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College Choice Factors of Student-Athletes at Title I High Schools in Miami-Dade County, Florida

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

COLLEGE CHOICE FACTORS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES AT TITLE I HIGH
SCHOOLS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

By

Cecilia Armesto

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty

of the University of Miami

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Doctor of Education

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2014

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COLLEGE CHOICE FACTORS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES AT TITLE I HIGH
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Many studies have been published in an effort to understand the processes that high school student-athletes undergo when deciding which college to attend. Very few of these studies investigate the issue in terms of the subgroups that make up these student-athletes. One of these subgroups, a very large and important one, is ethnic minority student-athletes in Title I high schools. Understanding the decision-making process of this subgroup is important to the high schools that prepare these students to enter college and to the colleges that recruit them. The college choice factors of 207 student-athletes at three Title I high schools in Miami-Dade County, Florida, were investigated with a paper-and-pencil survey. Independent variables were socioeconomic status (SES), race/ethnicity, graduation year, high school, gender, and grade point average. Dependent variables were eleven choice factors: cost of college, scholarship offer, reputation of college, distance from home, recruitment to play sport, reputation of college coach, opportunity to play early in college career, influence of high school coaches, influence of high school counselor, influence of friends, influence of family. Results showed that the most important factors in the students' choice of colleges were scholarship offer and cost of college, followed by the reputation of the college. Least important was the influence of friends, followed by distance from home, and influence of the school counselor. Only

one of the independent variables revealed significant differences in subgroups of the sample. There was a significant effect of SES on college choice factors; lower SES students reported that influence of counselor, reputation of the college, and distance from home were more important than higher SES students reported them to be. Higher SES students reported all of the other college choice factors to be more important than lower SES students reported them to be. These findings have implications for both colleges and high schools. It suggests to colleges how to recruit student-athletes from Title I high schools—offer financial aid and highlight the reputation of the college. It suggests to high schools the need for a more focused effort to expose economically disadvantaged student-athletes to more information about colleges that offer athletics and financial aid in or near Miami-Dade County, Florida.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2013), of the 3.2 million youth who graduated from high school in 2011-2012, 66.2% subsequently enrolled in colleges or universities. All high school graduates must make crucial decisions regarding their careers and future lives, but those bound for college have additional choices to make in selecting a collegiate institution to attend. High school seniors have many factors to consider when deciding what avenue to pursue after graduation. Those who decide to attend an institution of higher education typically seek advice from family, friends, and counselors, among others (Ceja, 2006; Chapman, DeMasi, & O'Brien, 1987; Galotti & Mark, 1994; Gilmour, Spiro, & Dolich, 1981; Hossler & Stage, 1992; Johnson, Stewart, & Eberly, 1991; Kim & Schneider, 2005; Martin, 1991, 1996; Matthay, 1989; McDonough, 1997; Muhammad, 2008). They contemplate finances, distance from home, institution's reputation, and other circumstances related to their potentially life-altering decision (Chapman, 1981; Delaney, 1998; Ganderton & Santos, 1995; Hu & Hossler, 2000; Kane & Spizman, 1994; Lillis & Tian, 2008; McDonough, 1994; McPherson, Schapiro, & Winston, 1993; Mumper, 1996; Somers, Cofer, & Vanderputten, 2002; Weiler, 1996).

Typical high school students spend four years in high school during which time they are exposed to various academic courses, one purpose of which is to help them determine certain life goals. Students may choose to enter the labor market immediately after graduation, enter the military, or continue with academic pursuits. Students who are more academically motivated have taken rigorous classes and seem most likely to further

their education in a collegiate setting (DesJardins, Ahlburg, & McCall, 2006; Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Wilson & Adelson, 2012). Litten (1991) reported that in the United States each year, over two million students, their families, and relevant school personnel confront the time-consuming and expensive college decision-making process, spending over 50 hours investigating information about colleges and approximately \$1,500 in direct costs of preparing materials and gathering information.

Students who are academically motivated take into consideration primarily academic factors associated with college choice. Letawsky, Schneider, Pedersen, and Palmer (2003) found that student-athletes, however, have additional factors to consider; these sports-related additional factors influence their decision-making process. Furthermore, student-athletes who attend economically disadvantaged schools face choices affected by financial and other considerations similar to non-athletes. The college selection process of this group has not been studied; specifically of interest is the impact of the socioeconomic level of students on college choice. Research studies conducted on student-athletes have not focused on student-athletes from Title I (high poverty) high schools nor on the role played by socioeconomic level and race/ethnicity on the college choices of such students (Adler & Adler, 1991; Konnert and Giese, 1987; Letawsky et al., 2003; Mathes & Gurney, 1985; Reynaud, 1998).

The Research Problem

According to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, a former student-athlete at Harvard, the primary purpose of going to college is to graduate. The goal of college is to academically prepare oneself for the next stage of life after college. Duncan (2012) stated in a speech, “Students who are truly student-athletes have a chance for a life-

transforming, life-shaping experience.” Participation in college and university athletic programs can affect students in profound ways (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

The process of choosing whether to attend college or not begins in high school for many students (Hossler et al., 1989). These researchers found that many high school students contemplate going to college during their first three years, but then finally commit one way or another during their senior year. College athletics are a source of attraction for some students to attend certain colleges and universities. Some students may choose an institution of higher education because they enjoy watching sports, but other students may choose because they have a talent for a particular sport. These student-athletes base their choice of institutions on a myriad of factors not limited to the institution’s ranking in the chosen sport, the academic offerings at the school, and the social setting of the institution (Adler & Adler, 1991; Konnert & Giese, 1987; Letawsky et al., 2003; Mathes & Gurney, 1985; Reynaud, 1998). Much of the *choice* the student-athlete faces is under his or her own control; however, the choice affects both the student and the institution. What the individual “comes away with,” both while in college and after the athletic eligibility expires, is of extreme importance to the student and the collegiate institution (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). According to Duncan (2012), for student-athletes, college should not be just about playing a sport, but the ultimate goals should be to become the best citizens possible and to prepare themselves for life after athletics.

For some student-athletes, athletics may play a significant role in the decision of which college to attend. Student-athletes might consider an athletic program that guarantees more playing time, more television exposure, or more assistance in

developing the athlete into a higher draft pick for professional sports. These student-athletes arrive on campus enthusiastic about showing their athletic prowess on the court, field, or pool (Adler & Adler, 1991; Mathes & Gurney, 1985; Konnert & Giese, 1987; Reynaud, 1998; Letawsky et al., 2003). They have a passion for their sport and seek to prove their ability to themselves, their teammates, and especially the coaches who recruited them (Garbert, Hale, & Montalvo, 1999). The problems student-athletes face when they choose an institution based solely on athletics and not on academics can be very costly: Student-athletes might experience academic difficulties and increased stress because of the academic demands, and they could also potentially lose eligibility because they cannot meet minimum academic requirements.

Studies that have addressed the problem. Many studies have been conducted in the field of college choice (will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two). Researchers such as Corey (1936) focused on the general factors traditional high school students considered when determining college choice. This literature review categorizes the factors originally found by Corey and presents the research based on: choice factors related to the individual; choice factors related to college characteristics; choice factors related to college culture at the high school; and choice factors related to student-athletes in general.

Researchers who focused their studies on choice factors related to the individual considered variables such as race/ethnicity, gender, finances, socioeconomic status, and input from family, friends, and counselors (Ceja, 2006; DesJardins, Ahlburg, & McCall, 2006; Hoogeveen, 2009; Lillis & Tian, 2008; Muhammad, 2008; Nasir, McLaughlin, & Jones, 2009; Wilson & Adelson, 2012). In general, the research shows that these

variables do affect the decision-making process for high school students because different students prioritize variables differently as will be delineated in the literature review.

When researchers consider choice factors related to college characteristics, they are looking at what students think about a college's academic reputation and majors offered (Ordovensky, 1995; Schroeder, 2007; Spies, 1978). Researchers who study college characteristics also strive to learn if the college's location is a factor that students consider when selecting an institution of higher education (Avery & Hoxby, 2003; Dembrot, 1984; MacAllum, Glover, Queen, & Riggs, 2007; Pope, 2005; Sevier, 1993).

Studies that center on college choice factors related to the college culture at the high school focus on how the environment within the high school affects college choice. These studies found a link between poorer urban schools and less motivation among their students and more difficulty in selecting a college. These studies found detrimental ramifications for students who aspire to attend college, but, on a positive note, the findings show that individual attitudes, effort, and the availability of strong mentors impact tremendously the college choice decision-making process (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010; Griffin & Allen, 2006; McClafferty, McDonough, & Nuñez, 2002; Nasir et al., 2009; Trent, Owens-Nicolson, Eatman, Daugherty, & Norman, 2003).

Studies that concentrate on the college choice factors of student-athletes are very limited. These studies focus on college choice through the lens of the athletes and specific choice factors related to athletics, such as recruitment, interactions with collegiate coaches, the availability of athletic scholarships, the amount of expected playing time, and the showcasing ability of the institution. Furthermore, studies of student-athletes found that the relationship with the new coach is of vital importance to

the prospective college student-athlete (Adler & Adler, 1991; Galotti & Mark, 1994; Garbert et al., 1999; Konnert & Geise, 1987; Letawsky et al., 2003; Lubker & Etzel, 2007; Mathes & Gurney, 1985; Reynaud, 1998; Ryan, Groves, & Schneider, 2007; Slabik, 1995; Smith, 2006).

Deficiencies in the studies. The review of the literature in Chapter Two shows that although a great deal of research has been conducted in the field of college choice, most of the studies have asked college freshmen to recall which factors influenced their college choice decisions. Asking the students after the decision has been made may or may not accurately reflect the actual process undertaken at an earlier time.

Studies regarding college choice consider all students— athletes and non-athletes— and do not focus on student-athletes. Those that do focus on student-athletes do not separate the student-athletes by race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or the college culture of the high school attended. Clearly, there is little literature about how ethnic minority student-athletes and student-athletes in low-income neighborhoods proceed through the college selection process. This study will take a step in remedying the deficiencies in the literature by providing information regarding how student-athletes at Title I (high poverty) schools in a large school district that is over 60% low income select a college.

The significance of the study for particular audiences. This study is intended to add scholarly research and literature to the field of college choice. There is a dearth of literature about the college choice selection processes of student-athletes at low income high schools and none specific to student-athletes who attend Title I schools. This study will benefit Title I high school counselors, coaches, parents, and athletic

department personnel in learning how these student-athletes proceed through the college selection process. Furthermore, these people who may be influential to student-athletes may benefit from knowing the potential cultural and grade level factors that students at Title I high schools self-report as important in the college process. Using this information, programming and workshops can be created to assist future student-athletes in selecting an institution of higher education.

Purpose Statement

This study focuses on what college choice factors student-athletes in Title I public high schools in the culturally diverse area of Miami-Dade County, Florida, take into consideration during the college selection process. This study investigates how their choice of higher education institutions are influenced (or not) by factors beyond their control, such as socioeconomic level, race/ethnicity, graduation year, gender, and by a factor that is under their control, grade point average. This study does not focus on college access, but on the processes that student-athletes utilize when considering college options. The researcher describes Hossler's College Choice Model (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987) and attempts to determine whether this model identified the college choice factors that student-athletes at Title I high schools undergo in determining their choices of collegiate institutions.

For the purposes of this study, a student-athlete is a student at a Title I high school in Miami-Dade County, Florida. Sophomore, junior and senior student-athletes at these schools who currently participate in a sport were surveyed. The review of the literature, which is detailed in Chapter 2, the following research questions were developed:

1. Which factors are the most predominant in the college selection process for student-athletes at Title I high schools?
2. Do the factors differ by high school?
3. How is socioeconomic status related to college choices for student-athletes who attend Title I schools?
4. How is race/ethnicity related to college choices for student-athletes who attend Title I schools?
5. How is graduation year related to college choices for student-athletes who attend Title I schools?
6. How is gender related to college choices for student-athletes who attend Title I schools?
7. How is GPA related to college choices for student-athletes who attend Title I schools?

Variables Defined

Independent Variables (Categorical)

SES= free and reduced lunch, not free or reduced lunch

Race/ethnicity= Black, Hispanic, White Non-Hispanic, Other

Graduation year = 2014, 2015, 2016

Gender= female, male

Grade Point Average= 4.0 or higher, 3.5 to 3.99, 3.0 to 3.49, 2.5 to 2.99, 2.0 to 2.49, I don't know.

