An Examination of Marketing Resource Allocation in NCAA Division I Athletics

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An Examination of Marketing Resource Allocation in NCAA Division I Athletics

T. Christopher Greenwell, Daniel F. Mahony, and Damon P. S. Andrew

Abstract

Administrators at NCAA Division I institutions have multiple sport programs to market, yet resource limitations challenge these administrators to identify efficient and equitable resource allocation strategies. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine how NCAA Division I marketing administrators allocate marketing resources to their various sport programs. Three norms of exchange: rationality, distributive justice, and power, are used as a conceptual framework, and primary marketing administrators at NCAA Division I institutions were surveyed. Results revealed past results and perceived scarcity of both monetary and non-monetary resources predicted allocation norms used to distribute marketing resources. Marketing administrators who agreed with distributive justice as a resource allocation norm were likely to allocate more monetary and non-monetary resources to women’s sports. Administrators agreeing that power influenced marketing resource allocations were more likely to allocate both monetary resources and non-monetary resources to men’s sports over women’s sports.

An Examination of Marketing Resource Allocation in NCAA Division I Athletics

Intercollegiate athletic programs consist of many different sports, each with different levels of fan support and opportunities for increased support. One goal of many athletic departments is to effectively market each of its teams. Limited marketing resources, however, often prevent administrators from marketing each sport to its fullest. Therefore, athletic marketers are challenged to identify resource allocation strategies that are both efficient and equitable.

Distribution decisions are rarely easy. For example, marketers may question whether they should allot resources into marketing soccer or football. Football is the traditional money maker in many Division I-A athletic departments (Fulks, 2004), but soccer is a growing sport with established popularity worldwide. If more attention were paid to soccer, could it grow into a sport which produces significant revenue? Similarly, marketers may struggle with whether to distribute more resources into marketing their men’s or women’s basketball programs. Marketers often struggle with the decision of whether to continue to invest resources into men’s basketball which typically draws larger crowds (NCAA, 2005), or invest in women’s basketball in an attempt to enhance the experiences of the athletes and increase revenue production. These dilemmas are just a few of the decisions faced by marketers trying to maximize returns from marketing resources for a large number of sport programs.

There are several reasons why resource allocation decisions are particularly challenging in intercollegiate athletics. First, intercollegiate athletic departments consist of multiple sport programs, each having different qualities and needs. For instance, most athletic departments have both men’s and women’s teams, teams with varying levels of success, teams with assorted levels of tradition, and teams competing in sports with different levels of consumer interest. Second, limited resources often prevent administrators from marketing each sport to its fullest. This scarcity of resources restricts marketers and impels them to provide resources to some teams at the expense of others. Third, various forces make it difficult to develop distribution patterns that are both efficient and equitable. For example, outside entities such as donors or other powerful constituents may exert pressure to promote certain sports. Further, legal requirements, such as Title IX, challenge marketers to make decisions that not only maximize financial returns but promote equality.
In addition, these decisions are complex in that multiple resources and rewards are exchanged in intercollegiate athletics (Greenwell & Armstrong, 2002). Marketing resources are generally thought of as being monetary in the form of dollars spent on advertising, promotions, and publicity campaigns, but non-monetary resources are exchanged as well. Time spent by staff, facilities used for events, and other non-monetary resources also must be allotted. In exchange for these resource allocations, multiple rewards are expected from sport programs. In some traditional business settings, revenue may be the one and only reward expected from a marketing allocation. However, in athletics, marketers may seek non-monetary rewards in addition to monetary rewards. In intercollegiate athletics, marketers may allocate marketing resources to a specific sport program to promote a sport program’s image within the community or its conference. These allocations may be made to bring prestige to the university, attract recruits, draw students, and/or display the university’s assets.

“...do marketers make allocation decisions to be fair, or do they base them on maximizing returns?”

