a corporation not discriminating against women or minorities is not engaging in a socially responsible act, but simply abiding by the law (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). This view appears to hold consistent from the legal responsibility framework established by Carroll (1979). A few years later, Kotler & Lee (2004) viewed corporate social responsibility as “a commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources” (p. 3).

The review of literature on CSR indicates the vast amount of variability that exists, with no single agreed upon definition (Forester, 2009). Based on the review of CSR definitions in the literature, CSR can be defined as a responsibility to further some social good by enhancing the community beyond what is required by law.

Now that a review of definitions of CSR has been explored and a refined definition has been extrapolated from the literature, it is important to discuss how CSR has become an area of increasing importance for many professional sport teams (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009). CSR will first be discussed within professional sports and then

examined at the intercollegiate level, followed by a review of the driving force for athletic departments CSR actions: community service.

Corporate Social Responsibility in Sport

While the study of CSR has become increasingly prevalent in organizational behavior, the concept of CSR has only recently entered the sport management literature (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Bradish & Cronin, 2009; Godfrey, 2009; Walker & Kent, 2009). Despite limited research on the connection between CSR and sport, the increased focus on community and the rapid engagement into socially responsible initiatives imply that CSR is gaining considerable attention in the sport industry (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006).

Walker and Kent (2009) argue “the sport industry CSR differs from other contexts as this industry possesses many attributes distinct from those found in other business segments” (p. 746). The authors note the star power of professional athletes and the connections sport teams have to the local communities as examples that make the sport industry a unique platform for the study of CSR. In addition, McGowan and Mahon (2009) assert the financial success of professional sports franchises depends almost entirely on community support for the team.

Professional sport franchises have recently responded to consumer demands by integrating elements of social responsibility into their business operations (Irwin, Lachowetz, Cornwell, & Clark, 2003; Walker & Kent, 2009). These actions allow organizations to improve the transparency of their operations in an attempt to make a lasting impact on the world. Among the four major professional sports in the United

States (NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL), efforts are being made to create programs that directly benefit local communities (Irwin et al., 2003). For example, the NBA *Cares* is the league's global community outreach initiative that addresses important social issues to positively impact children and families (NBA, 2015). Their community outreach programs include Basketball without Borders, Hoops for Troops, and My Brother's Keeper. These outreach programs provide young people with the opportunities for future success and development (NBA, 2015).

Sport organizations like other organizations, are able to use their resources for the betterment of society through CSR programs (Schleef, 2013). Leagues such as the MLB, NFL, and NHL have also begun to address environmental concerns such as offsetting carbon emissions and recycling efforts during games (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006; Babiak & Wolfe, 2009). In return, CSR helps boost fan support as well as increase revenues (McGowan & Mahon, 2009). These CSR actions are creating innovative community programs that have immeasurable potential in their ability to positively influence society.

The reasons for professional sport franchises engaging in CSR have been well documented across a range of areas. From an economic responsibility (Carroll, 1991) standpoint, sports franchises have a responsibility to earn a profit. However, because earning a profit comes solely from community support through ticket purchases, franchises have an obligation to their respective cities (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007). The economic development of their cities has always come from sports franchises very existence (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007). This development stems from fans going to a game, going to restaurants, stay in hotels, pay for parking, or buying souvenirs.

However, sports leagues and franchises have taken actions even further in recent years to address perception and image concerns (McGowan & Mahon, 2009). The major sports leagues have used CSR activities to bring attention to many of the prominent social issues in society including sex and alcohol offenses, racism, role modeling, and gender inequality (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007).

Professional sports franchises have numerous ways to make use of effective CSR strategies. One particular avenue is through professional championship games, in which Babiak and Wolfe (2006) explored CSR initiatives related to Super Bowl XL. The Super Bowl is the largest single professional sporting event in the world. Throughout the week preceding the game, the NFL conducts a multitude of events and activities to enrich and assist the local host community. It attracts more viewers and creates more revenue, allowing nonprofit organizations and local governments in cities that are awarded the game to address pressing social issues (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006). Findings from this investigation of Super Bowl XL reveal the NFL and host committee focused their CSR efforts on supporting education, promoting diversity within the community, partnering with Habitat for Humanity, and providing several charitable efforts.

