

5-2012

FEMALE INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETES' TRAVEL BEHAVIOR, TRAVEL NEEDS AND MOTIVATIONS ON SPORTING AIMED TOURS

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FEMALE INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETES'
TRAVEL BEHAVIOR, TRAVEL NEEDS AND
MOTIVATIONS ON SPORTING AIMED
TOURS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management

by
Zsofia Bende
May 2012

Accepted by:
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ABSTRACT

Sport tourism is a collection of several niche markets (Bull & Weed, 1999) that provides a diverse field of study. The popularity of sport tourism related research has increased in the past two decades (Gibson, 2004). Studies have mainly covered the analysis of mega events, economic impacts, destination management issues, and recreational sport tourism and spectatorship (Higham & Hinch, 2009). Research on the niche market of elite and intercollegiate athletes has been largely ignored. With the growing number of competitions (Costa, Glinia, & Drakou, 2004) and popularity of college athletics (Zgonc, 2010); there is a significant travel flow of intercollegiate athletes. It is necessary to understand these athletes travel behavior, travel needs and motivations on sporting aimed tours. The present study aims to contribute to the acknowledgement and recognition of athletes as a distinct sport tourism market segment.

Athletes travel frequently and under high pressure and stress (Hodge & Hermansson, 2007) with the primary goal to perform, therefore their behavior, needs and motivations could differ from any other type of sport tourists and share similarities with business travelers (Higham & Hinch, 2009). This study also examines their free time, leisure and tourism activities on sporting aimed tours.

After an initial online survey with 6 ACC coaches; a second online survey was designed and conducted with female intercollegiate rowers from ACC Rowing Programs. Descriptive statistical analysis, mean comparisons and regression analyses were run to reveal these athletes behavior, motivations and travel needs on sporting aimed tours.

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INTRODUCTION

While sport tourism has been a tourism phenomenon for centuries (Gibson, 1998b), there had not been a significant amount of research in the field until recently (Gibson, 2004). In the last two decades the literature has covered different segments of sport tourism, mainly concentrating on analysis of mega events, their economic impacts, event description and management, sport events' influence on tourism, and marketing applications (Higham & Hinch, 2009). The impact of commercial sports shifted researchers' focus to the spectator body, which is usually higher than the number of athletes (Hinch & Higham, 2004). This study is different in that it aims to examine and discuss a new clientele of intercollegiate athletes as a very distinct tourism market segment. Due to the growing number of competitions (Costa, Glinia, & Drakou, 2004) and participants in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (Zgonc, 2010) there is a need to turn the focus to this significant group's behavior, motivations and travel needs during sporting aimed tours. The Atlantic Coast Conference's Rowing Programs were selected and these programs' rowers were asked about their travel behavior, travel needs and motivations on sporting aimed tours through online surveys.

Significance

Business travelers represent a significant market segment, and research on their behavior, needs, and issues has been the focus of the tourism field (DeFrank, Konopaske,

& Ivancevich, 2000; Demel & Mayrhofer, 2010). Similar to business travelers, the niche market of elite athletes needs a more complete understanding. Higham and Hinch (2009) argued that elite athletes could be characterized as business travelers because both groups have a constant need to participate in return travel with the main purpose of work and performance, not leisure. However, in the downtimes, to prevent a burn out from the constant stress and pressure of the competition, they can engage in recreational and tourism activities. The main difference between the two groups is that athletes have less autonomy per se, they do not have a choice over accommodation and dining (Revees, 2000), while business travelers are more independent. The athletes' success also depends on both mental and physical achievements, and years of training determine the outcome of big competitions (Higham & Hinch, 2009).

Elite athletes are under high level of pressure and stress (Hodge & Hermansson, 2007) to perform while on tour. This can originate from many sources such as the time, money and effort that athletes already put in to be able to perform on the elite level. Unfamiliar environments, the effects of individual and team performance, and achievements are additional stress factors. The supply-side of the tourism industry has to address and respond to the needs of elite athletes and meet the requirements and expectations of hosting them. Higham and Hinch (2009) argued that athletes have specific destination preferences that depend on preparation opportunities, and the competition or training camp itself. Athletes need to prepare and acclimate to the environment. So far, destination management shows a slow response to address these needs (Higham & Hinch, 2009; Costa, Glinia, & Drakou, 2004). Hosting athletes and

therefore sporting events can be beneficial to destinations for a number of different ways: through image creation (Sofield, 2003), economic impacts, promotional goals (Higham & Hinch, 2006), etc.

Rowing is used in this study to give support to the importance of this market segment. The researcher's background and familiarity with the sport provides an easy access to the study population. Rowing generates a significant travel flow on regional, national, and international levels because of the high number of athletes and a relatively busy annual race schedule. Prestigious international races' rosters can exceed a thousand participants ("1213 rowers from 68 countries," 2011). A national championship (NCAA Championship) usually hosts thirty schools in the United States, and a regional Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) Championship has six schools with approximately 200 athletes ("And the Bid goes to...", 2011). The NCAA embraced a total 143 rowing teams with 6999 athletes in the past academic year (Zgonc, 2010). The time period of regattas differ from level to level. Of the championships listed above, the ACC Championship is the shortest, with teams spending an average of two or three days at the destination. The NCAA Championship is longer with three days of racing plus travel and acclimatization days.