Social Exchange Theory

Despite these challenges, little is known about how administrators make these difficult decisions. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to better understand how NCAA Division I marketing administrators allocate marketing resources to their various sport programs. The current paper utilizes classic social exchange theory to analyze how resource allocations are made. Social exchange is defined as voluntary actions motivated by expected returns (Blau, 1964), whereby participants seek to maximize gains and minimize costs (Emerson, 1981; Homans, 1974). Social exchange theory accounts for the ways resources and rewards are exchanged beyond a merely economic level. In other words, resources and rewards are not solely monetary, but can also be social and psychological in nature (Napier & Bryant, 1980). Organizational resources may take the form of money, human resources, time, effort, and information (Sniezek, May, & Sawyer, 1990).

In its simplest form, social exchange theory explains exchange relationships at an individual level, but it is also relevant on an organizational level as organizations are forums for transactions (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandy, & Toth, 1997; Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann, & Birjulin, 1999). Exchange theories have been used to evaluate how resources and rewards are exchanged in a variety of settings such as cooperation between police and the media (Simmons, 1999), labor markets (Van Dyne & Ang, 1998), salesperson relationships (Ramaswami, Srinivasan, & Gorton, 1996), community support for tourism (Kayat, 2002), employee mentoring (Ensher, Thomas, & Murphy, 2001), business-to-business relationships (Lambe, Wittmann, & Speckman, 2001), and supplier relationships (Hallen, Johanson, & Seyed-Mohamed, 1991). Principles of exchange have also been applied in the sport and leisure literature to understand leisure participation (Auld & Case, 1997) and corporate sponsorship (McCarville & Copeland, 1994).

The current study seeks to better understand how NCAA Division I marketing administrators allocate marketing resources to their various sport programs by addressing three key areas. First, it seeks to address which norms impact the decision making process. Specifically, do marketers make allocation decisions to be fair, or do they base them on maximizing returns? In addition, this study examines whether other parties are influential in the decision making process. Second, this study seeks to address which antecedents predict exchange norms. For example, if monetary resources are perceived to be scarcer, does this impact the norms used in making distribution decisions? Third, this study seeks to address how norms of exchange influence which types of sport programs receive resources. The findings from this research should clarify how resource allocation decisions are made and identify sources of inequitable or inefficient marketing resource allocations. The results can be useful in predicting decisions and in suggesting ways to influence and change distribution patterns in order to maximize returns.

Norms used for making allocation decisions

Using social exchange theory as a framework, Greenwell and Armstrong (2002) identified a number of bases for making exchange decisions. Their conceptual paper utilized principles of exchange to examine forces influencing how resources and rewards are exchanged in multi-sport athletic organizations such as intercollegiate athletic departments, and their work illustrated some of the challenges that athletic administrators may face in the allocation of marketing resources. Further, their work used key exchange norms to explain why inequitable and inefficient decisions are made. The three most prominent exchange norms presented were rationality, distributive justice, and power. A more detailed description of each follows.
The rationality proposition suggests actors will base their decisions on the probability of accruing returns and will seek the greatest reward at the least cost (Homan, 1974). Actors take into account the importance of rewards, cost of resources, and the expense of pursuing alternative exchanges (Kalberg, 1980). The rationality proposition is based on three of Homan's earlier propositions: success, stimulus, and value. The success proposition asserts if rewards are frequent, the activity leading to those rewards is likely to be repeated. The stimulus proposition states if an activity was successful and rewarding in the past, the activity is more likely to take place again. The value proposition asserts activities will be regulated by the value of the rewards received. In sum, this proposition suggests marketers in intercollegiate athletics who use this basis for their allocations are likely to repeat what has worked in the past. The problem this creates is many programs that have not generated good results in the past, or have never had the opportunity to generate these results because they were not given marketing resources, may be continually overlooked when resources are distributed (Greenwell & Armstrong, 2002).

The distributive justice proposition suggests that actors will be impacted by their perceptions of the fairness of allocation methods (Deutsch, 1985). While many may support basing distribution decisions on fairness, the difficulty has been in defining what is fair. Prior research has identified three basic distribution principles that decision makers may perceive as fair: equality, equity (or contribution), and need (Hums & Chelladurai, 1994). Equality generally suggests that all groups or individuals receive equal shares of the resources being distributed, while equity (or contribution) suggests more resources should be distributed to those programs making a greater contribution to the organization (e.g., working harder, more productive) (Hums & Chelladurai, 1994). Others have suggested contributing resources to those with the greatest need (e.g., lack resources, higher costs) to be most fair (Mahony, Hums, & Riemer, 2005). Regardless of the principle one sees as being most fair, it is important to understand the fair way of allocating resources is not always how decisions are made and may not be the most efficient.