While major professional sporting events such as Super Bowl provide great opportunities for the NFL and its constituents, little research has involved examining the influence of these CSR efforts on consumer attitudes. Walker and Kent (2009) provide an initial investigation and their findings suggest that CSR was viewed favorably by most fans and is an important aspect of the overall business strategy of a sport organization.

Community Service in Sport

As mentioned in the introduction, community service can be considered a function of CSR. Community relations can be thought of as a part of a team's overall CSR strategy (Gerber, 2012). Through various programs and initiatives, organizations give back to the communities in which they exist.

Within the context of CSR, community service has become a prominent method for organizations to act socially responsible. More and more sport franchises are using community service as a way to give back to the community and provide a positive presence with their time and efforts. Metz, McLellan, and Youniss (2003) classified community service as two types: one that, "dealt with persons in need or a public issue" (p. 190) and another than, "helped fellow students or did functionary work for organizations" (p. 190). This definition falls in line with most community service activities involving philanthropy, youth development, health and wellness, education.

Unlike professional sports, not all intercollegiate athletic programs participate in community outreach initiatives and programming. However, it would be in an athletic department's best interest to engage in community service and give back to the communities where it operates (Francis, 2007).

While the literature on community service in intercollegiate athletics remains scarce, there have been several studies investigating this particular connection. The available research in this area includes athletic department mission statements and student-athlete community service efforts (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011), perceptions and effects of community service participation among student-athletes (Jarvie & Paule-

Koba, 2012), and community partnerships within intercollegiate athletic departments (Svensson, Huml, & Hancock, 2014).

NCAA Division I athletic department mission statements are a key component to the foundation and values set forth by institutional members. Bart (1996) asserts mission statements are used to communicate the central purposes of organizations to the particular consumers. Andrassy and Bruening (2011) found a connection between the mission and action in regard to community service but the amount of service performed is not always a reflection of the mission statement in regards to community outreach. Furthermore, the major conferences appear to be more dedicated to community outreach (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011), and making strong commitments toward community service to enhance the total experience of the student-athletes (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011).

Another important aspect of community service and college athletics is the perceptions and effects participation has among student-athletes. Jarvie and Paule-Koba (2012) investigated the opportunities offered to student-athletes in understanding the benefits of community service. Interviews of three men's basketball players from a Division III program were conducted from the researchers. The authors employed a qualitative research method to give an account of the feelings of the participants in regards to their community service experiences (Jarvie & Paule-Koba, 2012). Results revealed that community service participation evokes benefits to both the individual student-athlete and the team as a whole (Jarvie & Paule-Koba, 2012). Out of the eight themes that emerged from the outcomes of community service participation, administrative support proved to be the most significant role in experiences of these

athletes (Jarvie & Paule-Koba, 2012). These particular findings provide insight into student-athletes views of community service participation and show that administrators should provide quality service opportunities to athletes.

The last area of research examined the findings of Svensson, Huml, and Hancock (2014) who sought to explore the relationships of NCAA Division I athletic departments and community service organizations. The researchers uncover four major themes for community partners' motives and benefits in their relationship with the athletic department: (a) increased volunteer capacity, (b) opportunities to create long-term impact with student-athletes, (c) ability to extend their mission through educational opportunities, and (d) monetary donations (p. 97). Findings indicated that community service organizations engaged in partnerships with the athletic department to increase their volunteer capacity, which helps those organizations increase their ability to fulfill their goals and objectives (Svensson, Huml, & Hancock, 2014). Educational opportunities were also found to be important for student-athletes. This study highlighted the importance of student-athlete volunteers engaging with community service organizations to increase the positive publicity for athletic departments, as well as the service opportunities for student-athletes and staff members. These findings highlight the importance for student-athletes to have opportunities to interact and work with local community service organizations. This interaction can have the ability to enhance the student-athlete experience and contribute to their professional growth upon graduation.