Background

Coakley (2001) argued that elite and professional athletes are very different from recreational athletes, who engage "freely in physical activities on their own terms" (p.

137). They are more dedicated, participation requires a year round commitment, and the involvement is exclusive, elitist and structured (Coakley, 2001). Intercollegiate athletes represent a sub-division of elite and professional athletes, because their commitment and efforts to a certain sport reflect a similar level of engagement. The NCAA student-athlete participation record shows a steady 2% increase in the number of collegiate athletes on a yearly basis with 430,300 student athletes in 2010 (Zgonc, 2010). These athletes travel to competitions and training camps during the season.

The history of athletes' travel shows that in the 20th century, teams that travelled internationally were considered to be on a '*tour*,' and their athletes were '*tourists*' (Higham & Hinch, 2009). This study further examines the topic arguing that elite athletes on sporting aimed tours are similar to business travelers on trips. Elite athletes represent an emerging niche segment of the sport tourism market where the athletes and the supporting staff became a certain type of tourist (Higham & Hall, 2003), or as Hall (as cited in Higham & Hinch, 2009) defined them: '*partial tourists*.' Elite athletes adopt a special travel behavior, they travel back and forth domestically and internationally to destinations, and they also explore the new city, region or country (Higham & Hinch, 2009). The term partial tourism means "a sport related mobility that spans a broad range of spatial and temporal scales as well as an ever diversifying range of competitive motivations, business and media interest and tourist/spectator interest" (Higham & Hinch, 2009, p. 51). On the contrary, in earlier studies, Graburn (1989) argued that elite athletes are traveling workers. He looks at tourism as an opposition to work while athletes on tours cannot fall in this category. Uriely (2001) categorizes athletes as traveling workers

but also working travelers that gives some justification for the partial tourist concept. The present study does not reject either of these concepts but argues that there are elements of both in elite athletes' travel. They travel to work but tourism activities are unavoidable elements of sporting aimed tours.

Costa, Glinia, and Drakou (2004) aimed to understand sport tourism services that serve top athletes and teams compared to recreational sport tourists. They found that elite athletes have very specified needs and expectations. The authors (Costa et al., 2004) suggested that the main goal of staff is to reduce stress caused by travel and the unfamiliar environment by applying empathic behavior and assuring the athletes of their support (Costa et al., 2004). Higham and Hinch (2004, 2006) argued that the hotel choice of a team consisting of elite or professional athletes depend on several factors such as the standard of facilities, the ease of access to the competition or training site, opportunities for a flexible eating schedule, and costs. In case of commercial sports other marketing relevant variables also influence the location of the team. The images of the team and the hotel, the promotional goals, the status of the team as a sport tourist attraction are taken into consideration by managers (Higham & Hinch, 2006).

Fesenmaier and Uysal's (1990) tourism system model provides the theoretical background for the study. It divides the tourism system into two parts: demand and supply side. It also differentiates cognitive, physical, and economic spaces. The model has been modified to be feasible for the special sport tourism niche of elite athletes and to reveal relationships between their travel behavior and the response of the sport tourism

industry. The demand side deals with elite athletes' cognitive processes, motivations, and their existence as a distinct demand group. On the supply side the destination attributes, quality, and services aim to explain the sport tourism industry's relationship to elite athletes travel and preparation. By providing a deeper understanding of elite athletes' expectations, performance orientation, motivations, needs, and requirements; this study has implications for host cities and suppliers. The athletes' perceptions of sporting aimed tours are influenced by each level of the sport tourism services and the attributes of the host destination.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the sport tourism niche market of female intercollegiate athletes in rowing by focusing on their travel behavior, travel needs, and motivations on sporting aimed tours.

Statement

There have been numerous studies conducted on the different aspects of sport tourism (Gibson, 1998b, 2004; Standeven & DeKnopp, 1999; Sofield, 2003; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007; Bull & Weed, 1999; Weed, 2007; Higham and Hinch, 2004, 2006, 2009) however there is a lack of literature on intercollegiate athletes' behavior, travel needs and motivations on sporting aimed tours. In this paper I argue that athletes traveling for

competition are considered a certain type of tourist group and a distinct market niche. Top athletes travel frequently and often under high pressure and stress, therefore their needs and expectations differ from other types of sport tourists. Similar to business travelers (Higham & Hinch, 2009), athletes are working during tours; however they do not have a choice over accommodation, dining, etc. Athletes travel to participate in competitions and training camps outside of their home region, but they also engage in a range of other sport and tourism related activities. To test this concept, online questionnaires were given to ACC Rowing member institutions including coaches and athletes.

Research questions

What are the past touristic experiences of female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours?

To what extent do female intercollegiate rowers engage in touristic type behavior on sporting aimed tours?

What are the travel needs and motivations of female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours?

How do travel needs and motivation influence travel behavior on sporting aimed tours?