Dependent Variables (Continuous)

Choice Factors Related to Individual:

- Financial Concerns
- Influence of Friends
- Influence of Family
- Influence of High School Counselors

Choice Factors Related to College Characteristics

- Reputation of College
- Distance From Home

Choice Factors Specific to Student-Athletes

- Recruitment to Play Sport
- Reputation of the College Coach
- Availability of Scholarships
- Opportunity to Play Early in Collegiate Career
- Influence of High School Coach

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature

A thorough review of research, focusing especially on contemporary scholarship published within the past ten years, was undertaken in three sections. First, a review of the literature dealing with the factors related to college choice for all college-bound students was reviewed. The same was done with the literature dealing with college-bound student-athletes and with college-bound student-athletes attending Title I public high schools. It is important to note that this project focuses on college choice rather than on college access.

College Choice Theoretical Frameworks

Choice theory. Choice Theory (Glasser, 1998) considers the choice behaviors of an individual in a decision-making unit and then analyzes how individual choices interact to produce outcomes. This theory is based on psychologist Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs (Maslow, 1968). Maslow's work inspired William Glasser, MD, to develop a theory of choice grounded in psychology and counseling. Glasser's Choice Theory includes four behavioral components (acting, thinking, feeling, and physiology) and explains how the choices we make in our thinking and acting affect our feeling and physiology (Glasser, 1998). Choice Theory also posits a framework for a "Quality World" in which individuals place their understanding of the world around them as it relates to people, possessions, beliefs, and all other self-imposed important factors. Glasser believes that individuals compare their real-world situations to their Quality World and strive to make choices that will lead to diminishing the disparity between the two.

Rational Choice Theory (RCT) (Scott, 2000) has similar behavioral components but is based on economics rather than psychology and adopts a methodological individualist position, which embodies the relationship between society and individuals. RCT attempts to explain all social phenomena in terms of the outcomes made by the motivations of self-interested individuals. Rational choice theorists attempt to understand the interactions that involve such resources as time, information, approval, and prestige. Individuals are seen as motivated by the wants or goals that are expressed in their preferences. The actions of an individual are based on the information available at the moment and the conditions under which a decision must be made. Similar to Glasser's "Quality World," it is believed that rational individuals choose alternatives that provide the greatest personal satisfaction.

Rational Choice Theory offers a useful way to think about college choice because it clearly explains the behavioral components used by individuals to consider alternatives and make choices that best suit their needs. Both Choice Theory and Rational Choice Theory are pertinent to this study because prior research has found that students and student-athletes are greatly influenced in the college decision-making process by various factors including academic reputation, availability of a desired major, distance from home, parents/guardians and other family and friends, and financial concerns (Chapman, 1981, 1984; Corey, 1936; Gallotti & Mark, 1994; Hossler et al., 1989). Student-athletes have these influences as well as those associated with sport: the coach's reputation and/or demeanor, the opportunity to play and the actual amount of potential playing time, the availability of an athletic scholarship, and the availability of academic support services.

College choice models. Student college choice has been viewed from many perspectives. Hossler, Schmit, and Vesper (1999) suggested four forms of theoretically-based approaches or models for examining the college-choice process: 1) economic models that assume that prospective college students are rational and analyze college choice through cost benefit (Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Paulsen, 2001) ; 2) status-attainment models that are grounded in sociology (Boyle, 1996; Hossler & Stage, 1992; Hossler et al., 1989); 3) information-processing models that share the rationality of economic models, but also incorporated information-seeking (Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999), and 4) combined models that take ideas from econometric (statistical analyses of problems associated with finance) and sociological perspectives based on the work of Chapman (1984), Hanson & Litten (1982), Hossler & Gallagher (1987), and Jackson (1982).

Hossler and Gallagher's three-phase model. Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) model is the best choice for this study because it incorporates the entire college choice process from start to finish in three broad stages. In many research studies, Hossler discussed when students begin each phase, approximately how long the students are in each phase, and what thoughts, determinations, and actions are completed during each phase. Hossler and Gallagher's Three Phase model is comprised of the following three phases: (a) deciding to attend college (predisposition), (b) investigating institutions and developing a list of potential colleges and universities (search), and (c) applying and enrolling (choice). Within each phase, several characteristics or factors influence the decision-making process. These are background characteristics (race/ethnicity, gender, parental income and education), personal characteristics (academic achievement, peer

influences), high school characteristics (quality, community/neighborhood SES as determined by school boundaries), and college characteristics (cost, location, available resources).

In the predisposition phase, the student consults respected and personally valued sources such as family, counselors, and friends to decide whether or not to attend college. The student weighs alternatives such as whether to enter the labor market or enlist in the military. This stage in the Hossler and Gallagher model focused on the decision to go to college rather than on a commitment to a location. In this phase, actual institutions have minimal influence on student college choice because in this early stage the focus is directly on the individual student's ideology, his or her environment, upbringing, and the impact of friends, family, and school. Students are positively influenced by their attendance at high-quality high schools that foster and encourage continuing education, parents who have attended college and/or have positive attitudes towards education, and the availability of information regarding financial aid and institutional costs. According to Hossler and Gallagher, the most important personal characteristics in this phase are the student's socioeconomic status and academic ability. Walpole (2008) found that students from high SES families are four times more likely to attend college than those from lower SES backgrounds. Similarly, those students who had higher academic achievement and took more advanced classes were more likely to choose to attend college (Walpole, 2008; Weiler, 1996). Once the decision is made to pursue college, the search phase begins.

The search phase is considered the most important of the three phase model. Throughout the time spent in this phase, students are constantly seeking information about colleges and weighing the pros and cons of each. During the search phase, which

usually begins during the junior year of high school, consideration of important variables and tangibles associated with college choice is made. Students determine whether they will pursue an academic track or possibly a vocational or non-traditional college option. According to Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) theory, throughout this stage a student compiles a list of potential institutions after gathering information about each that is relevant to him or her. The student considers what the institution has to offer based on choice factors deemed important and changes the list as different dynamics come into play. For example, students may consider geographic location first and then specific academic programs among the colleges remaining in their choice set (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987).

Students enter the choice phase when applications are submitted to a few select institutions as determined by the student. For most students, the choice stage begins during the senior year in high school. While in this final phase of selection, the student spends a great deal of time and energy evaluating the institutions on his or her short list. Of the many factors considered during this stage, academic reputation, costs, and location seem to be the most vital (Hossler et al., 1999). It is during this phase that financial aid numbers and scholarships impact the choice process.

College choice for student-athletes. For student-athletes, the college choice process is affected not only by all the factors previously mentioned within Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) model, but also by those factors associated with the sport. Additional choice factors considered by student-athletes are the coach's reputation, athletic scholarship offers, and the opportunity to play early in their collegiate careers (Adler & Adler, 1991; Konnert & Giese, 1987; Letawsky et al., 2003; Mathes & Gurney, 1985;

Reynaud, 1998). Once the coaches at prospective institutions show an interest in a student-athlete's talent, ability, leadership, etc., the student-athlete may put that institution on his/her radar, thereby affecting the college choice process. None of the previously mentioned models take into account the collegiate athletic department's role in the recruitment process as a function of college choice.

In sum, Choice Theory and Rational Choice Theory consider behaviors of the individual from a psychological and/or economic perspective in the decision-making process. Many other studies have been conducted to investigate student college choice from a sociological perspective, but Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) research encompasses all these perspectives into one model that incorporates the entire college choice process from beginning to end.

History of Research on College Choice

In one of the first studies of the college choice process, Corey (1936) focused his attention on the personal factors that influence why students select a particular college from the large number available. He examined the catalogs of several universities and found reasons why the institutions advertised that students should attend their school.

Factors he found that institutions used in recruiting students included:

- superior faculties (number of men and women with Ph.D.'s)
- the variety of courses offered
- the economy of attending the institution
- the completeness of the physical plant
- the size of the institution
- the institution's traditions
- its social life, including fraternities and clubs students may join
- its unique curricular plan or administrative organization
- athletics
- the institution's location
- its ideals and moral atmosphere

Corey concluded that these reasons are usually advanced by administrative officers or faculty members connected with the institutions and may or may not be the actual reasons why students choose to attend. Corey determined to learn about college choice from the students' perspectives by interviewing 143 freshmen enrolled in the Teachers College at the University of Nebraska and who did not live in Lincoln. The initial question was, "What factors influenced you to attend the University of Nebraska rather than some other institution of higher learning?" The following seven influences (in order of frequency) were answered by 90% of all respondents:

- high school teachers and administrators
- proximity of the university to students' homes
- family
- prestige of the institution
- economy
- availability of desired courses
- friends

Times have changed considerably since 1936. Corey found that students sought information about faculty members, completeness of physical plant, and how moral the atmosphere of the campus was. According to Persis (2009) and Hahn, Mestre, Ward, & Avery (2011), today's millennial students are technologically-oriented and are more interested in knowing about the amenities--do the dorms have cable television? How far from my dorm are the computer labs? Today's college students are also interested in knowing about the age of the wellness facilities and what other extracurricular activities are available to them outside the classroom (Blumenthal, 2009). Today's college students differ from those in the 1930's in that they want to know what academic support services are available to them in order to receive academic assistance with the aim of avoiding stress (Bigham, Bland, Melton, & Welle, 2012). What has not changed in all

these years is that students still consider colleges based on prestige, academic programs offered, cost of attendance, distance from home, and input from family, friends, and counselors.

Research on College Choice

College choice factors related to individual. Many personal factors are considered by students who consider college: Academic talent and motivation guides the selection process as does the influence of certain people.

Academic achievement. Students' academic achievement during high school is very influential in the college selection process and generally guides the college choice process (DesJardins, Ahlburg, & McCall, 2006; Manski & Wise, 1983). Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith (1989) showed that high school grade point average (GPA) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores are predictors of whether a student elects to apply to a college or university. DesJardins, Ahlburg, and McCall (2006) found that the probability of applying to college was higher among high-ability students, and that women had application probabilities that are 22% higher than those of men.

Academic achievement during high school can open doors or limit the availability of options that students can entertain during the search process. According to Wilson and Adelson (2012), academically talented students who participated in rigorous Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes and had higher academic achievement than students who did not participate in advanced curriculum courses selected colleges with (a) higher average mean SAT scores when prestige of the college was the reason for their selection, and (b) the college was farther away. Academic self-

concept and perceived challenge of their high school curriculum had no effect on students' selection of college.

In sum, academic achievement in high school is an important factor in the college selection process. Higher high school grade point average and college entrance exam scores increase the probability that students will elect to go to college, increase the probability that a student will select a four-year institution over a two-year institution, and increase the probability that a student will select an institution that is farther from home.

Financial concerns and socioeconomic status. Hu and Hossler (2000) found that one of the primary factors prospective college students consider when selecting a college is the cost of attendance. They also found that all students who value financial aid as a determinant of college choice are more likely to prefer private institutions over public institutions, when compared to students who think financial aid is less important.

Rising costs of tuition require students to closely consider affordability in the decision-making process. Anonymous (1998) cites a 1997 issue of *Landscape* that documented the “price-income squeeze” on higher education, “focusing on how the four-year cost of attending college has increased substantially faster than median family incomes in the United States. The full cost of attending a private college or university is now more than double the median family income and, for the first time, the four-year cost of attending a public institution exceeds that median” (p. 53). With soaring tuition costs, students must weigh the price of attendance with future salary expectations to determine if degree costs merit the accumulation of debt.

Studies on parental income as a determinant of SES are prevalent in research associated with factors affecting college choice (Chapman, 1981; Delaney, 1998; Ganderton & Santos, 1995; Kane & Spizman, 1994; Somers, Cofer, & Vanderputten, 2002). McDonough (1994) found that students with higher family incomes tend to select four-year institutions over two-year schools, and that they select private institutions more often than those students with lower parental income. Lillis & Tian (2008) found that low-SES students were less likely to select an institution with a higher price tag.

Several studies exist on the impact of college tuition costs and financial aid awards on student college choice behaviors (McPherson, Schapiro, & Winston, 1993; Mumper, 1996; Weiler, 1996). These studies focus on the effects of financial aid on student access to higher education and institutional choice. Not surprisingly, the research has found that students from lower-income families have the greatest difficulty meeting soaring tuition costs. Relative to upper-income families, net tuition increases for students from lower-income families are up to three times higher when expressed as a percentage of family income. The amount of financial aid that is awarded to students is a very real factor pertaining to institutional choice. Tuition discounts are imperative for many students to “short-list” a particular institution for consideration.

Hoogeveen (2009) found that Hispanic and other ethnic minority students are moving away from selecting to attend public or private four-year schools due to rising tuition costs, and instead select to attend two-year institutions. However, research shows that many of these ethnic minority students do not persist to complete a two-year degree, nor does the majority transition to a four-year institution (Clark, 1960; Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Ternzini, 1998).