Most recently, Schlereth, Scott and Berman (2014) performed a content analysis of CSR actions on the top-25 revenue generating NCAA Division I athletic departments.

They focused their data collection upon three constructs of CSR: environmental sustainability, cause-related marketing, and community service. Their results indicated CSR activity was found amongst all of the athletic departments in the study. Of the three constructs, community service was found to be most prevalent from its student-athletes. This particular finding falls in the line with the views of Misener and Mason (2009), who contended community service is a valuable tool for building a positive reputation in the community. Moreover, the creation of a positive reputation in the community through community service provides social insurance and builds a more committed fan base for the sports teams (Godfrey, 2009).

This review of the literature centered on research relating to CSR, community service, and their roles in sport. CSR has been viewed as an effective tool for organizations to enhance their reputation and build customer loyalty, as well as positively influence the community and even society (Lewis, 2003). CSR-related activities may help to soften some of the criticism surrounding an organization for any unethical activity, which is seen frequently in sport. Babiak and Wolfe (2006) suggest sport organizations have no choice when it comes to CSR efforts. It is possible these entities in sport can be “motivated by altruistic principles of helping others, and/or by pragmatic concerns related to the bottom line” (Babiak & Wolfe, p. 221). At the intercollegiate level, this same stance holds true and predicated upon the actions taken by athletic departments. While the various definitions of CSR and related theories can lead to confusion, the athletic departments in NCAA member institutions can clearly benefit from CSR practices (Brown, 2012) in the same manner as corporations and professional sports franchises addressed in the literature presented above.

Due to the lack of literature on CSR and community service in college athletics, a thorough investigation should be conducted to determine the many aspects of such a relationship. Adding the NCAA and its member institutions to the contexts in which CSR and community service are examined would continue to advance the sport management literature.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Sample

The study conducted in this research paper was designed to investigate the CSR actions of NCAA Division I FCS athletic departments through an analysis of community service. The sample was taken from university athletic departments websites that hold membership in NCAA Division I to compare the web content of the institutions in the NCAA's top division. NCAA Division I football has two prominent divisions: Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) and Football Championship Subdivision (FCS). These divisions basically break down the division's membership by how well the institution is equipped, in terms of size and funding of the athletic department. Generally, larger universities are members of and participate in the FBS, while smaller schools, known as "Mid-Majors" compete in the FCS division.

The sample was comprised of a total 151 college athletic websites, including 23 conferences (10 FBS and 13 FCS) and 128 FBS schools. In short, every FBS and FCS conference was chosen for analysis, in addition to every FBS school in the country. The websites were viewed and coded during the time period beginning on September 1, 2015 and ending on October 1, 2015.

Procedures

Content analysis is the most practical tool for examining trends and patterns in documents (Stemler, 2001). The standard procedures of content analysis were utilized to classify all of the community service content on the college athletic websites. According to content analysis methodology, Riffe, Lacy, and Fico (1998) found that a content analysis could employ one, two, or three coders depending on time and financial constraints. This research employed coding conducted by two trained coders (one sport management master's student and one sport management faculty member). The two coders worked independently to review and code each of the 151 college athletic websites. Reliability in content analysis measures how consistent the coders make decisions (Stemler, 2001). This measurement in content analysis determines if the coders, working independently of each other, are measuring the variables consistently.

During the month in which coding took place, the coders worked independently to review and code each of the 151 college athletic websites. A codebook, which was created by the researchers during the pilot study, was used to code contents more accurately and efficiently. The codebook was comprised of a table listing the conference or member institution, community service, and types of community service found. Each researcher visited each college athletic website and perused the entire website for community service content. If community service content was present, the researchers identified the locations for the community service activity and then recorded each community service effort.