Hypotheses

- H₁: There will be significant differences in behavior as years spent in rowing increases.
- H₂: There will be significant differences in behavior between the two age groups (18-20; 21-23) of the respondents.
- H₃: There will be significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have been to a team training camp and those who have not.
- H₄: There will be significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have participated at the ACC Championship and those who have not.
- H₅: There will be significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have participated at the NCAA Championship and those who have not.
- H₆: There will be significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have been to an international regatta and those who have not.
- H₇: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between the two age groups (18-20; 21-23) of the respondents.
- H₈: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have been to a team training camp and those who have not.
- H₉: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have participated at the ACC Championship and those who have not.
- H₁₀: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have participated at the NCAA Championship and those who have not.
- H₁₁: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between respondents who have been to an international regatta and respondents who have not.
- H₁₂: Travel needs and motivations can be used to predict behavior.

The present study aims to answer these questions and extend the current literature on sport tourism by examining the behavior, travel needs and motivations of

intercollegiate female athletes. With the focus on this niche market segment this study sets new means of research to further and deeper understand the participant side of sport tourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review includes an introduction to the topic of sport tourism and the development of the field. This will help provide a better understanding of the theories and practices of this tourism market. The literature review also entails specific definitions that emerged with the exploration of newer niche markets. In the second part; studies on active sport tourism are reviewed, making the distinction between intercollegiate athletes and other stakeholders, such as professional athletes, recreational sport tourist or spectators, engaged in sport tourism holidays. Finally the literature review concludes with the rowing related literature explaining the feasibility of the sport as a tourism niche market in this study and the conceptual framework of the study.

Sport Tourism

The history of sport tourism dates back for centuries, however a conceptual dualism existed for a long time treating sport and tourism as separate entities (Sofield, 2003). With sport being one of the main elements of the tourism industry (Higham & Hinch, 2009), a new economic niche of sport tourism emerged, expanding the binary division of sport and tourism (Sofield, 2003). The field of sport tourism is a collection of separate tourism niches that provides a variety of options and ranges both on the demand and the supply side of the industry (Bull & Weed, 1999).

Gibson (1998b, 2004), and Higham and Hinch (2009) provided an overview of sport tourism related research in their studies. The popularity of sport related tourism research has grown constantly since researchers focused their attention on the field in the last two decades (Gibson, 2004). The causative factors behind this process could be the increased emphasis of a healthy lifestyle or the tendency of cities to use sport events to attract tourists (Gibson, 1998b). Current literature on sports tourism has covered analysis of mega events, their economic and tourism impact, and event management (Higham & Hinch, 2009). Descriptive event evaluations have dominated the field so far. Implications have been suggested for marketing, destination branding, image creation, and for the sport media (Higham & Hinch, 2009). This study aims to expand the literature by providing insight on athletes' perspective of travel, their behavior, travel needs and motivations on sporting aimed tours.

The theoretical background of sport and tourism studies evolved from related fields, the different theoretical contributions and concepts have led to a wide variety of sport tourism definitions. Higham and Hinch (2009) first defined sport and tourism respectively by considering their complex and dynamic nature, and also accepted Standeven and DeKnopp's (as cited in Higham & Hinch, 2009) sport tourism definition that describes sport tourism as "the sum of cultural experiences of activity and place" (Higham & Hinch, 2009, p. 5).

In their book, *Sport and Tourism: Globalization, Mobility and Identity*, (Higham & Hinch, 2009) Higham and Hinch used the concept of sport tourism that has three

elements: activity, people and place. In the social dimension, sub-cultural identity can be formed which is more important for some individuals than any place attachment or the activity itself (Walker, Hinch, & Higham, 2010). Considering this approach Walker et al. (2010) also used Standeven and DeKnopp (as cited in Higham & Hinch, 2009) definition that suggests “sport tourism is about an experience of physical activity tied to an experience of place” (Higham & Hinch, 2009, p. 58).

Numerous studies (Sofield, 2003; Hinch & Higham, 2004, 2009; Gibson, 2004) have used Gammon and Robinson’s (1997) distinction between ‘*sport tourism*’ and ‘*tourism sport*’ explaining the underlying motives of sport tourism participation. In the case of sport tourism the sport is the primary motivation, while tourism is the secondary motivation for travel. Tourism sport participants’ primary motivation is to go on a holiday and in the second place to be engaged in sports (Gammon & Robinson, 1997). Sofield (2003) further distinguished the binary concept of sport tourism and tourism sport coming up with a quadripartite construct that includes hard and soft sport tourism and hard and soft tourism sport. Depending on athletes and tourists motivations level of engagement and commitment, ‘*hard sport tourism*’ is the most serious concept from the sport perspective assuming a high level of active or passive engagement that also includes elite athletes, while ‘*soft sport tourism*’ has an active recreational aspect. ‘*Hard tourism sport*’ participants’ motivation is to enrich their holiday time with sporting activities, while sport is a minor preference for ‘*soft tourism sport*’ participants (Sofield, 2003). Elite athletes’ on work fall into the first category since participation and

performance are their main focus (Higham & Hinch, 2009; Walker, Hinch, & Higham, 2010).

According to Hinch and Higham (2004) sport tourism is a niche sector of the tourism industry that can be further diversified and seen as a range of niche markets. The demand groups for each segment are different and each demand group has its own resource requirement. When it comes to conceptualizing sport tourism there has to be a distinction between spectatorship and active participation. Active sport tourist can be further divided to be active participants and players depending on their level of engagement (Hinch & Higham, 2004). The concept of motivation helps us to understand the sport tourism phenomena in general (Gibson, 2004). It has been found that even those sport tourists, whose primary motivation is sports, are participating in some non-sporting activities (Gibson, 2004) that make active sport tourists a distinct demand group on the sport tourism market.