The power proposition suggests actors' allocation decisions may be based on the influence of others inside and outside the organization (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1981). Sport programs can be viewed as organizational subunits, and the relationships between those subunits can dictate power relationships. According to Hickson, Hinnings, Lee, Schneck, and Pennings (1971), subunits have power when they can reduce uncertainty in the organization, cannot be easily replaced, and are central to the organization's activities. In sport, this principle implies programs that have historically delivered more revenue, fan support, or have more tradition may have more influence over decisions than other programs. More powerful sport programs may demand a greater share of resources, and less powerful sport programs may be willing to accept a smaller share. In addition, resources are likely to be allocated to sport programs whose success benefits other sport programs (Greenwell & Armstrong, 2002). For example, some basketball teams may demand more resources because their revenues subsidize other teams; this justification could be used to defend the inequity in marketing allocations for basketball in comparison to other sports. Influential parties can also have power over distributions. University administrators, powerful coaches, and influential alumni may all be able to influence the allocation of marketing resources. Often these power imbalances create inefficient exchanges, but change is difficult as powerful programs are often motivated to prevent change in order to protect their own interests (Amis, Slack, & Hinings, 2004).

"University administrators, powerful coaches, and influential alumni may all be able to influence the allocation of marketing resources."

Antecedents to allocation norms

Another goal of the current study is to explore which antecedents predict which norm is used. Two antecedents are of particular interest: scarcity and previous experience. Perceived scarcity is an important issue, as allocations of limited resources occur on a regular basis (Langholtz, Gettys, & Foote, 1993). Since it is rare to have sufficient resources to achieve all organizational objectives, marketing directors must make difficult decisions about how to distribute a scarce amount of resources. The degree to which an allocator perceives a resource to be scarce has been found to influence the allocator's evaluations of the recipient's worthiness (Ross & Ellard, 1986; Skitka & Tetlock, 1992) and the norm used to make allocations (Brinberg & Castell, 1982). When resources are in short supply, decision makers are likely to place an emphasis on accountability and efficiency more than when resources are abundant (Botner, 1998). Therefore, it is hypothesized that marketing managers will favor rationality as an allocation principle when resources are scarce because marketers in this situation will likely be more interested in maximizing returns from the little resources they have. On the other hand,
it is hypothesized that when resources are perceived to be abundant, marketers will be more likely to consider distributing resources based on what is fair. Further, perceived scarcity influences the types of resources that are exchanged. When resources are perceived to be abundant, money and goods are likely to be exchanged. However, when resources are perceived to be scarce, intrinsic resources are likely to be exchanged (Brinberg & Wood, 1983).

"Since most institutions do not distribute resources exclusively to either men's or women's sports but somewhere in between, a dichotomous variable would not be appropriate in measuring the gender distribution of resources."

The other antecedent of interest is previous experience. Blau (1964) argues humans are motivated to act by expectations of rewards and avoidance of costs. Prior experience weighs heavily on how these expectations are formed (Hovland, 1974). Prior experience also influences perceived certainty, and resource allocation behaviors differ depending on whether rewards are certain, risky, or uncertain (Langholtz et al., 1993). Since much of the rationality proposition is based upon whether or not the marketer has received rewards in the past, this variable should predict whether marketers use rationality as a distribution principle. Further, this factor may influence which teams receive resources. If women's sports and lower profile sports have not delivered suitable returns in the past, then marketers should be less likely to believe in distributive justice. On the contrary, if these programs have successfully delivered in the past, then the marketer may be more open to making distributions based on fairness.

Method

Sample and Procedure

The population for this study included the top marketing administrator at each NCAA Division I institution (N=327). Since each institution is organized differently, participants were not identified by title but by their rank within the organization. The organizational structures of athletic departments were examined to identify the primary marketing administrator, the person most likely to be in charge of making marketing allocations. Division I administrators were chosen for the sample because their institutions are most likely to aggressively market their programs and depend on returns from their marketing efforts. Initial questionnaires were distributed by mail to the primary marketing administrators at each institution. A follow-up questionnaire was sent to non-respondents two weeks after the initial mailing.