Kim (2004) questions whether financial aid provides equal opportunity for ethnic minority students to attend their first-choice institution, since ethnic minorities respond to types of financial aid differently from Whites. According to St John (1999) and St. John and Noell (1989), “For instance, ethnic minority students tend to avoid loans for their education, which in turn restricts students’ college choice, especially if loans are the only offered form of financial aid.” (in Kim, 2004, p. 44). Similarly, Leslie and Brinkman (1987) and St. John (1990) found that students who were offered grants and work studies as opposed to loans were more likely to select more expensive institutions. Kim’s study focused on the effects of different types of financial aid on college choice of different racial groups. Results showed that racial differences were markedly different in the responses of students who were asked to rate the importance of having financial aid in their college decision. Sixty-six percent of Whites, 71% of African Americans and 83% of Latino students considered that having financial aid was somewhat/very important in college choice. When specific financial aid variables were analyzed, loans did not have any significant impact on students’ choice to attend their desired institution. If students were offered grants or a combination of loans with grants, the probability of attending first-choice institutions was about 4% higher than for students who did not have any financial aid.

McDonough (1997) concluded that it was not just the financial component of SES that structures college choices but also the cultural differences among low, middle, upper SES families and schools. McDonough interviewed twelve Hispanic female high school seniors and their best friends and parents and found that students at different levels of SES did not base college choice decisions on finances alone. Parents of students with

low SES thought it best for their children to attend local community colleges when majors were undecided. These students also felt an added loyalty to family and friends, which caused them to select institutions closer to home. High SES students thought about how to mentally align friends, family, and school in a way that promoted selection of the best four-year school their grades would allow. Low SES students struggled with aligning all three and felt challenged to rank one over the others.

In sum, the cost of attendance is a legitimate factor that students consider in the college selection process. Students with higher parental income tend to select four-year institutions over two-year institutions and private over public institutions. Students with lower parental income tend to look for tuition discounts and have an increased probability of selecting lower priced colleges and universities in order to avoid loans that need to be repaid. Many select two-year schools over four-year schools to remain closer to home and minimize expenses.

Input from family and friends. Galotti and Mark (1994) noted that parents and/or guardians, friends, and guidance center materials were rated as most important in the college search process. Students sought information from significant others whose opinions they valued and cherished. Compared to males, female high school students more readily sought information from peers and parents rather than reaching out to high school counselors. High school students with higher academic ability started the college choice process earlier than those with lesser ability and considered and applied to more institutions. These students also had a tendency to seek information from counselors more than middle- and lower-ability students. Students whose parents had college

experience tended to rely less on counselors and more on parental input (Galotti & Mark, 1994).

Kim and Schneider (2005) focused on parental influences on transition to college. However, the researcher did acknowledge that college choice is influenced by more than socioeconomic characteristics and parental influences. Kim and Schneider cited prior research that contended that parent-child relationships, termed social capital, influence educational outcomes (decision to attend college, college visits, choice of college, financial support, etc.) separately from SES characteristics (Coleman, 1988; McNeal, 1999; Morgan & Sorensen, 1999; Smith, Beaulieu, & Seraphine, 1995; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995; Sun, 1999; Teachman, Paasch, & Carver, 1997). Kim and Schneider found that adolescents who have ambitions aligned to those of their parents' educational expectations for them and take action to reach those goals have a greater chance of attending a four-year versus a two-year college. Findings showed that being an academically ambitious African American was a positive predictor of enrollment in a four-year versus a two-year college and that having parents with higher levels of educational attainment significantly increased the odds of enrollment in either type of college, while family income affected only the odds of enrollment in a four-year college versus a two-year college.

Despite the fact that parental encouragement is found in the early stage of the college choice process (Hossler & Stage, 1992), parental influence is less apparent in the final stages of the college selection process (Hossler et al., 1989). Toward the end of the process when students are selecting their schools, other sources of information such as peers, and counselors become more prevalent (Hossler et al., 1989). However, this was

not the case in a study of Mexican-American students by Ceja (2006). Ceja studied high school females of Mexican descent and found that the roles of parents and siblings were greatly limited during college choice decision-making for these Chicana high school seniors, primarily due to parents having limited information and understanding of educational opportunities in this country. However, the students reported that their parents exerted a positive influence on their college aspirations. The study revealed that while parents aspired for their children to be college educated, none had any knowledge of how to select or apply to a college. Despite having limited knowledge, the students reported that their parents valued a college education and therefore all felt supported as each moved through the selection process. Ceja also found that a limitation with which most Chicana students in his study struggled were parents who did not speak or understand English. Despite having attended orientations to better assist their children, limited language skills hampered the parents' ability to help with the college choice process. The process became easier when an older sibling was available and willing to help.

In sum, input from family and friends is a factor that many college-bound students consider when selecting an institution of higher education. In general, female high school students tend to seek information from peers and parents (African American males are discussed in a later section), while higher SES students approach counselors more than middle- and lower ability students. Parental input is sought by those students whose parents have college experience. Similarly, parental input is valued more by students whose ambitions aligned to those of their parents' educational expectations. Parental input seems to be limited for children of immigrant parents who do not understand the

American higher education system. More parental input is found in the early stage of the college selection process than at the final stage when students seek more information from peers and counselors.

Input from high school counselors. Results of studies vary greatly when reporting the percentage of high school students who seek information from high school counselors: from 16 % to 92 % (Chapman, DeMasi, & O'Brien, 1987; Gilmour, Spiro, & Dolich, 1981; Johnson, Stewart, & Eberly, 1991; Martin, 1996; Martin, 1991; Matthay, 1989). Counselors often play a vital role in the college selection process during the junior and senior years through advisement. Chapman, DeMasi, and O'Brien (1987) reported that high school students meet with counselors on average three to five times during their last two years of high school. Similarly, Johnson, Stewart, and Eberly (1991) found that about 70 % of college students reported using their high school counselors as a key source of information in the college selection process. These surveyed students reported seeking advice about financial aid, academic advising, and general college queries.

Muhammad (2008) found that counselors act like parental figures, positively impacting future education for African American youth. Because of misinformation in the African American community regarding college costs, many talented African Americans opt-out of higher education. Freeman (2005) suggested that in order for African American students to seek an education past high school, they need ability, desire, and cultural support. For many capable African Americans, the necessary support is provided by the high school counselor.

In *Choosing Colleges: How Social Class and Schools Structure Opportunity*, Patricia McDonough (1997) described the interviews she conducted with 12 seniors at 4 different high schools (2 private and 2 public) in California's Silicon Valley, the best friend of each, the parents of each, and the primary guidance counselor of each. The author focused her study on the impact of high schools and the role of high school guidance counselors and college counselors privately hired on the college selection process. McDonough found that the culture at each high school had a direct impact on the selection processes of the seniors. At one public high school, it was the norm for students to seek entry to state schools and community colleges while at the other the norm was to select out-of-state private institutions and in-state public 4-year universities. The school culture was a strong pre-determinant of the choice processes of the students. Contrary to previous studies (Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Paulsen, 1990), McDonough found that guidance counselors at the schools where the counselor to pupil ratio was small or schools where college counseling was a priority had a bigger impact on students' decision-making processes.

Plank and Jordan (2001) and Muhammad (2008) sought to understand the notion of talent loss, the phenomenon of high-achieving students not entering postsecondary educational institutions within five years of graduating from high school. Plank and Jordan stated that there is a high concentration of talent loss within the lower-SES population. They cited numerous studies (Jackson, 1990; Leslie & Brinkman, 1987; McPherson & Schapiro, 1991; Orfield, 1992; St. John, 1990, 1991; St. John & Noell, 1989) that found that higher tuition decreases the likelihood of pursuing a collegiate education, but higher SES and financial aid increase the probability of seeking a higher

education. Plank and Jordan posited that by increasing the amount of information provided to lower-SES families through counselors and social networking, talented students will choose to enter postsecondary institutions and less talent will be lost. Their findings show that direct effects of SES diminish when sources of information, guidance, and action are provided to parents and students. Specifically, the direct effects of SES on the odds of attending a 4-year rather than a 2-year institution reduce to 94%. By providing information, guidance, and action, the college selection process is affected. Talent loss is drastically decreased and more disadvantaged students make the decision to attend 4-year institutions.

In sum, high school counselors positively impact the college selection process through advisement. Students who seek advice from counselors typically ask about financial aid, academic advising, and general college questions. Counselors can play a pivotal role in college selection by increasing the amount of information provided to lower-SES and ethnic minority families to prevent academic talent loss. Counselors have the greatest impact when the counselor-to-pupil ratio is small and when high schools make college counseling a priority.

Special issues for African American and Hispanic students. According to Pew Hispanic Center's 2011 report, Hispanics represent the fastest growing segment of the college-bound population, with an increase of 349,000 students from 2009 to 2010 compared to an increase of 88,000 African Americans and a decrease of 320,000 White students. As American society becomes more diverse, it is important to understand and meet the needs of ethnic minorities who aspire to be college educated. During the 1999-2000 academic year, 34% of all Hispanic and 40% of all African American students as

opposed to 46% of all White students enrolled in four-year colleges. More recently, Whites represented 72% and Hispanics represented 6% of college enrollees nationally (Horn, 2006). An unscientific online poll taken in 2009 by CollegeClickTV.com found that ethnic minority high school students believe that racial diversity is one of the most important factors when deciding which college they will attend. The same poll showed that 81% of ethnic minority high school students believed that when choosing a college to attend, it is important that the college enrolls students from a wide range of ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Another factor that affects college choice among high school students is academic achievement. Research has been done on the effect of the African American and Hispanic identity on academic achievement not only at the collegiate level, but also at the high school level (Cross, 1991; Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001; Hughes, 2003; Nasir, McLaughlin, & Jones, 2009; Nasir & Saxe, 2003; Oyserman et al., 2001). Some studies have found that strong affinity to African American identity negatively impacts academic achievement while others found the opposite. Nasir and Saxe (2003) theorized that ethnic minority students believe that they must choose between a positive ethnic identity and a strong academic identity in order to manage the tensions between the two. Ethnic minority students who choose to excel in an academic setting will invariably select a college differently from a student who under-performed academically and does not have as many options.

Nasir, McLaughlin, and Jones (2009) studied students at an urban high school in a city in California described by the 2000 census as 64% African American, 16% Hispanic, and 9% Asian-Pacific Islander. The crime-ridden neighborhood is the poorest in the

county, with over 65% of households earning less than \$30,000 annually and 50% of households earning less than \$11,000 annually. Almost half the residents of this city aged 25 and over do not have a high school diploma. The researchers were interested in learning how African American racial identity was defined, how these definitions played out in the classroom and school life, and how academic achievement was affected by racial identity. Results showed that two different versions of African American racial identity termed “street savvy” and “school-oriented” were observed. Both groups wore popular clothes and spoke Ebonics, but the school-oriented group was less “thuggish” (less tough and/or violent), and more connected to the school and community, and saw themselves as agents of change. In terms of academic achievement, it was this latter group who attended school for intellectual development and not just for social interactions. This group understood that their situation was hard and that education was the impetus for change. It was students in this group who were thinking about college and actively seeking information. Undoubtedly, the way African American students identify with their race affects the college choice process.

Nasir and Cooks (2009) studied an African American track and field team at a low SES urban high school to explore how learning settings affect identity development and how that identity impacts individuals to act on their own or follow community/cultural expectations. The researchers explained to the readers of the study that psychological aspects of the self-affect behavior and choices. The study found that the African American runners on the team who had the lowest self-esteem set goals and worked towards those goals with the help of a caring, motivated individual (in this case, the track coach). They developed a more positive self-image that was hypothesized to cause the

students to believe in themselves. This translated into learned persistence both on and off the track. In effect, this study illustrates that parts of identity are learned and can be greatly influenced by adults interested in teaching youth the positive effects of working hard to reach aspirations. In the context of college choice, shaping the identity of underprivileged ethnic minority students through mentorship could affect the college choice decision-making process.

Brown, Hamm, Herman, & Heck (2008) studied ethnic minorities and peer groups in high schools and found that crowd affiliation can define the students' choice of friends and extracurricular activities. Students' involvement within a certain crowd may define these students' identity and can alter behavior and choices. Peer influence can be very significant in the college choice process. Crowd affiliation can affect lifestyle and values despite individuals not always selecting their own crowd. Hamm, Brown, and Heck (2005) reported that cross-ethnic friend nominations were more frequent among Hispanic youth in the college-bound versus the lower academic track and among African American youth of higher academic achievement levels versus those African American youth of lower academic levels. It stands to reason that involvement and interaction with ethnic-only peer groups could impact college choices negatively or positively. If the peer group is comprised of less motivated students who do not value education, an individual in that group would be less inclined to seek college information. On the other hand, affiliation with an ethnic peer group that is very interested in academics, has goals of effecting change, or has an optimistic outlook about the future could cause/influence a member of that peer group to pursue higher education.