Active sport tourism

In their book about sport tourism development, Hinch and Higham (2004) stated that, “the active sport tourism market is constituted of individuals who pursue physical involvement in competitive or non-competitive sports while traveling” (Hinch & Higham, 2004, p. 39).

Active sport tourism is a growing market with a great variety of market segments. Approaches to further understand and describe active sport tourism's elements include geographic, socio-economic, demographic, psychographic and behavioristic market segmentation (Hinch & Higham, 2004). Geographic market segmentation considers the proximity to sport resources and their nature such as natural or built sport locations or as a combination of the two. Meanwhile, socio-economic segmentation based upon the participants occupation or income. The so called demographic approach shows characteristics of the demand group. In her study on active sport tourism Gibson (1998a) profiled active sport tourists as "male, affluent and college educated" (p. 155) individuals. According to Hinch and Higham (2004) the psychographic market segmentation is based on the participants' level of engagement. In general, it can be said that active participation creates distinct social groups which is an expression of identity through "career choices, work time, place of residence and tourism destination preferences" (Higham & Hinch, 2004, p. 43). Behavioristic market segmentation explores demand groups' behavior in relation to the product. It is important for the supply side of the sport tourism market to understand the motivations and behavior of the demand side (Hinch & Higham, 2004). Gibson (2004) argued that having sport tourists in a host region is more beneficial for the community than hosting excursionists, because their economic impact due to their longer stay is bigger and they are also more likely to engage in traditional tourism activities. Chalip and McQuilty (2004) included participants in the certain sport's subculture and argued that they have the opportunity to be engaged in other activities that are consistent with the interest of the group such as visiting

destination related attractions, opportunities to shop, etc. An example of a destination related attraction is the opening ceremony of sporting events. These ceremonies can be also used to add value to the event and create a good atmosphere for the attendants (Chalip & McQuirty, 2004).

In Weed's (2007) opinion the key stakeholders in the practice of sport tourism are participants, policy makers, sport service providers, the tourism sector in general, and sport tourism sector in particular (Weed, 2007). Gibson (1998a) classified stakeholders according to their level of engagement. She distinguishes spectators, nostalgia sport tourists and active participants. The current descriptions and classifications of sport tourists are primarily based on motivation, behavioral types and level of engagement (Gibson, 1998a; Weed, 2007; Higham and Hinch, 2009; Walker, Higham, & Hinch, 2010).

Intercollegiate athletes

The present study focuses on intercollegiate female athletes as travelers: their behavior, motivations, and travel needs. There have been few studies in the sport tourism field that extend the focus of research from the bigger body of sport tourists (recreational sport tourists and sport fans) to this highly specialized segment of elite athletes (Hinch & Higham, 2009; Costa, Glinia, & Drakou, 2004).

Classification of athletes

Coakley (2001) argued that athletes who engage “freely in physical activities on their own terms” (p. 137) are recreational athletes. They develop their skills without coaches, scheduled practices, or contests. On a more serious level of sports, Coakley (2001) differentiated between elite and professional sports. The former is associated with amateur, non-commercial, non-revenue sports, while the latter represents commercial, big-time sports that are played to make money and entertainment. It is true of both elite and professional athletes that they are competitive and performance-oriented with a high level of dedication. Involvement in a certain sport is exclusive, structured, elitist, and requires year round commitment from the athletes. In both elite and professional sports the “livelihood of coaches depend on the athletes’ performance” (Coakley, 2001, p. 135). Commercial programs and sponsorships pay salaries and rent high quality facilities for the teams (Coakley, 2001). Intercollegiate athletes could be considered an age limited sub-division of elite and professional athletes because their commitments and efforts in their sports reach similar levels. Depending on the nature of the sport, intercollegiate athletes train and compete year-round during their college years in high quality environment and facilities (Coakley, 2001). Athletes also invest a lot of time and energy to balance between athletics and academics (Coakley, 2001). According to the 2009-10 NCAA Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates Record a total 430,300 student athletes participated in NCAA sports in 2010, of which 184,426 were female student-athletes (Zgonc, 2010).

Definitions

In sports history, the Olympic Games were the first events to generate travel flow (Higham & Hinch, 2009). In the 20th century, teams that travel internationally are considered to be on a *'tour,'* while their athletes are *'tourists.'* Today, sport related mobility means voluntary travel that causes changes in residence whether in a short, medium, or long term context. Sports professionals, including athletes and coaches, move freely within the European Union; however it takes only a small portion of the migration in the world. Scholarships and better resources in the United States attract elite athletes from around the world (Higham & Hinch, 2009). In relation to tourism, new roles of the ever changing concept of sport have emerged. One of which is the appearance of elite athletes as a market segment, where, the athletes and the supporting staff became a certain type of tourist (Higham & Hall, 2003). Higham and Hinch (2009) agreed with Hall's (as cited in Higham & Hinch, 2009) definition which suggests that those who are engaged in some sort of these forms of sport related tourism are *'partial tourists'* (Higham & Hinch, 2009). The concept fits well for different types of groups participating in sport tourism. Neither the fans behave strictly as tourists supporting their teams away from home nor the international athletes who get US college scholarship to train, travel, and compete with the team. They do not consider themselves tourists; however, there are elements of tourism in their activity (Higham & Hinch, 2009). They adopt mobile lives; they travel to a destination and most likely return as well. Athletes also explore the new city, region, or country and most commonly they travel domestically and internationally with the team for training camps and competitions. The term partial tourism means a