Instrument

A questionnaire was designed to assess relationships between allocation norms and types of sports receiving marketing resource allocations. The questionnaire consisted of three multi-item scales generated to measure exchange norms, and general questions pertaining to which types of teams received the most monetary and non-monetary resources, the scarcity of each type of resource, and which teams had produced acceptable results in the past. Additional demographic data on

Table 1.
Scale Items, Means, and Standard Deviations of Distributive Norms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rationality</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Marketing resources are spent on teams that have the greatest likelihood of producing the greatest return on investment.</td>
<td>5.14(1.06)</td>
<td>5.15(1.04)</td>
<td>5.07(1.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Marketing resources are spent on teams that produce the most valuable rewards.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Marketing resources are spent on programs where the receipt of rewards is most certain.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distributive Justice</strong></td>
<td>4.59(1.28)</td>
<td>4.56(1.28)</td>
<td>4.70(1.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Fairness is an important consideration in how marketing resources are allocated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fairness plays no part in how marketing resources are allocated (rev).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Marketing allocations that will be unfair to the teams involved should be avoided.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong></td>
<td>4.17(1.42)</td>
<td>4.18(1.40)</td>
<td>4.14(1.52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. More resources are allocated to teams with a lot of influence in the athletic department.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. More resources are allocated to teams with influential constituents such as boosters and alumni.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The influence of a team allows it to demand and receive more marketing resources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
respondents was collected for the purposes of describing the sample.

Three scales were constructed to measure rationality, distributive justice, and power. The extant literature (e.g., Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1981; Greenwell & Armstrong, 2002; Homans, 1974) was used to generate eight to nine items for each construct. The list of items was presented to a panel of expert judges (four college professors who had done previous research in this area) in order to assess content validity. Each judge was asked to rate whether he or she agreed that the items represented the appropriate domain and whether the format was conducive to obtaining desired results. Items receiving less than 75% agreement among panel members were automatically rejected. The three items with the highest level of agreement and with the most conceptual meaning were retained for each measure. Items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The three items for each subscale were averaged to provide an overall measure for each construct. Each of the subscales was found to be internally consistent with Cronbach's alpha coefficients greater than the .70 minimum suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994): rationality = .71, distributive justice = .72 and power = .75. A confirmatory factor analysis indicated acceptable measures of absolute fit ($\chi^2 = 23.82, p = 0.47$; RMSEA = 0.0062; GFI = 0.96; AGFI = 0.93) and comparative fit (NFI = 0.94; NNFI = 1.00; CFI = 1.00; RFI = 0.91). Scale items for these three variables are presented in Table 1.

To address the antecedents, separate items were used to measure the perceived scarcity of monetary and nonmonetary resources. These various resources were measured using 7-point response scales (1 = abundant and 7 = scarce). Respondents were also asked to rate how often allocations of marketing resources had produced desired results for four different categories of sport programs using 7-point response scales (1 = not very often to 7 = very often). The following sport categories were used for the study: men's high profile sports, women's high profile sports, men's other sports, and women's other sports. Categories of sports were used rather than specific sports, because different universities place greater emphasis on different sports. For example, baseball may be a key sport or revenue generator at a southern institution, while volleyball may be the equivalent at a West Coast institution. Respondents were given specific instructions as to which types of sports fit these categories.

Since most institutions do not distribute resources exclusively to either men's or women's sports but somewhere in between, a dichotomous variable would not be appropriate in measuring the gender distribution of resources. Therefore, 7-point response scales were used to determine the proportion of resources that are allocated to men's and women's sports (1 = men's sports to 7 = women's sports). Similarly, the next item asked respondents to rate which types of sports were more likely to receive monetary resources on a 7-point scale (1 = high profile sports to 7 = other sports). The next two items were identical, but "non-monetary resources" was substituted for "monetary resources."

"... results from this study indicate that resource allocation decisions are behavioral in addition to being monetary."

Analysis

The analysis consisted of two parts. First, the means and standard deviations of resource allocation norms used by marketing administrators and antecedents to those resource allocation norms were examined. Second, each resource allocation principle was analyzed as to how it influenced where marketing resources (monetary and non-monetary) were allocated (men's sports vs. women's sports). Multiple regression and MANOVA were utilized to analyze data.