African American students, especially males, face an additional hardship when considering college choices. Smith and Fleming (2005) demonstrated that the majority of African American students on college campuses are female. Their study cited King (2000) who found that there was an extreme gender gap between African American males (37%) and African American females (63%) attending college, a fact that is believed by some researchers to be influenced by the mother-daughter bond. Smith and Fleming found that African American students are being raised primarily by single parents who are usually female (mother or grandmother). Muhammad (2008) found that mothers have a strong influence over their daughters to pursue higher education at four-year colleges while African American male students were influenced more by a strong African American male role model, usually the high school counselor taking on a father-figure role.

In sum, ethnic minority students face additional hardships within the college choice selection process. Ethnic minority students prefer to attend institutions that welcome diversity. Ethnic minority students who attend high schools in poor neighborhoods seem to believe that they must choose between a positive ethnic identity and a strong academic identity. Many ethnic minority high school students look to role models and mentors in the absence of a parental figure to assist with identity development and to guide them through the college decision-making process. Involvement with peer groups also defines members' identity and can alter behavior and choices.

College choice factors related to college characteristics. Knowledge of what the college has to offer the student and the location of the college also affect college choice decision-making.

Academic reputation and majors offered. Sevier (1993) studied 1,127 college-bound African American high school juniors and reported that availability of desired major and total cost of attending college were the most important factors. Spies (1978) sought to survey 8,000 above-average ability high school students as determined by scores on the PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test). Of the 2,545 respondents, he found that academic reputation of the institution was more important than financial consideration. Many students who attend college have a desired outcome in mind. These students have an interest in a particular subject and consider the quality and availability of courses when selecting an institution of higher education.

J. Farley Ordovensky, an economist who studied college fit and institutional attributes, advised prospective college students to choose an institution that is “right for them” and not place an inordinate amount of consideration on the prestige factor, but also determine the quality of “fit.” He also advises that students should investigate the institution and not just rely on reputation as cited by (Ordovensky, 1995). Similarly, an online poll conducted by frequent student pollster Peterson's, 42% of college-bound students said a strong academic fit was their primary criterion for identifying colleges where they might like to apply for admission (Schroeder, 2007).

Distance from home. Choosing an institution is a personal decision that involves more than just what the institution has to offer the student. The institution's distance from home is a factor to consider by students who need a pre-established support system or those students who may need to commute to campus. High ability students with no financial need consider a wider range of colleges than less able students who need

financial assistance (Dembrot, 1984). A 2005 Associated Press newspaper article by Justin Pope described the results of interviews conducted by the author of several California students who had acceptance letters from institutions close to home and from those across the country (Pope, 2005). The students reported being “torn” between leaving family and friends and broadening their horizons away from home. The article also stated that 25 % of all those collegiate students who were interviewed chose to attend institutions outside their home state. Factors that led those students away from home were athletics, financial aid, prestige, and escape from unpleasant home neighborhoods.

Avery and Hoxby (2003) surveyed students and parents from high schools in 43 states during the 1999-2000 school year. The 3,294 high school respondents were seniors who were randomly selected by their counselors for being at the top of their class (top 10% at public schools and top 20% at private schools) as determined by grade point average. The students were surveyed to ask about admission outcomes; then their parents were surveyed to ask how tuition levels and financial aid packages would affect college choices. The study found that students and parents accepted large merit-based aid to attend a less appealing institution closer to home than to burden themselves financially by selecting an institution that was initially more desirable. Avery and Hoxby (2003) found that students from low-income families were more likely to stay close to home regardless of academic achievement or race. Similarly, research conducted by MacAllum et al. (2007) found that it was more important to African American and Hispanic students to stay close to home than it was to White students.

In sum, characteristics related specifically to colleges also affect college choice for students. The academic reputation and majors offered at institutions as well as the distance from home are of particular interest to high school students and affect the college choice process. High school students who have an idea of what they are interested in studying search for quality institutions that offer courses in their area of interest. Researchers encourage students to visit campuses and try to determine if the institution is the right “fit” for them and not just rely on the prestige factor. Finally, the distance from home is a primary college choice factor for students who need a pre-established support system, those who may need to reduce costs by commuting, and those who feel they need to stay close to family or friends.

College choice factors related to college culture at the high school. College culture refers to the amount of effort placed by the administration and teachers at a high school to encourage and prepare students for success in post-secondary education (McClafferty, McDonough, & Nuñez, 2002). High schools that emphasize that students learn about options for their future, learn about careers and the education required for those careers, and high schools that share expectations that all students can prepare for post-secondary education are considered high in college culture.

According to McClafferty et al. (2002), nine principles should be implemented by high schools for students to believe they can have a great future, and for students to have the ability to plan and prepare for an academic future after high school. High school personnel should *clearly communicate* the requirements to go to college and *define goals* of college preparation. High schools should also provide current, relevant, and accessible *information* related to colleges. Students should also be *advised* about necessary

coursework and career options as well as *necessary tests* and fees required for admission. Students should be given opportunity to prepare for those tests. Teachers should incorporate college-related information and activities into *daily lessons*. *Families* should be informed and provided with opportunities to gain college planning knowledge through school functions. High schools should build *partnerships with colleges* in order to facilitate trips and aid in academic enrichment programs to raise college awareness and college aspirations. Finally, consistency in communication between all levels of education should be established. Essentially, high schools that excel in establishing a college culture are those that academically prepare students for the rigors of college, teach students to embrace challenging work, and provide access to college information and assistance with college planning (McClafferty et al., 2002).

Few studies of ethnic minority students focus on the school environment as having an impact on college choice (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010; Griffin & Allen, 2006; Nasir et al., 2009; Trent et al., 2003). All of these studies found that schools with high concentrations of ethnic minorities-- that is, where ethnic minorities were the majority of the enrolled population--were poorer: had fewer resources, and students had less access to information about colleges. The poor urban schools studied by the researchers spent less per student and had classes taught by less experienced personnel. The class sizes were larger, the libraries were more outdated, and academic rigor as measured by the number of AP and IB classes offered was substantially less in poor urban schools than at schools in more affluent areas.

All of these factors can influence the college choice decisions of students. If there are not enough resources, capable mentors, and an academically rich environment, the

students are negatively affected (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010; Griffin & Allen, 2006; Nasir et al., 2009; Trent et al., 2003). Academic achievement fuels educational aspirations so the quality of the high school, as explained above, has a direct impact on college choice. Griffin and Allen (2006) studied ethnic minority students in the CHOICES program in Southern California. The CHOICES program was developed to examine why ethnic minorities had low graduation rates and low levels of college aspirations. The focus of the project was on the academic experiences, college access, and support networks of African American and Hispanic students. The high schools that were selected to participate in this study had higher than average college-going rates for the two ethnic minority groups and were more than 50% African American and Hispanic. The students selected from the two high schools were all labeled high-achievers. The qualitative study found that these high-achieving students rated their academic preparedness as 3.67 to 3.88 on a 5-point Likert scale. When asked during focus groups to explain, students commented that they felt they had to work harder to be allowed to take AP courses. Some felt stereotyped as athletes and not scholars; others were more cautious in class because of a lack of ethnic/cultural diversity. They were afraid to say something during class discussions that would cause the White majority to think negatively and reaffirm negative stereotypes.

In sum, the college choice decision-making process of high school students is affected by factors related to college culture at the high school. High schools in poor neighborhoods, with fewer resources, less mentors, and a less academically-rich environment negatively impacted college choice. In contrast, students at high schools that offered more advanced courses, had smaller class sizes, had modern libraries, and

had experienced counselors and faculties, were positively influenced with respect to college choice.

College choice factors specific to student-athletes. Student-athletes have additional factors to consider when selecting a college to attend. Among those are the reputation of the college coach, the availability of athletic scholarships, the opportunity to play early in their collegiate career, and the prospect of television exposure, among others (Adler & Adler, 1991; Mathes & Gurney, 1985; Konnert and Giese, 1987; Reynaud, 1998; Letawsky et al., 2003). Garbert, Hale, and Montalvo (1999) found that the head coach is the most influential factor in the decision-making process of most college student-athletes.

Mathes and Gurney (1985) surveyed student-athletes who volunteered to participate in their study and found that the college coach and academics were most important in the student-athlete decision-making process. Participants completed a 59-item college selection decision-making survey. The results showed that female student-athletes and recipients of partial scholarships rated athletics and campus environment as important, but not as important as male student-athletes or athletes on full scholarship rated athletics and campus environment. Interestingly, this study showed that males in revenue-producing sports valued academics significantly more in college choice than did males in non-revenue-producing sports. Similarly, Adler and Adler (1991) noted that the coach and reputation of the coach were most often mentioned by athletes when asked about college choice. The athletes in the Adlers' book, *Backboards and Blackboards*, were drawn (recruited) to the institution to be groomed as potential professional basketball players, not as students. Student-athletes spend an inordinate amount of time

in the presence of coaches and therefore must be comfortable with the coaches' personalities, approachability, integrity, character and/or demeanor (Ryan et al., 2007). The reputation of the coach and the coaching staff is also vital for student-athletes who aspire to play their sport at a professional level after college (Adler & Adler, 1991; Braddock & Hua, 2006; Braddock, Hua, & Dawkins, 2008; Ryan et al., 2007).

Konnert and Giese (1987) found that the opportunity to play early in their careers rated as very high in the consideration of student-athletes when deciding which postsecondary institution to attend. Some student-athletes are not interested in "red-shirting" their first year or sitting on the bench behind more talented athletes. Division III student-athletes do not receive athletic scholarships and therefore may not want the added expense of an additional year of tuition.

Reynaud (1998) identified receiving an athletic scholarship as one of the most important factors in the decision-making process, particularly for female student-athletes. In many cases in her study, female student-athletes were offered an athletic scholarship to only a single school. These athletes wanted to continue playing their sport (volleyball) and chose to attend the institution making the offer. That being said, athletic scholarships are a real factor for many student-athletes as a way to mitigate the expenses associated with a college education (Reynaud, 1998).

After surveying 126 first-year student-athletes enrolled at a large, public four-year, Research I institution that enrolls almost 40,000 students, Letawsky et al., (2003) found that the five most influential factors in college choice for these student-athletes included degree-program options, head coach, academic support services on campus, type of community in which campus is located, and the school's sports traditions.

Among the least influential were the college choices of friends, the prospect of television exposure, non-athletic financial aid, school colors, and opinions of high school teammates.

Benefits of collegiate athletics for student-athletes. College student-athletes are those individuals who attend college and play an intercollegiate sport (Watt & Moore, 2001). The college student-athlete faces all the challenges experienced by non-athletes, but also has sport-related activities that affect many facets of development (Street, 1999). Student-athletes constantly cope with balancing the demands of student with those of athlete. When high school student-athletes select an institution of higher education, they are making a commitment to an entity that will provide support while transitioning from high school. That commitment, if fulfilled, will culminate with the successful completion of a college degree. Graduation rates are one of the best indicators of academic success in college (Watt & Moore, 2001). The NCAA began collecting data on graduation rates in 1983. There is a higher graduation rate among athletes at Division I and Division II colleges than that among non-athletes who attend the same institutions. In 2011, the graduation rate of all Division I student-athletes who entered in 2004 was 65% compared to 63% for non-athletes (NCAA, 2011). The same article reports that the graduation rate of all Division II student-athletes who entered in 2004 was 55% compared to 49% for non-athletes.

The involvement of college students in athletics has often been seen as having a positive impact on students' social development. Astin (1993) found that the three most powerful forms of involvement are academic involvement, involvement with faculty, and involvement with student peer groups. Student-athletes are limited in academic

involvement and involvement with faculty, but this subgroup has a wealth of involvement with student peer groups. Student-athletes not only spend an inordinate amount of time with teammates at practices and competitions, but traveling and studying as well. Astin reported that the greater the interaction with peers, the more favorable the outcome. He proposed that the power of the peer group can be found in the capacity of the peer group to involve each student more intensely in experiences. By being part of a team, the student-athlete has a ready-built social structure. The immediate presence of teammates with similar work habits and schedules helps new college students deal with the loneliness and the stress commonly felt during the adjustment period most first-year college students experience. Many college coaches provide socials for new recruits as a way to introduce new team members and to distract new arrivals from feelings of homesickness. These socials, which may be as simple as a team picnic, allow freshmen to meet each other and establish a social network for support.

In sum, researchers have found that student-athletes are faced with additional factors to consider when selecting a college to attend. Many student-athletes rate the collegiate head coach as most important in their selection process, while other researchers have found that the coach and coaching staff is the primary factor in the selection of the institution by the student-athlete. Other researchers have found that the amount of playing time and the availability of sports-related scholarships are the primary factors in college selection. Not only do student-athletes consider the traditional factors impacting college choice, but clearly, the coaches, coaching staff, and the key players associated with financial incentives to play the sport impact the decision-making process.