During the pilot study, 40 websites were viewed and coding categories were created to represent the relevant community service content. Throughout the pilot study, the researchers focused on four main categories; the existence of community endeavors (1=yes, 0=no), locations for the community service activity links on each home webpage, types of community service activities, and audio-visual methods to present community service activities.

Measures

Following the initial pilot study, the researcher reconciled the coding differences and checked the initial intercoder reliability for each category by using Cohen's Kappa, which was performed to determine consistency among the coders. Cohen's Kappa is the most reliable to measure intercoder reliability among several measures and is particularly recommended for studies with two coders (Joyce, 2013; Landis & Koch, 1977). Cohen's Kappa analysis revealed a .914 consistency, which is above the reasonable standard number for acceptable percentage of agreement of .80 (Landis & Koch, 1977; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998). Face validity, as Riffe et al. (1998) suggested, was used to assess if the categories were well defined with a logical and consistent coding scheme.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to help establish an understanding of the CSR initiatives in college athletic programs, specifically the community service endeavors. More than 80% of the Fortune 500 companies and almost all professional sport teams address CSR issues on their websites because a positive relationship with the community is one of the most critical elements to be a successful organization (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004). While the majority collegiate athletic departments do not operate at the level of most Fortune 500 companies and professional sport teams, their presence within society and the community are very visible. Therefore, it should be in the best interest of athletic departments to not only engage in community service activities but to display such programs on their websites.

Additionally, this research was designed to investigate types of community service activities by college athletic departments. The analysis focused on specific areas from the website content analysis as they pertain to the central research questions. The outcomes are reported as they relate to the four research questions previously proposed in Chapter 1 of the introduction.

As previously mentioned, the methodology employed in this study used a website content analysis design to answer the proposed research questions. In order to test for reliability between two coders, Cohen's Kappa was tested using the data set in SPSS 23 and found to be 0.914 ($p < 0.001$). Values of Kappa above 0.8 are considered good

agreement (Landis & Koch, 1977). Further analysis within SPSS 23 was conducted to answer the research hypotheses.

The first research question posited, how many Division I conferences and Division I FBS schools currently provide community service activities on their websites? The content analysis revealed that only 34.8%, 8 (5 FBS and 3 FCS) among 23 conferences of Division I conferences included members' community service activities on their websites. Among the 128 FBS college athletic programs, only 31.1% (47 schools) included community service endeavors on their websites.

The second research hypothesis inquired upon the location of community service found on the Division I FBS athletic teams websites. The findings indicate the location of community service links were primarily under the "Inside Athletics" tab, 80.9% ($n = 38$), followed by 14.9% ($n = 7$) under the "Fan zone" tab, 2.1% ($n = 1$) having an independent tab to list community service activities, and 2.1% ($n = 1$) not providing links within one of the three coded locations presented above (Table 1).

Table 1

Location of Community Service Links

	Frequency	%
Community Service	1	2.1
Athletics	38	80.9
Fan Zone	7	14.9
Others	1	2.1
Total	47	100.0

The third research question was what percentage of Division I FBS athletic teams displayed photos, videos, or news content on their websites? Approximately 75% ($n = 35$) of the 47 schools displayed photos (Table 2). Photos were primarily of the student-athletes and coaches performing community service and interacting with the given population (e.g., children, homeless, and elderly) that day.

Community service video content appeared on just about 22% ($n = 10$) of the athletic websites, which included recaps and highlights of student-athletes in the community (Table 2). Video content primarily included a narrative of the duties being performed, followed by various clips of student-athletes' interacting with many members of the community. Several videos also included student-athlete and coach interviews where they were asked to describe their experience at that given community service project.