“sport-motivated mobility” (Higham & Hinch, 2009, p. 50). Providing a wider picture Higham and Hinch (2009) also argued that “a sport related mobility spans a broad range of spatial and temporal scales as well as an ever diversifying range of competitive motivations, business and media interest and tourist/spectator experiences” (Higham & Hinch, 2009, p. 51).

The migration of sport labor has become a common feature of the “new global cultural economy” (Higham & Hinch, 2009, p. 52). In professional athletes’ migration the authors made a distinction between permanent and temporary migration depending on the time spent away from home (Higham & Hinch, 2009). The authors (Higham & Hinch, 2009) also discussed Graburn’s (1989) argument that considers athletes *‘traveling workers,’* eliminating the tourism aspect that considered an opposition to work (Higham & Hinch, 2009). Uriely (2001) classified athletes as *‘traveling workers’* but also *‘working travelers,’* which gives justification for the *‘partial tourist’* concept. Higham and Hinch (2009) adopted Uriely’s (2001) concept and described travelling professional sport workers as athletes who travel to pursue their sport career while sometimes engaging in tourism activities so they “can be easily characterized as business travelers/tourists” (Higham & Hinch, 2009, p. 89).

Higham and Hinch (2009) argued that elite athletes on tour are very similar to business travelers. Both market segments meet the criteria of partial tourism by adopting mobile lifestyles, often being involved in return travels and being able to afford recreational and tourism activities during downtimes of work, however the main purpose

of travel is work or participation in competition, not leisure. Supporting their argument they used a case study that suggested that elite athletes have a constant need to travel with the focus on performance either in competitions, training camps, or acclimation (Higham & Hinch, 2009). Sport performance on sporting aimed tours is similar to work on business trips. However, there is a big difference between athletes and businessmen and women on tours. Elite athletes have no influence on accommodation and dining choices, less autonomy because the funding of the tours comes from their teams and organizations. Business travels are more flexible and participants are more independent (Reeves, 2000; Higham & Hinch, 2009).

As the demand for elite athletes increases, the production-driven sport migration expands. The mobility of athletes leads to an erosion of place attachment, the place where they currently play may not build up a new identity (Higham & Hinch, 2009). Sofield (2003) argued that elite athletes whose participation is based on work have less of a sense of belonging than those competitors who are there to have fun and celebrate their achievements in the sport.

Reeves' (2000) six types of sport tourists explained each groups' motivations, decision making, lifestyle, and spending profiles. According to his distinction, elite athletes are highly motivated, whose decisions are very important. However, athletes have little autonomy per se; their participation is the only reason to be at the site while only an injury or fear can keep them away from racing. Their spendings are high due to specific requirements but funded by organizations not by the athletes as individuals

(Reeves, 2000). Costa et al. (2004) argued that the growing number of competitions for elite athletes represents a new clientele for the sport tourism industry on both the national and the international level. Athletes travel on a regular basis and spend a significant amount of time in different states or countries for competition, training camps or acclimatization purposes. They seek out suitable destinations where they can prepare and train uninterrupted (Reilly, Waterhouse, Burke, & Alonso, 2007).

From the psychological perspective (Hodge & Hermansson, 2007) elite athletes' preparation for competitions is critical for maximum performance. They can be familiar with and adjust to the annual schedule in their own sport. The mental demands of elite athletes must be addressed and supported by the supply side to provide an environment that allows them to proceed in their competition routine without disruptions.

Hodge and Hermansson (2007) listed the major factors that could cause stress during the Olympic Games. These are:

“(i) the time, effort, and money required for performances at this level can become a source of stress when the athlete begins to wonder if it is ‘all going to pay off’, (ii) worry about ‘life-after-sport’, win or lose at these Games what will I do next?, (iii) the incredible media coverage at the Games compared to the level of coverage that their sport may usually receive (Greenleaf, Gould, & Dieffenbach, 2001), (iv) the ‘atmosphere’ of the Games -- representing their country, competing against the world’s best with the spotlight on your performance, (v) living in the village and dealing with the ‘artificial’ surroundings, (vi) organisation, transport and

security hassles, (vii) dealing with injury, health, or fitness problems, (viii) dealing with the disappointment of a ‘poor’ performance in the first race/heat/event, (ix) coping with the disappointment of a ‘poor’ overall performance, and (x) interpersonal conflict with teammates, coaches or managers.” (p. 3)

These issues are present in smaller-scale competitions as well but stress and anxiety are also lower. Living circumstances are a source of tension due to the lack of privacy, relaxation difficulties, and monotonous food (Hodge & Hermansson, 2007).