College choice factors for student-athletes at Title I high schools. A limited number of studies have been done on college bound student-athletes and their choice processes. Further, these studies look at general populations of student-athletes after they have entered college (Letawsky et al., 2003; Lubker & Etzel (2007); Mathes & Gurney, 1985; Slabik, 1995; Smith, 2006). For example, Letawsky et al. (2003) surveyed first-year student-athletes at a large, public, four-year Research I institution, and Lubker and Etzel (2007) surveyed mostly White first-year student-athletes and former student-athletes at a Division I-A school in the Big East Conference. These studies and others may or may not include low income students or students of color. The data are presented in the aggregate. For instance, Galotti and Mark (1994) initially surveyed high school juniors in a short-term longitudinal study to determine college choice factors. Their results do not include race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status of parents, or the high school culture of the students surveyed. Therefore, there is no way to know how low income students differ in the process from more economically advantaged or non-ethnic minority students. The present study seeks to address this deficiency in the literature.

Chapter Three: Method

Participants

Setting. According to the Florida Department of Education website, Title I is a program funded by the federal government to improve students' academic achievement. It provides funding for supplemental instruction for high poverty schools to help students who are not performing at grade level academically or at risk of falling behind. The program annually provides over \$14 billion to school systems across the country for students at risk of failure and living at or near poverty. Over the course of the 2009-2010 school year, federal funding through this program was used by over 56,000 public schools nationwide in order for struggling students to meet state standards in a variety of subject areas ("Understanding the Basics of Title I Funds," 2012). Title I is also designed to focus on financial special needs populations and to reduce the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. Title I is intended to help ensure that all children have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state academic standards and assessments.

As the largest federal program supporting elementary and secondary education, Title I targets these resources to the districts and schools where the needs are greatest. Money is given to school districts to help students meet learning expectations presented in each grade level and/or subject area. The allocation of funds for each school district is based on a legislative formula dependent upon the distribution of low-income children and state per-pupil expenditures. The amount of money given to each school depends on the number of low-income families enrolled in the school as determined by free/reduced

lunch status. In order to be considered a Title I school, 40% of the enrolled population must be economically disadvantaged.

Research sample. Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is the fourth largest school system in the United States. It serves over 350,000 students, the majority of whom are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Sixty percent of students are eligible for free and reduced price lunch (FRPL). Hispanic students represent about 60% of enrolled students, while one-third are African American and less than 10% are White. Approximately 17% of the students are English language learners (ELL) and more than 20% are foreign born.

The pool of participants in this study were all current high school student-athletes at three Title I high schools (Tables 1 and 2) in the North and North Central Regions of Miami-Dade County, Florida: Westland Hialeah Senior High located at 4000 W. 18th Avenue, in Hialeah; Hialeah Gardens Senior High located at 11700 Hialeah Gardens Boulevard, in Hialeah Gardens; and Miami Springs Senior High School located at 751 Dove Avenue, in Miami Springs.

All three of these Title I high schools have a college advisor and offer various activities throughout the school year to promote college awareness (Table 3). Students have varying opportunities to meet with college recruiters who visit the high schools, to meet with the college advisor, to attend presentations and/or information sessions regarding college applications and financial aid, and/or to have a year-long course with the primary objective of teaching students about various colleges, universities, and vocational careers.

This study was intended to be done in the spring, but several delays in acquiring permission from the University of Miami IRB and the Miami-Dade School System's RRC resulted in the study taking place during the fall (beginning of the school year). It was anticipated that 1000-1200 student-athletes would have been surveyed at four different Title I high schools, but the principals and athletic directors of the Title I high schools that had agreed to participate were changed during the summer. The new principals and/or ADs did not agree to participate at two of the schools so a search began for replacements. Of the 26 Title I high schools in Miami-Dade County, 20 were contacted and three agreed to participate as long as the student-athletes did not miss any class time. Therefore, the study had to be done after school hours during practices.

The students sampled at each school were student-athletes on fall and winter sports rosters during the school year 2013-2014 and those spring sports athletes who participated in 2012-2013. At each high school, the team rosters for each sport were reviewed to make a master list of all the students who participated during the season for each sport. The student-athletes on the master list of each sampled high school comprised the pool of potential participants in this study. Of those 427 student-athletes, 207 participated in the study.

The student-athletes who are eligible to participate in high school athletics are those students currently enrolled at the high school or those students who live in the school's boundaries that are home schooled or attend alternative schools that do not offer high school athletics. To participate in high school athletics, student-athletes must be younger than 19 years, 9 months of age, maintain an unweighted grade point average

(GPA) of at least 2.0 on a 4 point scale, meet daily attendance requirements, pass a medical examination, and pay the required health insurance fee.

Instrument

The data were collected using a paper-and-pencil survey created by the researcher (See Appendix A). Students were asked to respond to questions regarding their demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, SES through participation in a free/reduced lunch program), anticipated year of high school graduation, and current GPA. In addition, the survey investigated students' choice factors to determine whether students plan to attend college, and the factors they attribute as important in the college selection process. The college choice factors are: cost of college, influence of friends, influence of family, influence of high school counselors, influence of high school coaches, reputation of college, distance from home, recruitment by college coach to play sport, reputation of the college coach, availability of scholarships, and the opportunity to play early in their career.

Procedures

The survey was piloted by two former student-athletes who graduated in 2012. The researcher watched the pilot test respondents complete the survey. The pilot test respondents were given the cover letter and survey and asked to fill it out in the researcher's presence. The researcher watched for hesitation, erasures, or skipped questions and sought verbal feedback. Specifically, the researcher was interested in knowing if each question measured what it was intended to measure, whether the words on the instrument were easily understood, and if the range of response choices was appropriate for each question. The researcher was also interested in how long the survey took to complete and if the information collected was the information sought.

Approval by the University of Miami IRB and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools RRC was sought. Both institutions approved this study. The Athletic Directors (AD) were given a parent consent and student assent forms in English (Appendix B and D) and Spanish (Appendix C) to give to students one day before the date the data were scheduled to be collected. In order to maximize the total number of participants who were needed for the success of this study, the researcher went to each high school campus and attended the practices of several sports that were in-season. As students arrived to practice, the parent consent and student assent forms were checked for completion and placed in a box. The students who were 18 years of age and had completed the forms and those students who had been given parental permission had their names checked off a master list and were given the survey to complete. After completion, the students placed the survey in a box and continued to their practice. The student-athletes who did not have parental consent went directly to practice. Those who did not bring back their completed consent forms were reminded to bring them to school the next day, and they also continued to practice. The students who brought their signed forms to practice the next day, were given the survey to complete if they had parental permission; those student-athletes also placed their survey into the box with the completed surveys from the previous day. This process continued for several days to garner as many participants as possible.

For the spring sports (not in-season), the ADs used the sport rosters from the previous year to determine which student-athletes were to be given parent consent and student assent forms. The student-athletes returned the consent forms to the AD, who then gave the participants a survey with an envelope. The student-athlete completed the

survey immediately and placed the completed form in the envelope and placed the envelope in a box that the researcher collected from the AD.

The researcher gathered surveys from Westland Hialeah Senior High from September 19, 2013 through October 3, 2013. Surveys were gathered from Miami Springs Senior High from October 4, 2013 through October 16, 2013. Surveys were gathered from Hialeah Gardens Senior High from October 17, 2013 through October 30, 2013.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were computed: means, standard deviations, ranges, skewness, kurtosis, and correlations for continuous variables and frequencies for nominal and ordinal data. A series of t-tests, ANOVAs, MANOVAs, and/or MANCOVAs were computed to test potential differences in dependent variables based on independent variables. If the omnibus tests are statistically significant, the univariate tests were also computed.

Chapter Four: Results

Preliminary Analyses

Data were entered into SPSS by the researcher and carefully checked for missing or incorrect data. SPSS (Version 21) was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each variable: Frequencies were run for categorical variables and means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis, and correlations were computed for continuous variables (see Tables 4 and 5). It should be noted that Cost and Scholarship Offer are skewed and kurtotic. The results of analyses with these variables should be regarded with caution. As can be seen in Table 6, there were many dependent variables that were correlated.

The first part of Table 4 shows the demographics of the sample. The vast majority of the sample, 92%, was from two high schools, Miami Springs Senior High and Westland Hialeah Senior High. The sample was primarily Hispanic (82%) and male (67%). The vast majority of the Hispanic parental heritage was from Cuba (67%). As expected, the vast majority (88%) of students receive free or reduced lunch, since students sampled were from Title I schools. Football was the sport that was most represented in the sample. The preponderance of the sample (80%) responded that they were interested in attending a 4-year college. Of the college-bound respondents, 65% stated they planned to be student-athletes. A large majority of the sample, 85%, planned to apply to attend college while only 15% stated that they were undecided or more interested in finding a job or enlisting in the military. Many respondents, 30%, did not consult anyone at their high school about college, but the majority, 56%, was most influenced regarding college by family members.

After descriptive statistics were run, Crosstabs were computed between the independent variables to see if they are independent from each other. They are not (see Table 7). High School is related to Graduation Year, GPA, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender. Grade Point Average is related to Race/Ethnicity, SES, and High School. Gender is related to Race/Ethnicity and High School. Race/Ethnicity is related to GPA, Gender, and High School. SES is related to GPA. Graduation Year is related to High School. Therefore, covariates were included in the primary analyses. Of interest are the findings that: (a) Hispanic students had higher GPAs than African American students, and (b) Lower SES students had higher GPAs than the higher SES students..

Primary Analyses

Research Question 1: Which College Choice Factors are the most predominant in the college selection process for student-athletes who attend Title I schools? This question was answered in two ways. The bottom of Table 5 shows the means of each college choice factor in the order of importance as reported by the sample. Cost and Scholarship were reported as most important and Influence of Counselor, Distance from Home, and Influence of Friends were reported as least important. In order to determine if the differences between the means were significant, a repeated measures, one-way ANOVA was computed. The F-Test was significant ($F(10, 1820)=56.96$, $p<.01$). Pairwise comparisons with Bonferroni corrections were calculated. The pairwise comparisons verified what the simple means showed: The means of Scholarship Offer ($m=1.15$, $sd=.49$) and Cost ($m=1.22$, $sd=.53$) were significantly different from all of the other factors. Similarly, Reputation of College ($m=1.57$, $sd=.77$) was significantly different from all other factors except Influence of Family ($m=1.77$, $sd=.88$).

Data analyses showed that the students reported that the most important factors in their choice of colleges were scholarship offer and cost of college, followed by the reputation of college. Least important was the influence of friends, followed by distance from home and influence of the high school counselor. Also, there was a significant effect of SES on college choice factors; lower SES students reported that influence of counselor, reputation of the college, and distance from home were more important than higher SES students reported them to be. Higher SES students reported all of the other college choice factors to be more important than lower SES students reported them to be.

Research Question 2: Do the College Choice Factors differ by high school?

To answer this question, a 3 x 2 MANCOVA was calculated examining the effect of High School (Miami Springs, Westland, Hialeah Gardens) and Race/Ethnicity (African American, Hispanic) with Graduation Year (2014, 2015, 2016) and GPA (2.0 to 2.49, 2.5 to 2.99, 3.0 to 3.49, 3.5 and above) as covariates. The omnibus test for High School was not significant ($F(22, 290)=1.26, p=.20, \eta^2=.09$). There was no interaction between High School and Race/Ethnicity and there were no main effects. Findings are unclear due to group sizes being unequal.

Research Question 3: How is socioeconomic status related to College Choice Factors for student-athletes who attend Title I high schools? To answer this question, a one-way MANCOVA was calculated with SES (Free Lunch, No Free Lunch) as the independent variable and GPA (2.0 to 2.49, 2.5 to 2.99, 3.0 to 3.49, 3.5 and above) as the covariate. A significant effect was found ($F(22, 310)=11.44, p<.001, \eta^2=.45$). Follow-up univariate ANOVAs revealed that SES was significant for every College Choice Factor ($p<.001$). Effect sizes ranged from $\eta^2=.30$ to $\eta^2=.55$. Higher SES student-

athletes reported Cost, Influence of Friends, Influence of Family, Influence of Coach, Recruitment, Reputation of Coach, Scholarship, and Playing Early as more important than lower SES student-athletes rated them. The lower SES student-athletes reported Influence of Counselor, Reputation of College, and Distance from Home as more important than higher SES students (see Table 8). A small percentage (12.3%) did not qualify for free or reduced lunch. These students did not meet Federal requirements for the program because the ratio of household size to family income was greater than the income eligibility guidelines allow. Therefore, these students are not considered low SES.