The final components of the third question involved the presence of news content on the athletic websites. Analysis revealed nearly 62% ($n = 29$) of the 47 Division I FBS schools displayed some sort of news content on their websites (Table 2). News content largely consisted of newsletters and media services write-ups following the completion of community service efforts. Within these newsletters and stories, information pertained mostly to a summary of the events that took place as well as quotes from student-athletes describing their experiences giving back to the community.

Table 2

Community Service Photos, Videos, and News Contents in Websites

	Frequency	%
Photos	35	74.5
Videos	10	21.7
News Content	29	61.7
Photos & Videos	9	18.0

The fourth and final research question sought to examine specific types of community service being completed among Division I FBS athletic programs. Upon completion of the coding process, four major community service areas were identified (Education, Goodwill, Health & Wellness, Youth Development) from the content analysis that athletic programs are participating in and displaying on their websites. The first community service area to be identified was Education. Education as an area of community service was operationally defined as school or library visits, and reading books for children. Of the 47 reported Division I FBS schools, nearly 61% ($n = 28$) participated in community service initiatives related to Education (Table 3). Examples of Educational community service areas included school, reading, literacy, and drug prevention programs.

The second community service area to be identified from the college athletic websites was Goodwill efforts. Goodwill as a community service area was defined as efforts that include, but were not limited to: participating in charity event, hospital visits,

community clean up days, habitat for humanity, and shoe/toy-drive for kids. Goodwill efforts were found on roughly 89% ($n = 41$) of the college athletic websites (Table 3). This particular finding points out a growing trend in CSR efforts employed in college athletic departments. College athletic programs are focusing their CSR initiatives on Goodwill, which can lead to increased support within the community, and positively changing the overall appearance of each athletic program. More discussion from this particular finding will be addressed in the following chapter.

Next, Health & Wellness emerged from the data analysis as the next area of community service found on college athletic websites. Health & Wellness efforts by administrators and student-athletes' included supporting cancer awareness, Leukemia and Lymphoma society, kids health days, and the heart association. Health & Wellness endeavors were recorded from just about 69% ($n = 31$) on college athletic websites (Table 3).

The final area of community service that was extrapolated from the website content analysis to answer the last research question was Youth Development. This particular area of community service contains efforts made to hold camps and clinics, involvement in youth leadership enterprises, provide mentorship roles to local kids in the community, such as Boys and Girls club or Big Brothers and Sisters program. Among the Division I FBS schools reporting Youth Development service, exactly 75% ($n = 33$) listed this area of community service on their websites (Table 3).

Table 3

Education, Goodwill, Health & Wellness, and Youth Content in Websites

	Frequency	%
Education Content	28	60.9
Goodwill Efforts	41	89.1
Health & Wellness	31	68.9
Youth Development	33	75.0

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter will utilize the results provided in Chapter 4 to address the research questions, discuss the implications of the findings, offer recommendations to athletic practitioners, and provide directions for future empirical research.

The CSR actions of the athletic departments appear to show a positive trend towards making an impact on society (Schlereth, Scott, & Berman, 2014). Community service is the primary avenue in which CSR actions are expressed from the athletic departments. The NCAA has already implemented an association-wide vehicle for community relations in its CHAMPS/Life Skills program (Francis, 2007), demonstrating the importance for student-athletes and administrators to become involved within the community. Community service programming is usually involved with administration, marketing, and academic services departments in college athletic programs.

To the best of my knowledge, this is one of the first attempts to examine university athletic programs and how they are not only engaging in community service efforts, but displaying the relevant content on their websites. This study provides valuable insights to the intercollegiate athletics community, especially those involved in sports information, media relations, marketers, and administrators, on the community service activities of their athletic departments.

Involvement in community service has been proven as one of the most effective ways to build relationships with consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2006; Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004). Consequently, over the last couple of decades, the

number of organizations that have been involved in community service has increased exponentially in various industries (Kotler & Keller, 2006). However, the findings of this research showed that although college athletic departments get involved in a variety of community service activities, the numbers of college athletics that participate in community service are considerably low. Only about one-third of FBS and FCS conferences and FBS athletic departments feature community service activities on their websites. This finding is particularly distressing because NCAA and almost all college athletic websites clearly indicate that community service is one of the major missions that college athletic programs strive for (Andrassy & Bruening, 2011).