Hinch and Higham (2004) discussed different demands and requirements on athletes. The athletes’ primary goal is to enhance their performance. Consequently, they need efficiency in tours regarding easy access to competition and training facilities or sites, specific accommodation and flexible eating schedules, and access to performance related services. Destination managers have to take all these factors into consideration before and during sporting events (Hinch & Higham, 2004). Costa et al. (2004) suggested that elite athletes are more sensitive to a new environment than their non-competitive counterparts because they are traveling to perform; therefore acclimatization is a key process leading up to competition. They have very specified needs and expectations while they are under the pressure of performance. The tourism industry has to address these demands while also focusing on athletes’ dining and leisure preferences. The staff needs to try to reduce the stress due to travel and create an environment that feels like home (Costa, Glinia, & Drakou, 2004). Higham and Hinch (2009) investigated elite

athletes' needs during tours and found that the longer distance athletes have to travel to participate in a competition the less likely they are going to win. The home ground advantage is significant. There are several factors influencing the travel experience but the most important aspect is finding a balance between racing and relaxing to ensure a proper psychological state of mind and avoid burnout. Hodge, Lonsdale, and Ng (2008) argued that burnout can originate from motivations or perceived stress and cause reduced accomplishment and sport devaluation. Bray and Widmeyer's (2000) study provided support for the argument above. They conducted research on athletes' perception of game location factors that influence their performance. By identifying the main contributors to the home field advantage they found that factors such as the lack of home crowd, the effects of travel, and the unfamiliarity of the new venue negatively affect performance. Familiarity has proved to be an important factor that has further implications for the supply side of sport tourism that serves athletes (Bray & Widmeyer, 2000). According to Higham and Hinch (2009) tourism activities can prevent teams and individual athletes from burning out. They can gain a mental and physical balance by having recreation time. The teams' cultural background and the time period spent away from home define the set of activities that help them during the breaks of competition to recover and prepare for the next competition or training. Destination management professionals show a slow response to prepare hosts for this highly specialized tourism market. However, it is important to meet the needs of traveling sport teams because these tours are associated with high stakes and there are years of work invested in certain competitions so the environment matters (Higham & Hinch, 2009).

Rowing

Rowing is usually seen as a team sport and it is feasible for the current study because of the great volume of athletes who travel annually to participate in training camps and competitions. It has been steadily scheduled on the Olympic Games program as one of the most athletes embracing sport. On the international level the annual World Rowing Championship for senior athletes broke record entries in the year of 2011 (“1,213 rowers from 68 countries,” 2011), where more than 1,210 athletes from 68 countries participated. Most of the teams spend more than two weeks in the host destinations. It has a significant impact on a location like Bled, Slovenia where the 2011 Championship was held and where the town’s population is around 10,000 people. At the Under 23 level, the Championship includes rowers from the collegiate age group. In 2011 there was a record number of 63 nations participated and traveled to Amsterdam (“Record Number of Nations at the 2011 World Rowing Under-23 Championship,” 2011). In the United States, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) provides a great opportunity for female intercollegiate athletes to engage in elite sports over their university years on the national level. The 2009-10 NCAA Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates Record (Zgonc, 2010) showed that in the 2009-10 academic years in Division I, II, and III, a total of 143 teams with 6,999 female rowers participated in rowing. According to a local newspaper, the 2011 NCAA Championship scheduled Division I, II and III schools for racing, which means a total of 30 schools and about 500 athletes plus staff (Raia, 2011). On the regional level the conferences are responsible for coordinating rowing regattas for their collegiate teams. This study focuses on the Atlantic Coast Conference

(ACC). The Championship is organized annually in Clemson, SC. Six schools compete in four events for the title (“Noting ACC Rowing,” 2011), which means approximately 200 people travel, including athletes and coaches. The researcher also included team training camps in this study because they provide an additional source of income for the tourism industry because those usually take a significantly longer time and the roster is also higher than it is in racing events.

Describing rowing using Hinch and Higham’s (2004) sport market segmentation, it can be said that from the geographic approach rowing uses the natural environment with a few built facilities. Higham and Hinch (2009) argued that sports are becoming homogenized, and standardization leads to the erosion of the uniqueness of facilities. Rowing venues have to share certain similarities to be able to organize elite events. However, the natural environment highly influences the landscape of every rowing venue, while the infrastructure remains the same. The socio-economic segmentation considers the participants occupation and income. Rowing is originally a sport of the upper class; however, the dynamics of the sport have changed over time and it is now available to a wide range of classes, with the limit of access to certain natural resources. Selection is based on performance; the equipment and traveling are mostly funded by the team in collegiate rowing. From the demographic approach rowing embraces a wide range of athletes. International races start at the junior level (age of 18), continue at the collegiate and Under 23 level (19-22), peak at the senior regattas (open) and end at the masters level (age of 35 and up). NCAA rules restrict eligibility which is tied to years spent in college, sports involvement, etc.