Results

A total of 144 responses were received for a response rate of 44%. This number of responses was considered adequate because the sample size of 144 meets the requirement regarding the ratio of cases to independent variables outlined by Tabachnik and Fidel (2001) and Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1998) to ensure both statistical power and generalizability. Further, the response rate was typical of other studies using this population. Respondents were mostly male (80%) and had worked in intercollegiate athletics for an average of 9.5 years and had worked at their institutions for an average of 6.1 years. Responses were spread over all three areas of Division I athletics with 48 from Division I-A, 43 from Division I-AA, and 38 from Division I-AAA schools.

Respondents indicated they felt monetary resources ($M = 4.98, SD = 1.32$) were more scarce than nonmonetary resources ($M = 4.52, SD = 1.29$). Marketing resource allocations to men's high-profile sports had produced expected results most often ($M = 5.03, SD = 1.13$) followed by women's high profile sports ($M = 4.13, SD = 1.35$) and men's other sports ($M = 3.55, SD = 1.23$). Women's other sports had produced expected results least often ($M = 3.22, SD = 1.29$). Men's sports were more likely to receive both monetary and nonmonetary marketing resources than women's sports, and high-profile sports were more likely to receive...
both monetary and non-monetary marketing resources
than other sports.

The allocation norm marketing administrators iden-
tified as the most prevalent was rationality (M = 5.14,
SD = 1.06) followed by distributive justice (M = 4.59,
SD = 1.3) and power (M = 4.17, SD = 1.4). Means and
standard deviations are found in Table 1. Results of a
MANOVA revealed neither the gender of the adminis-
trator [Wilks' Lambda = .995, F(3,134) = .208, p = .891],
nor the classification within Division I (I-A, I-
AA, or I-AAA) [Wilks' Lambda = .979, F(6,268) = .988,
p = .434], influenced agreement with any of the
resource allocation norms.

To identify antecedents for norms, each of the
resource allocation norms was regressed on perceived
scarcity of resources and previous experience. A series
of standard multiple regressions was performed with
each of the allocation norms as the dependent variables
and scarcity of monetary resources, scarcity of non-
monetary resources, previous experience with men's
high profile sports, and previous experience with other
sports as the independent variables. Bonferonni’s cor-
rection (i.e., alpha/number of equations = .0167) was
used to handle the problems associated with family
wise error rate (Hair et al., 1998).

For rationality, the result of the full regression model
was significant and the independent variables account-
ed for 12.7% of the variance (R^2 = .127, adjusted R^2 =
.101, F (4,135) = 4.915, p = .001). Positive experience
with men's high profile sports (p = .007) and scarcity
of monetary resources (p = .003) significantly con-
tributed to the prediction of rationality as an allocation
norm. Coefficients for both were positive, implying
when resources are scarce and/or men's sports have
produced results in the past, allocators are likely to use
rationality as a distribution principle.

For distributive justice, the result of the full regres-
sion model was significant and the independent vari-
bles accounted for 14.9% of the variance (R^2 = .149,
adjusted R^2 = .124, F (4,136) = 5.970, p < .001).
Scarcity of non-monetary resources (p = .003) signifi-
cantly contributed to the prediction of distributive jus-
tice as an allocation norm and the coefficient was
negative, indicating when non-monetary resources
were abundant, allocators were likely to use distribu-
tive justice as an allocations principle. Past experience
with other sports (p = .002) was significantly and posi-
tively correlated, indicating when other sports had pro-
duced positive results in the past, allocators were likely
to use fairness as an allocation principle.