Research Question 4: How is race/ethnicity related to College Choice Factors for student-athletes who attend Title I high schools? To answer this question, $2 \times 3 \times 2$ MANCOVA was calculated examining the effect of Race/Ethnicity (African American, Hispanic), High School (Miami Springs, Westland, Hialeah Gardens), and Gender (Male, Female) with GPA (2.0 to 2.49, 2.5 to 2.99, 3.0 to 3.49, 3.5 and above) as a covariate. The omnibus test for Race/Ethnicity was not significant ($F(11, 145)=1.54, p=.12, \eta^2=.11$). There was no interaction between Race/Ethnicity and the other independent variables and there were no main effects. Findings are unclear due to group sizes being unequal.

Research Question 5: How is graduation year related to College Choice Factors for student-athletes who attend Title I schools? To answer this question, a 3×3 MANOVA was calculated examining the effect of Graduation Year (2014, 2015, 2016) and High School (Miami Springs, Westland, Hialeah Gardens). The omnibus test for Graduation Year was not significant ($F(22,330)=1.55, p=.06, \eta^2=.09$). There was no interaction between Graduation Year and High School.

Research Question 6: How is gender related to College Choice Factors for student-athletes who attend Title I schools? To answer this question, a 2 x 2 x 3 MANOVA was calculated examining the effect of Gender (Male, Female) and Race/Ethnicity (African American, Hispanic) and High School (Miami Springs, Westland, Hialeah Gardens). The omnibus test for Gender was not significant ($F(11, 160)=1.11, p=.36, \eta^2=.07$). There were no main effects or interactions between Gender and Race/Ethnicity and High School. Findings are unclear due to group sizes being unequal.

Research Question 7: How is grade point average (GPA) related to College Choice Factors for student-athletes who attend Title I schools? To answer this question, a 4 x 2 x 2 x 3 MANOVA was calculated examining the effect of GPA (2.0 to 2.49, 2.5 to 2.99, 3.0 to 3.49, 3.5 and above) and Race/Ethnicity (African American, Hispanic), SES (Free Lunch, No Free Lunch), and High School (Miami Springs, Westland, Hialeah Gardens). No significant effect was found ($F(33, 387)=1.46, p=.052, \eta^2=.11$). There were no main effects or interactions between GPA and Race/Ethnicity, SES, or High School.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this dissertation was to determine what college choice factors student-athletes in Title I high schools in Miami-Dade County, Florida, take into consideration during the college selection process. For this purpose, a survey of 207 student-athletes at three of these high schools was conducted between September 2013 and October 2013. Data analyses showed that the students reported that the most important factors in their choice of colleges were scholarship offer and cost of college, followed by the reputation of the college. Least important was the influence of friends, followed by distance from home, and influence of the school counselor. Also there was a significant effect of SES on college choice factors; lower SES students reported that influence of counselor, reputation of the college, and distance from home were more important than higher SES students reported them to be. Higher SES students reported all of the other college choice factors to be more important than lower SES students reported them to be. This chapter will evaluate the dissertation study's contribution to the literature, will offer directions for future research and implications for practical applications both at the collegiate and high school levels, and will discuss limitations of the study.

This dissertation study adds to the literature in two major ways: (a) The participants were student-athletes from Title I high schools, and (b) It takes into account the additional choice factors associated with sport, factors that were not included in most studies on college choice. Very few studies have been done with regard to student-athletes and how they make college choices. Most studies surveyed students already in

college, but this dissertation study focused on not only high school student-athletes, but those who are ethnic minorities attending low-income neighborhood schools. It is enlightening to see that 70% (114 of 162) of participants who stated they wish to attend college want to continue to participate in sport at the collegiate level. Given this high percentage, it is striking that only 21% of these would-be college athletes reported that they consulted their high school coaches regarding college. Similarly unusual is that only 2% stated that a college recruiter was most influential in the college choice process and that only 9% responded that the coach was most influential— an outcome that contradicts findings by Garbert, Hale, and Montalvo (1999) or Letawsky et al. (2003) that the head coach is the most influential factor in the decision-making process of most student-athletes.

Limitations

First, a limitation to the dissertation study was a lack of homogenous sizes within the groups of independent variables; the study would have been improved if it had included equal or close to equal numbers in terms of high school, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and gender. Second, the study would also have been improved if the survey could have been given at the end of the school year instead of at the beginning of the school year. Spring sports would have had a greater participation rate and perhaps many more surveys would have been completed. The original plan was to have student-athletes gather all at once during the school day to be surveyed, but since the school year had just started, all three high school principals denied the researcher access to the student-athletes during school hours. Also, despite efforts to include as many Title I

schools as possible, most athletic directors and principals were reluctant to participate in the study.

A third limitation concerns the lack of homogeneity of sample sizes within groups of independent variables. First, the number of students sampled at Hialeah Gardens Senior High School (8%) was much smaller than the number of students sampled at Westland Hialeah Senior High (41%) and Miami Springs Senior High (51%). Many student-athletes at Hialeah Gardens were not included, thereby limiting the comparisons between the three high schools. Second, the independent variable related to race/ethnicity lacked homogeneity due to the overwhelming number of Hispanic (84%) students sampled compared to African American (16%) students. Comparisons between these two groups are limited by the lack of African American respondents. Third, the independent variable related to gender lacked homogeneity due to greater numbers of male (67%) respondents to female (33%) respondents. Comparisons between these two groups is limited by the lack of female respondents. Finally, the independent variable associated with GPA lacked homogeneity because there were very few students who reported their GPA to be above 3.5 (15%), who would be considered the top academic students. The preponderance (69%) of respondents had average academic achievement, thereby not giving an accurate representation of how academically talented student-athletes at Title I high schools may have responded to the college choice factors.

A fourth limitation is that not all high school-student athletes were included in this study. The participants in this study are only those on the official roster of a sport at the high school during the 2013-2014 school year. The study did not include student-athletes who played for teams outside of school, those student-athletes who previously

played for the school in prior years but did not play during the current year, or those student-athletes who participate in sports not offered at their high schools. Many sports had been dropped by the high schools surveyed and none of the athletes who previously participated in those sports were included in the study.

Fifth, a limitation to the actual results of this study is how skewed and kurtotic cost and scholarship were. The lack of variability affected the outcome of several tests, but it is evident that both these variables were reported to be extremely important to the participants sampled.

Threats to Validity. There were a few threats to internal validity associated with selection in this study. First, not all the student-athletes who participated in this study had the same experiences associated with sport. Some had recently begun to play sports when they entered high school, while others have been developing their athletic talents for much longer. Those high school student-athletes who began to play sports once they began high school may or may not have had sufficient time to develop necessary skills associated with their sport in order to be recruited to play at the collegiate level. Similarly, some student-athletes may or may not have high school coaches who have put their names out to colleges in order to be recruited.

Another threat to internal validity associated with selection is that this study focused on student-athletes who currently participate in intermural-high school athletics. Many high school students who are also athletes do not play for their school, but for an age-group team, optimist club, or other. Those student-athletes were not included in this study. Similarly, many high school students participate in athletics that high schools do not offer, such as martial arts, gymnastics, equestrian, rodeo, and such. These sports are

traditionally under collegiate athletic departments and many institutions offer athletic scholarships and recruit athletes, but this study did not include those student-athletes.

This study also has limitations associated with external validity. This study was conducted at only three of twenty-six Title I high schools in the Miami-Dade County Public School system, the fourth largest school system in the United States. Despite efforts to include more schools in this study, only students from only the northern section of the county were sampled. Two of the schools sampled, Westland Hialeah Senior High and Hialeah Gardens Senior High, are both relatively new schools that opened in 2007 and 2008, respectively. These schools have participated in high school athletics for only the last four years and there have been only three graduating classes from each; there has not been a culture established for college attendance nor for athletic participation. Therefore, the sample was not representative of the population of all students at Title I schools in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. The study results may be generalized to the Title I high school student-athletes in the northern area of Miami-Dade County.

Implications

Theoretical. As discussed in the review of literature, Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) theoretical model describing the college choice process as having three distinct phases— predisposition, search, and choice— was perceived as most appropriate for this study since all of the phases occur during the high school years. Hossler and Gallagher's model further described that several factors influence the decision-making process within each phase. Those factors are background characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, parental income, and parental education. Hossler, Schmit, and Vesper (1999) found little to no effect of race/ethnicity or gender on the educational aspirations of students. Their

study identified other factors which were personal characteristics such as academic achievement and peer influences. Hossler, Schmit, and Vesper found that as GPA increased, the likelihood that students considered attending college increased. The researchers also stated that the high school itself has characteristics that affect college choice, including quality and community/neighborhood SES. Finally, Hossler and Gallagher (1987) suggested that characteristics also taken into consideration are the college's cost, location, and available resources. This study examined all those factors and found some results that support Hossler and colleagues' theory and some results that contradicted their theory. This study supports Hossler's theory that cost and scholarship are important factors of college choice for student-athletes at Title I schools. Findings also support Hossler's theory that race/ethnicity and gender do not seem to impact college choice. However, findings do not support Hossler's theory that peer influences and academic achievement are critical components of college choice for student-athletes at Title I schools.

Hossler and Gallagher (1987), Walpole (2008), and Wilson and Adelson (2012) found that students from higher SES had higher academic achievement and that those whose parents attended college in the United States were four times more likely to attend college than those in the opposite categories. The finding that the lower SES students had higher GPAs contradicts Hossler and Gallagher (1987), Walpole (2008), and Wilson and Adelson (2012). The findings of this study indicate that nearly all of the student-athletes at the three high schools surveyed thought that college is attainable despite mediocre academic achievement: The majority of respondents, 62%, had attained a GPA below 3.0. Further, only 53% of their parents attended college in the United States. A

possible explanation for this discrepancy may be the role of the high school in exposing student-athletes to different colleges through curricular strategies and other college-related events held at the high schools. These activities appear to be having a positive impact on the predisposition and search phases of the student-athletes.

Many findings in this study contradict those of prior studies. Most remarkable of all is that 30% of participants did not consult anyone at the high school regarding college choice, contradicting Chapman, DeMasi, and O'Brien (1987), who found that high school juniors and seniors meet with counselors 3 to 5 times per year. Instead, it appears that the role of the parents and family in this lower SES sample is much stronger than that of coaches, recruiters, or counselors. Results also show that the influence of friends and distance from home are considered much less important to the student-athletes sampled than prior studies such as Galotti and Mark (1994) concluded. However, the low SES students rated distance from home as important. The current study contradicts their finding that friends were rated as most important in the college choice process.

While 90% of respondents stated that they wished to apply to a 4-year college, only 10% stated they would select to apply to a 2-year college, technical school, or a different kind of school. In the current study, 56% percent of the respondents indicated that the most influential person regarding college choice was a family member, presumed parents. Therefore, the vast majority of student-athletes reported a family member as most influential in their decision to attend a 4-year school. This finding contradicts McDonough (1997) that found that parents of low SES students thought it was best for their children to attend local 2-year colleges.

It also seems logical to conclude that since the majority of the participants in this sample (65%) reported that they wanted to play sports in college, they believed that only 4-year schools offer an opportunity to play their sport. A possible explanation might be that the “Freshman Orientation” class that all students are required to take in two out of the three high schools focuses primarily on the introduction of 4-year colleges to the students. Also, most of these students participate in a low-cost, annual 4-night road trip to visit several 4-year colleges each year. The lack of exposure to 2-year colleges that offer athletics may very well be the reason why such a large number of these student-athletes wish to attend four-year institutions.

Hu and Hossler (2000), Lillis and Tian (2008), Hoogeveen (2008) and several other studies found that cost, tuition, scholarship, and financial aid had an impact on college choice. Results of this study support the findings that financial concerns are considered very important to the student-athletes sampled. A possible explanation would be that since all the sample is from low SES Title I high schools, the affordability of college attendance is of paramount concern to students and their families.

Research. For those interested in undertaking a similar study in the future, a few changes to the methodology would be beneficial and allow for further study. First, some changes should be made to the survey: A differentiation should be made between parents and other family members with respect to influence on college choice factors. Also, a differentiation should be made between a military recruiter and an athletic recruiter to determine which of the two the respondent is referring to, and the new survey should also address the question of whether parents (in addition to family member) have *attended* college in the United States. Further, it would be important to know if a parent has

graduated from a college in the United States, because it is possible that many students answered “yes” to the original question when parents enrolled in English learning courses or a trade course for a certification and not an actual collegiate program. In addition, a question on the survey asking students if they have applied to any colleges would have made it possible to complete the discussion of Hossler and Gallagher’s Three Phase Model instead of focusing only on the first two phases. Finally, it would have been beneficial to know how the student-athlete rates his or her level of athletic talent. It is interesting that none of the three high schools has had winning seasons in very many sports, but the majority (65%) of respondents reported wanting to participate in athletics at 2- or 4-year colleges, raising the question, do the student-athletes sampled have desire, but not enough talent to play at the next level? Another way to distinguish between true prospective collegiate athletes and those who simply desire to play intramural or club sports would have been to ask the student-athlete how many official recruiting trips he or she has taken. It would also be useful to ask students directly about their desire to play in an intramural league and/or a club sport versus interscholastic sport participation.