While the likelihood of more schools actually engaging in community service efforts is strong, the fact remains that relatively low numbers of athletic departments are displaying CSR content on their websites. This result is particular concerning from a marketing perspective, because, previous research has shown that athletic programs use their websites to gain a marketing advantage (Brown, 2003; Filo & Funk, 2005). Specifically, Brown (2003) contended that many sport organizations use the website to accomplish organizational goals, such providing information about the organization, creating awareness, projecting a favorable image, establishing an interactive channel of communication, gaining access to previously inaccessible customers, providing an opportunity for feedback from the consumers, and selling merchandise and tickets and generating sales.

Another important finding of this study is that athletic departments are involved in four major areas of community services: Education, Goodwill, Health & Wellness, and Youth Development. Out of the 47 schools that had community service content on their

websites, a large majority engaged in most areas of community service. Goodwill efforts were found to be the most prevalent with nearly 90% reporting Goodwill community service. These Goodwill efforts include a variety of activities such as community-wide clean up days, habitat for humanity, serving food at the local shelter, local toy drive during the holidays, annual coat drive for the underprivileged, involvement with wounded warriors, and sustainability programs. These opportunities allow the student-athletes to make a direct contribution to the community that supports them on the field and contributes to their maturity and professional development. Athletic administrators are strongly encouraged to develop Goodwill efforts for their student-athletes to become involved in, and make a direct contribution to the community.

With college athletic departments placing such an emphasis on website content, it is imperative to include community service content on their websites. This is particularly important because of the financial implications. Ko, Rhee, Kim, and Kim (2014) found that donors' perceptions about CSR activities significantly influenced trust and commitment toward the organization. This particular finding suggests that making donors and community members aware of CSR efforts, will have significantly lasting effects on revenue generation, as well as community and fan support.

The present study suggests several practical recommendations for athletic practitioners. First, existing research has consistently found that community service activities would bring various benefits to the organization. Athletic administrators should encourage coaches, student-athletes, and personnel in the athletic department to participate in community service activities. In addition, they have to utilize a variety of

audio-visual technology to publish community service activities in their athletic website. Second, community service should occur regularly within the athletic program and projects (Jarvie & Paule-Koba, 2012). Some community service activities tend to be short or one-time opportunities. However, athletic programs should put their efforts into building long-term relationships with the community. Community service such as long-term and team efforts can be good ways to build team chemistry and increase social interaction with the community.

As with any work that includes content analysis research, this study has some limitations. For instance, community service content not found on the athletic departments' websites doesn't mean it is not happening. It can be assumed that many more college athletic programs are engaging in community service efforts but simply don't display such efforts on their websites. Only a single CSR program in college athletics was analyzed using website content analysis, so the results cannot be generalized to all global CSR programs.

In addition to previously mentioned ideas for potential investigations, future studies might want to conduct a content analysis to analyze Division II and Division III athletic websites. While this study examined all Division I FBS schools, looking at the other divisions within the NCAA could yield differing results. Many Division II and III athletic programs operate very differently, including access to resources, school support, and the availability of scholarship money. Although the other divisions aren't as visible to the public eye as the major Division I programs seen on major television networks, community service is still an important component of CSR practices as well as giving back to the local community.

Another direction of future research should consider choosing specific sports, as well individual versus team sports, to compare the CSR efforts within an athletic department. For example, Purdue lists their community service initiatives by team so one can easily see the exact types of projects each sport team has completed in the community.

What can be learned from the findings of this study is that CSR and its community service efforts can provide benefits to not only the athletic programs, but to the community, and even society. The particular benefits need to be studied upon further, but this initial investigation sheds light on the incidence of community service endeavors on NCAA Division I FBS athletic programs websites.

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