For power, the result of the full regression model was
not significant (R^2 = .053, adjusted R^2 = .025, F
(4,136) = 1.911, p = .112) indicating neither prior
experience nor scarcity of resources influences power
as a distributive norm. Regression results are found in
Table 2.

| Table 2. Regression of Distributive Norms on Scarcity and Prior Results |
|--------------------------|-----|------|------|---|---|
|                           | R^2 | B    | SE B | β | t  |
| Rationality               | .127| 0.22 | 0.07 | 0.27 | 3.00 | 0.00* |
| Scarcity of monetary resources |    | 0.01 | 0.07 | 0.01 | 0.16 | 0.87 |
| Scarcity of non-monetary resources |    | 0.22 | 0.08 | 0.23 | 2.75 | 0.01* |
| Past results of men's high profile sports |    | -0.15 | 0.09 | -0.15 | -1.72 | 0.09 |
| Past results of other sports |    | 0.16 | 0.08 | 0.17 | 1.88 | 0.06 |
| Distribution Justice      | .149| -0.26 | 0.09 | -0.26 | -2.98 | 0.00* |
| Scarcity of monetary resources |    | 0.03 | 0.09 | 0.03 | 0.36 | 0.72 |
| Scarcity of non-monetary resources |    | 0.33 | 0.10 | 0.27 | 3.19 | 0.00* |
| Past results of men's high profile sports |    | 0.17 | 0.10 | 0.16 | 1.67 | 0.10 |
| Past results of other sports |    | 0.03 | 0.10 | 0.02 | 0.26 | 0.80 |
| Power                     | .053| 0.20 | 0.11 | 0.15 | 1.74 | 0.08 |
| Scarcity of monetary resources |    | 0.13 | 0.12 | 0.10 | 1.07 | 0.29 |
| Scarcity of non-monetary resources |    | 0.20 | 0.11 | 0.15 | 1.74 | 0.08 |
| Past results of men's high profile sports |    | 0.20 | 0.11 | 0.15 | 1.74 | 0.08 |
| Past results of other sports |    | 0.13 | 0.12 | 0.10 | 1.07 | 0.29 |

*p < 0.05
For the next part of the analysis, the gender distribution of monetary resources and the gender distribution of non-monetary resources were each regressed upon the three resource allocation norms. Bonferroni's correction (i.e., alpha/number of equations = .025) was used to handle the problems associated with family wise error rate. For gender distribution of monetary resources, the result of the full regression model was significant and the independent variables accounted for 16.4% of the variance ($R^2 = .164$, adjusted $R^2 = .143$, $F(3,124) = 8.089$, $p < .001$). Distributive justice ($p = .001$) and power ($p = .019$) significantly contributed to the prediction of whether men's or women's teams received monetary resources. The coefficient for distributive justice was positive, indicating women's sports were likely to receive more economic resources when allocators believed in distributive justice as an allocation principle. On the other hand, the coefficient for power was negative, indicating increases in power were related to monetary resources being distributed to men's sports.

For the gender distribution of non-monetary resources, the result of the full regression model was significant and the independent variables accounted for 9.2% of the variance ($R^2 = .092$, adjusted $R^2 = .071$, $F(3,127) = 4.303$, $p = .006$). Power ($p = .042$) was the only independent variable that significantly contributed to the prediction of whether men's or women's teams received non-monetary resources. Similar to the findings concerning monetary resources, the coefficient was negative indicating increases in power were associated with allocators distributing more non-monetary resources to men's sports.

Regression results are found in Table 3.

**Discussion**

The current study extends the work done by Greenwell and Armstrong (2002) to better understand resource distribution in college athletic marketing. This study's findings are important for several reasons. First, results from this study indicate that resource allocation decisions are behavioral in addition to being monetary. This finding gives a better understanding of not only how resources are allocated, but why resources are allocated. Second, this study empirically validates many assumptions or widely held beliefs as to how marketing resources are allocated in intercollegiate athletics. Marketers may utilize this information as have a legitimate basis for identifying inequitable or inefficient resource allocations. Third, the findings from this study provide a basis for suggesting ways to improve the efficiency of marketing resource allocations. Considering the relevance and importance of the problem, this study provides a framework for addressing dilemmas that have long troubled athletic marketers. As a result, decision making can be better predicted, and methods to improve distribution patterns can be suggested. Finally, this study serves as a basis for future research concerning how to increase the effectiveness of marketing allocations. By identifying relevant variables that influence resource allocations in intercollegiate athletics, this study can be used as a starting point for future research designed to develop more robust models and identify more efficient strategies. A discussion of the relevant findings and list of recommendations follows.