Another research implication involves the timing of the survey at the beginning of the school year. It is very likely that the sophomores who participated in this study may have been too far away from graduation to have truly considered many of the college choice factors presented. Student-athletes completed the survey in either September or October, depending on the school attended. The results may have been different if these same sophomores were surveyed at the end of the school year. Similarly, the seniors surveyed may or may not have sent applications to colleges this early in the school year.

It is very possible that their answers may have been different had the students been surveyed just prior to high school graduation.

The findings in this study lead to the possibility of future studies. It would seem logical to follow this study with a qualitative study to learn the WHYs of the college choice process for the student-athletes at Title I schools. For example, a comparison of these findings to those of a similar study of student-athletes and non-student-athletes at the same high schools would reveal the impact of participation in athletics. In addition, a qualitative study focusing on the finding that low SES students rated distance from home as important could explain why they answered differently from the whole sample. Possible reasons could be cost of travel or distance from a support system. Finally, a follow-up study to see whether these student-athletes do indeed apply and enroll in 4-year colleges and whether or not they participate in athletics would be beneficial.

Practical. Findings in this study, reveal that there are several implications for colleges to consider when recruiting Title I student-athletes. There are also suggestions for high school personnel to consider in order to assist these student-athletes with college choices.

For colleges. Sixty-five percent of Division I athletes who entered college in 2006 graduated within six years compared to 64% of the overall student body at Division I institutions (Wolverton, 2013). When one considers the positive impact college athletics has on ethnic-minority students, particularly African American athletes who in the past 12 years have improved collegiate graduation rates by 11 percentage points, the benefits of participation cannot be ignored.

The most important college choice factor found in this study is cost. It is critically important for institutions to offer financial aid or curb tuition and expenses associated with cost in order to attract student-athletes from Title I high schools. Tuition discounting in the form of scholarships are reported as vitally important and necessary (Hu and Hossler, 2000; Kim, 2004; McPherson, Schapiro, & Winston, 1993; Mumper, 1996; Weiler, 1996).

In order to recruit Title I student-athletes, colleges should focus on contacting families directly since the majority (64%) of student-athletes responded that parents and family members are most influential in the college choice process. Similarly, colleges who are contacting high school coaches and counselors to solicit student-athletes are not using their time, effort, or dollars wisely because Title I student-athletes do not seek information from these sources, in general. College athletic departments should also be informing their coaches and recruiters to contact the families of potential student-athletes and not wait for student-athletes to contact them.

Since many student-athletes in Title I schools participate in an annual college awareness course during their freshman year of high school, local colleges should consider sending information about their institutions for teachers to integrate into the curriculum. Students in these courses are a captive audience and can learn about prospective institutions early in high school and have an awareness of their existence. This would be especially beneficial to 2-year institutions that offer athletics and Division III institutions.

The findings of the analysis for research question 3 were that lower SES student-athletes reported Distance From Home as more important than higher SES students.

State college and university recruiters should use this information to increase their recruitment of local talent. Furthermore, results of this study show that the state of Florida should consider adding football to many of the 2-year colleges that currently do not offer the sport. There is an available talent pool for academically underprepared student-athletes who play football and wish to stay closer to home.

For high schools. Several implications for high schools are clear as a result of the findings in this dissertation study. First, most student-athletes (65%) appear to want to play sports at the collegiate level. The question then for high school coaches is, “Where will the athlete’s talent best be appreciated or utilized?” Coaches need to be more involved in their athletes’ college decision-making processes by educating their athletes on the possibilities of playing sports at more than just 4-year institutions. Since the majority (85%) of respondents were average achievers academically, coaches might suggest to their students to consider 2-year colleges that offer the desired sport. Academically talented but not athletically gifted student-athletes should be pointed to Division III schools. These schools offer tuition assistance through academic achievements and financial aid.

Not only is the SES of the student and the family important in the college choice process, but high schools need to help families understand the benefits of college. Since families were found to be the most influential people to the student-athletes in this study, the high schools need to offer more workshops and information sessions regarding college admissions, financial aid, and applications for parents and families. High schools need to take a more active role in educating parents who, in turn, will influence their children in selecting the college of best fit. Also, Title I high schools who have a

preponderance of lower SES students need to recognize that these students value the influence of the counselor, the reputation of the college, and distance from home more than higher SES students. It would be beneficial to empower counselors to meet more with lower SES students, to focus curriculum on teaching students about each college's reputation, and to focus on exposing these students to institutions near Miami-Dade County.

It would be beneficial for high schools to provide a counselor whose main priority is the student-athlete, especially during the junior and senior years when the majority of college searches are taking place. This counselor would be responsible for not only class selection and advising during the high school years, but, more importantly, this counselor would be able to take a more dynamic role in supporting student-athletes during the college decision-making process. The athletic director also needs to be a leader in this process and provide athletes and families with literature and information about various institutions that might be interested in the student-athlete's talents.

The final benefit to high schools would be to address the course that all freshmen students are required to take at Westland and Hialeah Gardens high schools. Currently, the curriculum in this course exposes students to several Division I schools around the country. Students are expected to learn school colors, mascots, locations, academic programs offered, and the application process for each. Curriculum should include exposure to several different kinds of higher education institutions including Division II, Division III, small liberal arts, HBCU's, 2-year schools, trade schools, single gender schools, military academies, etc. Within the curriculum students should learn not only

what the institution has to offer them, but also what they can offer the institution. This would be especially beneficial for student-athletes.

Conclusions

There were practical implications for colleges and for high schools. In sum:

- Scholarship and Cost are the most important college choice factors. Therefore, colleges need to increase financial aid, including scholarships, or curb tuition costs.
- To recruit Title I athletes, colleges and athletic recruiters need to contact families directly.
- Since low SES student-athletes reported that Distance from Home was very important, local colleges and universities with athletic programs should be more proactive in meeting with student-athletes and their families. Those local institutions that do not offer athletics or only offer a few sports should consider adding more sports to their athletic department.
- Most respondents were average students so coaches should expose their athletes to 2-year institutions that offer athletics.
- Academically-talented but not necessarily athletically-gifted student-athletes should be exposed to Division II or III institutions that will offer the financial help through academics, but will also allow the student-athletes to play their desired sport.
- Starting in the ninth grade, more workshops and information sessions for parents and families regarding college admissions, financial aid, and applications.

- High school college advisor/counselors need to meet with student-athletes more often to assist with course selection, describe reputable colleges that are near home, and provide support throughout the college decision-making process.
- Athletic Directors and coaches need to be more proactive in providing information about a variety of colleges and universities to those student-athletes who wish to pursue athletics in college.

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Table 1

Demographics of High Schools Sampled (October 2011)

High School	Enrollment	% Free/Reduced lunch	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Other
Hialeah Gardens	Total: 2569	83.1%	1.1%	95.5%	2.6%	.8%
	Female students: 1271, 49.5%	F: 1048	F: 11	F: 1221	F: 31	F: 8
	Male students: 1298, 50.5%	M: 1088	M:17	M: 1233	M: 35	M: 13
Miami Springs	Total: 1916	73.2%	12.4%	79.9%	7.0%	.7%
	Female students: 950, 49.6%	F: 697	F: 136	F: 746	F: 60	F: 8
	Male students: 966, 50.4%	M: 706	M:101	M: 784	M: 74	M: 7
Westland Hialeah	Total: 1949	79%	1.9%	95.9%	2.0%	.2%
	Female students: 1042, 53.5%	F: 815	F: 24	F: 996	F: 20	F: 2
	Male students: 907, 46.5%	M: 724	M:14	M: 873	M: 19	M: 1

Note. Data retrieved from

http://doeweb-prd.doe.state.fl.us/eds/nclbpar/year1112/schl1112.cfm?dist_number=13

Table 2

Athletics at Sampled High Schools

High School	Sports Offered
Hialeah Gardens	Fall: Cross Country, Football, Swimming, Girls' Volleyball Winter: Basketball, Soccer, Wrestling Spring: Baseball, Softball, Track & Field, Boys' Volleyball
Miami Springs	Fall: Football, Golf, Girls' Volleyball Winter: Basketball, Soccer, Wrestling Spring: Baseball, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field, Boys' Volleyball
Westland Hialeah	Fall: Cross Country, Football, Girls' Volleyball, Swimming Winter: Basketball, Soccer Spring: Baseball, Softball, Boys' Volleyball

Table 3

College-Oriented Activities at Sampled High Schools

	Hialeah Gardens	Miami Springs	Westland Hialeah
Number of college advisors on campus	1	1	1
Ratio Student to advisor	2569:1	1916:1	1949:1
College Fair	Oct., 2012 Evening presentations	Nov., 2012 Evening presentations	Nov., 2012 45 minute session during school
College Presentations	5	22	12
College Clubs	College Prep Club	None	Yes, Citi Post-Secondary Success Program
Academic Curriculum	Annual college awareness course for freshmen, annual 4-day college trip	None	Annual college awareness course for freshmen, annual 4-day college trip
Evening Parent Orientations	1	3	5 Attendance from 10-60 parents

Table 4

Frequencies of Demographic Variables and Other Categorical Variables (N=207)

High School	
Hialeah Gardens	17
Miami Springs	106
Westland Hialeah	84
Graduation Year	
2014	78
2015	55
2016	74
Age	
14	2
15	47
16	58
17	73
18	24
19	3
Gender	
Female	69
Male	138
Heritage	
African American	33
Hispanic	170
White	3
Asian	1

Table 4

Frequencies of Demographic Variables and Other Categorical Variables (N=207) (Continued)

Parental Heritage ^a	
Cuba	112
Dominican Republic	14
Honduras	11
Nicaragua	20
Puerto Rico	10
USA	32
Other Countries (13)	31
Family Member Attend College in United States	
Yes	109
No	93
Grade Point Average	
2.0 to 2.49	49
2.5 to 2.99	69
3.0 to 3.49	44
3.5 to 3.99	23
4.0 or higher	5
I don't know.	17
Free or Reduced Lunch	
Yes	179
No	25

Table 4

Frequencies of Demographic Variables and Other Categorical Variables (N=207) (Continued)

High School Sports Played	
Baseball	20
Boys' Basketball	29
Boys' Cross Country	8
Boys' Soccer	14
Boys' Swimming	14
Boys' Tennis	1
Boys' Track	18
Boys' Volleyball	13
Football	86
Wrestling	15
Girls' Basketball	19
Girls' Cross Country	3
Girls' Soccer	13
Girls' Swimming	21
Girls' Water Polo	1
Girls' Tennis	4
Girls' Track	6
Girls' Volleyball	29
Softball	9
Total Sports Played	
1 Sport	116
2 Sports	67
3 Sports	24

Table 4

Frequencies of Demographic Variables and Other Categorical Variables (N=207) (Continued)

Primary Sport Played	
Baseball	14
Boys' Basketball	21
Boys' Cross Country	1
Boys' Soccer	7
Boys' Swimming	11
Boys' Tennis	1
Boys' Volleyball	2
Football	74
Wrestling	6
Girls' Basketball	11
Girls' Cross Country	2
Girls' Soccer	6
Girls' Swimming	16
Girls' Tennis	3
Girls' Track	3
Girls' Volleyball	23
Softball	5
Post-Graduation Plans	
College as Athlete	114
College as Non-Athlete	62
Enlist in Military	10
Find a Job	8
Other	3
I Don't Know.	10

Table 4

Frequencies of Demographic Variables and Other Categorical Variables (N=207) (Continued)

Type of Institution To Which To Apply

2-Year College	11
4-Year College	163
Technical School	6
A Different Kind of School	2
Undecided	17
No College	6

People at High School Consulted Regarding

Post-Graduation Plans^a

CAP Advisor	19
Coaches	45
Teachers	53
Someone Else	35
No One	64

People Most Influential Regarding

Post-Graduation Plans^a

Parent(s)	154
Other Family Member(s)	21
Friend(s)	33
Counselor(s)	10
Recruiter	6
Coach(es)	25
Teacher(s)	19
Someone Not Listed	9

Note. For variables that total less than 207, some respondents did not respond to item.