Higham and Hinch (2009) used a few case studies that discuss athletes traveling patterns, behavior and motivation in specific sports. Most of the literature is on major mega events such as the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup and rugby competitions because these events generally attract a lot of tourists and the spectator body is significantly larger than the participant body (Hinch & Higham, 2004). There has not been any rowing related sport tourism research published in the field so far. This could be because rowing is a non-commercial sport that makes a large number of athletes travel but has a relatively low number of spectators. The case study used by Higham and Hinch (2009) provided good insight on athletes' motivations, needs and issues on travel using multisport festivals, cricket and rugby as reference sports. The case study characterized elite athletes as business travelers. The argument is applicable for rowing as well, since athletes have to perform under pressure during training and races after traveling. The difference lies in the nature of the sports; seasonal aspects; and the race schedules that requires different training times, levels of effort, program and eating schedule and also provides different lengths of downtime to relax or to be engaged in leisure activities. The authors (Higham & Hinch, 2009) also stated that athletes in global sports, including rowing, are from around the world and must compete as far as twelve time zones away from home. Rowers have a highly mobile lifestyle. Most international races are organized by European countries. For example, New Zealanders spend approximately five months in Europe to train for and compete in the summer rowing season (Higham & Hinch, 2009). Similarly, the ACC teams' rowing schedules predispose athletes for long travels,

however given the domestic nature of the races, the time difference is usually not more than three hours.

It has been argued (Sofield, 2003) that for athletes, going to a competition means work; however, it is also the time and place to celebrate being an athlete. A case study (Higham & Hinch, 2009) showed the commodification of Maori culture in New Zealand as a popular element of opening ceremonies in sporting events. It was a significant element of each rugby game played by the New Zealanders, but it was also used in the last World Rowing Championship in New Zealand to welcome participants. In terms of US domestic rowing races, before both ACC and NCAA Championships, an opening ceremony welcomes the athletes and coaches to start the event.

The commodification of sports and their subcultures is significant in the globalized world. In some sports, for example golf, people cannot buy memberships and access to the symbols and key sites of the given sport (Higham & Hinch, 2009). In United States' rowing structure anyone with a team affiliation can sign up to be a member of the US Rowing Association and buy clothes and accessories with its symbols. Rowing accessories also represent the manifestation of commodification and their popularity is constantly growing. They are great gifts for athletes and for their families and it also represents participation in the event.

Conceptual Framework

A number of scholars have proposed models of the tourism system (Fesenmaier & Uysal, 1990). Fesenmaier and Uysal (1990) argued that the most important models in historical order are Leiper's fundamental work from 1979, Mill and Morrison's from 1985, and Gunn's from 1988. Following Gunn, the tourism system model included four basic components: the tourist, the tourist attraction, the transportation, and the information. Transportation and information work as linkages that lead tourists through the decision making process and also provide support for the tourism industry through promotion, product development and pricing strategies to affect the tourists' decisions (Fesenmaier & Uysal, 1990). However, all the models that attempt to describe the functioning tourism system (Gunn, 2002) proposed the same major components that link together interdependently, although the labels of each item vary from author to author. According to Getz (1986), this tourism system model belongs to the theoretical models, as opposed to the process models, which explain or describe elements of the functioning tourism system. This model has descriptive and explanatory features as well because it defines the components but also shows how the subsystems work.

However, Gunn's model needs to be reframed and developed to be able to go into more detail (Fesenmaier & Uysal, 1990). The alternative of the previously listed models recognizes three different subsystems within the broad system that reflect on various levels of human and economic behavior which relate to tourism. Since it cannot be

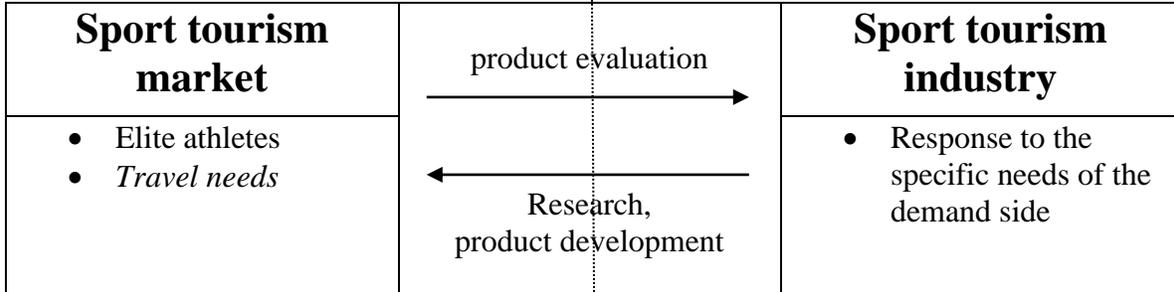
reduced to simple cause and effects relationships, the probability of the emergence of new properties are high.

The conceptual framework of this study is a modified version of Fesenmaier and Uysal's (1990) tourism system model that aims to reveal the relationships between the different subsystems of a collegiate sport tourism system concept.