In terms of allocation norms, rationality best represented how marketers allocated marketing resources followed by distributive justice and power. These results indicate that despite the talk about the impor-
tance of fairness (Mahony, Hums, & Riemer, 2002) athletic departments still allocate resources based on maximizing returns on their investments. There are two perspectives on whether this is appropriate. Some would suggest that placing resources where the returns are perceived to be the greatest is not only logical, but is necessary for the athletic department to survive financially. In fact, some believe that even those programs not receiving the resources benefit because of the increased resources generated by the programs being marketed more. In contrast, others would argue that such a strategy tends to continue current distribution patterns and ignores the potential resources that could be generated if different sports were given more resources. Moreover, they would argue many of the high profile sports do not, in fact, generate excess revenue despite the greater access to marketing resources (Fulks, 2004).

Means did not differ according to classification (I-A, I-AA, or I-AAA) indicating each classification struggles with the same conflict of trying to increase revenue, while still being fair. Interestingly, males and females did not differ in terms of which principle they used to make allocation decisions. It is important to note this study addressed how marketing resources are actually allocated rather than how they should be allocated. If this study had addressed how allocations should be made, it is possible that females may have leaned more toward distributive justice and less toward rationality. Prior research on how athletic department resources should be distributed did find similar gender differences (Hums & Chelladurai, 1994; Mahony, Reimer, Breeding, & Hums, 2006).

Scarcity of monetary resources was significantly correlated with rationality, indicating when monetary resources are scarce, marketers are likely to focus on accruing the highest value for the lowest cost and are more likely to disregard fairness as a norm. This trend is particularly troublesome when one considers allocators are likely to perceive all their resources as scarce (Becker, 1976). Resources are rarely abundant, and when they are, they are still not likely to be perceived to be abundant. In terms of non-monetary resources, scarcity negatively correlated to distributive justice indicating the reverse of the previous finding. In other words, distributive justice is likely to be used as a distributive principle when non-monetary resources such as time, facilities, and personnel are perceived to be abundant. Taken together, these results suggest college sports marketers are more likely to be fair when it comes to non-monetary resources, but fairness is less of an issue with monetary resources.

Past results also influenced distributive norms. When marketers received positive results from men's high profile sports in the past, they were likely to use rationality as a distributive norm. It appears marketers use these past results to justify their allocation decisions and invest more marketing resources into the same sports they have been marketing. Positive results in the past for other sports (women's sports and men's low-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rationality was the highest rated norm.</td>
<td>Marketers are primarily concerned with maximizing returns rather than being fair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarcity of resources influenced the exchange norm used to distribute resources.</td>
<td>When resources are scarce, marketers are likely to focus on accruing the highest value for the lowest cost. Marketers are more likely to be fair when distributing non-monetary resources.</td>
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<td>Prior results influenced the exchange norm utilized to distribute resources.</td>
<td>Marketers are less likely to distribute marketing resources to programs that have not delivered in the past.</td>
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<td>Power relationships predicted which sports received resources.</td>
<td>The influence of powerful stakeholders tends to shift more resources into men's sports over women's sports.</td>
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<td>Rationality did not predict which sports received resources.</td>
<td>Marketers will seek the highest returns regardless of the sport's gender composition.</td>
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profile sports) correlated with distributive justice. Marketers tend to base decisions on fairness only when they have received positive results in the past from these sports. This strategy seems to limit opportunities, as marketers are less likely to risk allocating resources unless they have evidence of past success. An unwillingness to take risks limits innovations and stifles change. As discussed earlier, it is possible that some sports could generate more resources if they received more marketing resources, which could be a great benefit to the athletic department over the long term. For example, soccer is very popular internationally and some universities have a large number of international students and/or are situated in communities with a large immigrant population. This scenario would seem to suggest the potential for increasing interest and support for the university soccer team. However, this development may never happen if the program receives little or no marketing resources.

Two of the three allocation norms predicted which sports received marketing resources. Marketers rating distributive justice highly were more likely to allocate resources to women’s sports, indicating women’s sports seem to benefit from allocators who have a belief in fairness. Unfortunately for those sports, this norm was not the highest rated. Again, rationality was more likely to be used when distributing marketing resources. Prior research has also supported the notion that despite the claims to the contrary (Hums & Chelladurai, 1994), many programs still tend to provide more resources of all types to programs that have traditionally been revenue generators (Mahony & Pastore, 1998).