^aFrequencies total more than 207 participants due to multiple responses by some respondents.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of College Choice Factors

College Choice Factors	n	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Cost	191	1.22	.53	2.80	8.95
Influence of Friends	191	2.61	1.01	-.16	-1.05
Influence of Family	191	1.77	.88	.93	.01
Influence of Counselor	191	2.35	1.00	.21	-1.00
Influence of HS Coach	191	2.06	.97	.57	-.66
Reputation of College	191	1.57	.77	1.20	.66
Distance from Home	191	2.41	1.13	.08	-1.38
Recruitment to Play Sports	192	1.99	1.06	.69	-.81
Reputation of Collegiate Coach	189	2.15	1.05	.50	-.95
Scholarship Offer	192	1.15	.49	4.10	18.53
Ability to Play Early	190	1.93	1.11	.81	-.79

Note. Sample sizes are less than 207 due to some respondents not responding to the item.

Table 6

Pearson's Correlations Between College Choice Factors

	Scholarship	Cost	Rep College	Influ Fam	Play Early	Recruit	Influ HS Coach
Scholarship							
Cost	.12						
Rep College	.18 *	.12					
Influ Family	-.02	.08	.17 *				
Play Early	.16 *	-.11	.06	.17 *			
Recruitment	.13	-.07	.08	.17 *	.61 **		
Influ H.S. Coach	.08	.04	.20 **	.34 **	.43 **	.55 **	
Rep Coll. Coach	.18 *	-.06	.27 **	.21 **	.58 **	.75 **	.50 **
Influ Counselor	.13	.06	.17 *	.33 **	.22 **	.27 **	.44 **
Distance	.12	-.05	.06	.20 **	-.05	-.04	-.10
Influ Friends	-.02	.00	.19 **	.48 **	.07	.11	.32 **

p<.05. **p<.001.

Table 7

Likelihood Ratios for Chi Square Tests of Independent Variables

	Graduation Year	GPA	Race/Ethnicity	SES	School	Gender
Graduation Year						
GPA	13.2 (8)					
Race/Ethnicity	.5 (2)	11.3 (4) *				
SES	.7 (2)	15.4 (4) **	.0 (1)			
School	16.1 (4) **	17.4 (8) *	27.2 (2) ***	2.2 (2)		
Gender	1.6 (2)	8.7 (4)	4.5 (1) *	.0 (1)	17.4 (2) ***	

Note. Degrees of freedom are shown in parentheses.

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

Table 8

Results of Univariate Tests for Differences in SES

Dependent Variable	Free/Reduced Lunch	Mean ^a	Standard Error	F	Significance	η^2_p
Cost	No	1.08	.12	F(2, 164)=100.66	p<.001	.55
	Yes	1.20	.04			
Influence of Friends	No	2.16	.23	F(2, 164)=97.66	p<.001	.54
	Yes	2.66	.08			
Influence of Family	No	1.45	.19	F(2, 164)=38.41	p<.001	.32
	Yes	1.81	.07			
Influence of Counselor	No	2.40	.23	F(2, 164)=88.03	p<.001	.52
	Yes	2.37	.08			
Influence of HS Coach	No	1.88	.22	F(2, 164)=43.31	p<.001	.35
	Yes	2.10	.08			

Note. n=167

^aRange equals 1—4

Table 8

Results of Univariate Tests for Differences in SES (continued)

Dependent Variable	Free/Reduced Lunch	Mean ^a	Standard Error	F	Significance	η_p^2																																				
Reputation of College	No	1.62	.18	F(2, 164)=65.63	p<.001	.45																																				
	Yes	1.55	.06				Distance from Home	No	2.40	.27	F(2, 164)=67.67	p<.001	.45	Yes	2.37	.09	Recruitment to Play Sports	No	2.03	.25	F(2, 164)=35.07	p<.001	.30	Yes	2.05	.09	Reputation Collegiate Coach	No	1.87	.25	F(2, 164)=52.77	p<.001	.39	Yes	2.22	.09	Scholarship Offer	No	1.13	.12	F(2, 164)=90.74	p<.001
Distance from Home	No	2.40	.27	F(2, 164)=67.67	p<.001	.45																																				
	Yes	2.37	.09				Recruitment to Play Sports	No	2.03	.25	F(2, 164)=35.07	p<.001	.30	Yes	2.05	.09	Reputation Collegiate Coach	No	1.87	.25	F(2, 164)=52.77	p<.001	.39	Yes	2.22	.09	Scholarship Offer	No	1.13	.12	F(2, 164)=90.74	p<.001	.53	Yes	1.17	.04						
Recruitment to Play Sports	No	2.03	.25	F(2, 164)=35.07	p<.001	.30																																				
	Yes	2.05	.09				Reputation Collegiate Coach	No	1.87	.25	F(2, 164)=52.77	p<.001	.39	Yes	2.22	.09	Scholarship Offer	No	1.13	.12	F(2, 164)=90.74	p<.001	.53	Yes	1.17	.04																
Reputation Collegiate Coach	No	1.87	.25	F(2, 164)=52.77	p<.001	.39																																				
	Yes	2.22	.09				Scholarship Offer	No	1.13	.12	F(2, 164)=90.74	p<.001	.53	Yes	1.17	.04																										
Scholarship Offer	No	1.13	.12	F(2, 164)=90.74	p<.001	.53																																				
	Yes	1.17	.04																																							

Note. n=167

^aRange equals 1—4

Table 8

Results of Univariate Tests for Differences in SES (continued)

Dependent Variable	Free/Reduced Lunch	Mean ^a	Standard Error	F	Significance	η_p^2
Ability to Play Early	No	1.83	.26	F(2, 164)=37.23	p<.001	.31
	Yes	1.97	.09			

Note. n=167

^aRange equals 1—4

APPENDIX A

College Choice Factors Survey

Participation does not imply recruitment.

Directions: Circle the response that **most accurately** answers the question.

1. Which high school do you currently attend:

- Hialeah Gardens Senior High
- Miami Springs Senior High
- Westland Hialeah Senior High

2. What is your expected year of graduation: 2014 2015 2016 2017 I don't know.

3. How old are you today: 14 15 16 17 18 19

4. Gender: male female

5. Heritage: African American Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Other

6. What country is your family from? _____

7. Did any member of your family attend college in the United States? Yes No

8. Current GPA: 2.0 to 2.49 2.5 to 2.99 3.0 to 3.49 3.5 to 3.99 4.0 or higher
I don't know.

9. Are you on free or reduced lunch: yes no

10. Which teams have you played on?

- | | | | | |
|---------------|----------|------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Cross Country | Football | Golf | Swimming | Girls' Volleyball |
| Basketball | Soccer | Water Polo | Wrestling | |
| Baseball | Softball | Tennis | Track & Field | Boys' Volleyball |
| Other(s) | _____ | | | |

11. What is your primary sport? _____

12. What are your plans for after graduation?

Attend college, as a student-athlete

Attend college, as a student who does not play intercollegiate sports

Enlist in the military

Find a job

Other

I don't know.

13. Which type of institution do you plan to apply to attend?

A community college (2-year school)

A college or university with a 4-year degree program

A technical school

A different kind of school not listed

Undecided

I don't want to go to college.

14. Which person at your high school have you spoken with **the most** about your options after leaving high school?

My CAP advisor

My coaches

My teachers

I have not spoken to anyone at school.

I spoke to someone else at school.

15. Who influences your decisions about life after graduation **the most**?

Parent(s)

Friend(s)

Counselor(s)

Recruiter

Coach(es)

Other family member(s)

Teacher(s)

Someone not listed.

If you plan to attend college, please answer these questions. If you do not plan to attend college, please skip this page and go to the next page.

Directions: Below is a list of factors that high school students typically consider when choosing a college or university. Think about the choices you consider when selecting a college and rate each on a scale from Very Important to Not Important.

College Choice Factor	Very Important	Somewhat Important	A Little Important	Not Important
Cost of tuition and fees				
Influence of friends				
Influence of family				
Influence of high school counselor				
Influence of high school coaches				
Reputation of college				
Distance from home				
Recruitment by college coaches to play your sport				
Reputation of the college coach				
Scholarship offer				
Opportunity to play early in collegiate career				
Other: _____ _____				

Appendix B
University of Miami
Adult/Parental Consent Form

1. Title of research project/study: College Choice Factors

Note: If you are a parent, “you” refers to the procedures “your child” will be asked to complete.

2. Description of the Study:

The goal of this study is to learn what factors student-athletes consider in the college choice decision-making process. You are being asked to take part in this study because you participated in a high school sport during the school year 2012-2013. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before you agree to participate in this study. If you decide to be part of this study you will be given a survey that will take you about 20 minutes to complete.

3. Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

This study does not have anything – to the best of my knowledge- that may hurt you or make you feel bad. If you do feel bad in any way you can stop being part of the study at any time. Nothing bad will happen to you if you stop being in the study. We do not expect that you will get any benefit from participating in this study.

4. Confidentiality and Anonymity:

Your responses on the survey are anonymous. That means the researcher will not be collecting any identifying information.

5. Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your decision to participate in the study is voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate in the study without any penalty. If you decide to stop participating in the study the information gathered will be destroyed.

6. Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions ask us. If you have questions later, you can email the principle investigator, Dr. Margaret Crosbie-Burnett, at mcrosbur@miami.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact the University of Miami Human Subjects Research Office at 305-243-3195.

-----*(cut and retain description)*-----

7. Agreement (Statement of Consent):

I have read the description above and agree to participate/allow my child to participate in the research study.

Participant’s/Minor’s Name: _____

Signature (if over 18): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s Name: C. Armesto Date: _____

Appendix C
University of Miami
Formulario de consentimiento para el adulto o los padres

1. Título del proyecto/estudio de investigación: Factores que influyen en la selección de la universidad.

Nota: Si usted es el padre o la madre, al mencionar “usted” nos referimos a “su hijo(a)” y los procedimientos que se le pedirá seguir a él o ella.

2. Descripción del estudio:

El propósito de este estudio es averiguar qué factores consideran los estudiantes atletas en el proceso de escoger la universidad. A usted se le pide que participe en este estudio porque participó en un deporte en la escuela secundaria superior (*high school*) durante el año escolar 2013-2014. Por favor, lea este formulario y haga todas las preguntas que tenga antes de aceptar participar en este estudio. Si decide participar, se le dará un cuestionario que podrá contestar en unos 20 minutos.

3. Riesgos y beneficios de participar en este estudio:

A mi entender, este estudio no contiene nada que pueda perjudicarlo(a) o molestarlo(a). Si de alguna manera se siente molesto(a), puede dejar de participar en el estudio en cualquier momento. Nada malo le sucederá si decide no continuar participando en el estudio. No esperamos que usted se beneficie en nada si participa en este estudio.

4. Confidencialidad y anonimato:

Sus respuestas al cuestionario son anónimas. Eso significa que el investigador no va a obtener ninguna información que lo (la) identifique a usted.

5. Estudio de carácter voluntario:

Su decisión de participar en este estudio es de carácter voluntario. Puede optar por no participar en el estudio sin ser penalizado(a) de ninguna manera. Si decide dejar el estudio, la información que ha sido obtenida será destruida.

6. Contactos y preguntas:

Si tiene preguntas, háganoslas. Si tiene preguntas más adelante, puede enviar un correo electrónico a la investigadora principal, Dra. Margaret Crosbie-Burnett, a mcrosbur@miami.edu. Si tiene preguntas o dudas sobre sus derechos como sujeto en una investigación, comuníquese con la Oficina de Investigaciones con Sujetos Humanos (Human Subjects Research Office) de la University of Miami en el 305-243-3195.

-----*(corte aquí y conserve la descripción anterior)*-----

7. Acuerdo (Declaración de consentimiento):

He leído la descripción anterior y acepto participar o permitir que mi hijo(a) participe en el estudio de investigación.

Nombre del (la) participante o del (la) menor: _____

Nombre del padre, madre o tutor legal: _____

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Nombre del investigador: C. Armesto Fecha: _____

Appendix D
University of Miami
Minor Assent Document

Project Title: College Choice Factors of Student-Athletes
Investigator: Cecilia Armesto

We are doing a research study about how high school students choose a college. A research study is a way to learn more about people. If you decide you want to be part of this study, you will be asked to complete a 20 minute survey.

There are some things about this study you should know. You will be given a permission slip for a parent/guardian to sign if you are not 18 years old or older. You will need to bring that back on the day of the survey in order to participate. You will be called out of your last class one day during the last 30 minutes.

When we are finished with this study we will write a report about what was learned. This report will not include your name or that you were in the study.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. If you decide to stop after we begin, that's okay too. No one will be mad at you if you decide not to do this study. You may ask questions about the study at any time.

Do you have any questions?

If you decide you want to be in this study, please sign your name.

I agree _____ I do not agree _____ to participate in this study which I have read or which has been explained to me by _____

(Sign your name here)

(Date)

(Signature of Person Obtaining Assent)

(Date)