Power also dictated which sports received both monetary and non-monetary resources as marketers agreed that imbalances in power had an effect on the way they made decisions. Further, the data revealed marketers were more likely to put their resources into men’s sports implying powerful stakeholders tended to steer administrators into putting more resources into men’s sports. This trend illustrates an ongoing issue. Powerful constituents, whether they are administrators (Acosta & Carpenter, 2004), donors (Mahony, Gladden, & Funk, 2003), etc., still tend to be male and push for resources to go into men’s sports, often at the expense of women’s sports.

More importantly, the results revealed rationality was not a significant predictor of which sports received resources. This tendency indicates marketers looking for the highest returns will allocate resources wherever they can to maximize their returns. Therefore, sport programs that can demonstrate the ability to generate rewards may be able to sway allocation decisions. This finding is important as it gives under-marketed sport programs a way to seek additional marketing resources. Under-marketed sport programs may be more successful by compiling and presenting quantifiable successes, rather than by just making demands.

In terms of future research, the current study is limited in that each of the norms was measured at a general level. Therefore, more study is needed to further delineate the intricacies of each norm. For example, the current study found that some allocators preferred distributive justice as an allocation norm, but more can be learned as to what they considered to be just. Similarly, it would be of interest to investigate the power norm in order to gain a better understanding of which parties exact the most influence over allocation decisions.

Further, it is important to note that the regression models only explained 12%-15% of the variance in the dependent variables. Although the level of prediction may seem fairly low, it is noteworthy from a practical standpoint as even minor increases in performance can be critical in intercollegiate athletics (Turner & Chelladurai, 2005). Small improvements in how resources are allocated can have a significant impact in delivering desired results. The modest correlations do suggest, however, additional predictors which explain more of the variation in norms and behaviors may exist. Therefore, future studies should identify additional antecedents and distribution norms in order to bolster our understanding of how marketing resources are allocated in intercollegiate athletics.

Conclusions and Recommendations
These findings lead to the question of how those involved with sport can change allocation patterns that may be inequitable or inefficient. First, they must try to change focus from short-term to long-term success. They need to convince those involved with determining the distributions of the benefits of looking past these current restrictions to develop opportunities over time rather than focusing on short-term revenue. Currently, most athletic departments have, at most, no more than two sports (often football and men’s basketball) that produce a significant amount of revenue and/or are able to produce a profit (Fulks, 2004). However, exceptions exist, which suggests in some cases it is possible to develop more than two sports as major revenue producers. While this may require time and an investment of resources, having additional revenue producers could significantly improve the long-term financial viability of the athletic department.

Second, sport managers should identify alternative allocation patterns from other successful athletic
departments. It is understandable that many managers would want to avoid the risk of being the first to try something new, but the reality in this case is there are athletic departments that have been successful with different distribution patterns. Sport managers could investigate the strategies used at these schools and model those that appear most promising for their institution. Again, seeking opportunities where new marketing allocations may lead to previously undiscovered rewards could have some real benefits for the athletic department.

Third, sport managers could focus on a broad spectrum of rewards rather than simply focusing on monetary rewards. If they can identify a larger range of benefits that can be recouped from marketing sport programs, they may find some potential rewards that could have other benefits for the university and the athletic department. For example, promoting one or more women’s teams with greater intensity may help the university create an image as an institution committed to social justice and equity, which could lead to a number of public relations related benefits.

Finally, those involved with sport may want to work to keep university officials more involved so that allocation decisions can be made that will meet not only athletic department goals, but university goals. As just suggested, university officials may be more concerned about some of the public relations benefits of certain distribution strategies than purely the monetary benefits. They understand the potential of positive public relations to bring prestige to the university, attract recruits, draw students, increased donations, etc. Overall, while it is difficult to change patterns of behaviors in organizations that have emerged over many years, it at least becomes possible if one understands the bases for those behaviors. The current study contributes by allowing us to better understand the bases for making marketing resource allocation decisions.

References
athletes and other college students. Journal of Sport Management, 20, 159-188.