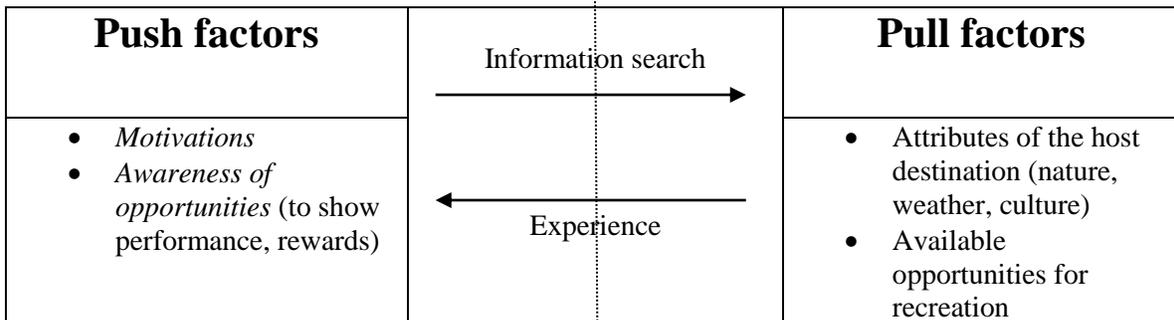
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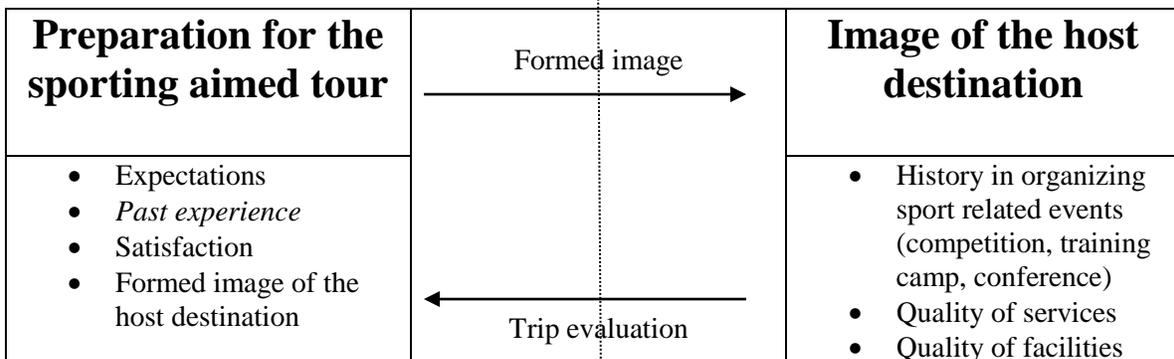
Subsystem C



Subsystem B



Subsystem A



Higham and Hinch (2009) argued that sports fit into the foundational model proposed by Leiper (as cited in Higham & Hinch, 2009). It distinct three elements: the human element

(competitive athletes and spectators), a nucleus (sport site) and the marker (advertisements and media representation). The tourist attraction appears in the connection to these three elements. Given the complex nature of the sport tourism system; Walker, Hinch, and Higham (2010) suggested that the sport tourism phenomena in general needs a better theoretical foundation and tested framework that could help to explain travel behaviors of elite athletes. The purpose of this conceptual framework is to provide a theoretical background that is applicable to the tourism industry. It also helps explore intercollegiate athletes' behavior, travel needs, and motivations and explains the basic relationship between athletes as a distinct demand group, and the tourism industry. Consequently, the demand side of the framework gets more attention in this study.

Subsystem A

Following the original model, this conceptual framework is comprised of three subsystems. As Fesenmaier and Uysal (1990) named, '*Subsystem A*' is the '*cognitive space*' that describes the most basic level of the system by exploring the needs and motivations of individuals' underlying leisure activity and links it to the ability of the destination to fulfill those needs. During their preparation for competitions and team training camps, expectations drive athletes to a state of disequilibrium. In their performance dominated world athletes travel, train, and compete to reach the equilibrium. Elite athletes form an image of the host destination that is influenced by their expectations toward the site of the competition / training camp, the accommodation,

dining, and opportunities for leisure activities. Past experiences; satisfaction with the event, performance, site of the event, quality of facilities, accommodation, dining opportunities, opportunities for relaxation are also part of image creation. Kaplanidou and Vogt (2007) argued that destination image can be defined by a cognitive element of an attitude construct, while the concept of sport event image has no clear definition. Visitation experience creates a more realistic destination image than previous assumed images partly because revisiting a destination bears less risk of unsatisfactory experiences (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007). Neal and Gursoy (2008) argued that satisfaction and dissatisfaction during different stages of the tour affect the overall travel experience.

Images of a host destination on the cognitive level could be built up by its past history in sport events, quality of its services, and facilities. The literature about sport event image mostly embraces marketing approaches and has a strong sub-cultural association (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007). Sofield (2003) argued that hosting sporting events is an effective tool to support positive image creation for countries, regions and cities; therefore they are well integrated in the tourism strategy.

Subsystem B

The so called '*physical space*' or '*Subsystem B*' (Fesenmaier & Uysal, 1990) focuses on the individual's motivation for travel by examining travel behavior. The most important part of this subsystem is the presence of the push and pull factors. These are

forces underlying tourist motivations and destination attributes. Fesenmaier and Uysal (1990) defined these factors:

“Push factors are considered to be those socio-psychological constructs of the tourists and their environments that predispose the individual to travel or to participate in leisure activities. Pull factors, on the other hand, are those that emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination and are thought to help establish the chosen destination.” (p. 30)

Push and pull factors are widely used in academic research, providing a theoretical background for many studies (Bohman, 2010; Li & Bray, 2007; Rubio, Allue, & Mullet, 2002; Goossens, 2000). In this study, push factors include motivations and the awareness of opportunities of the athletes. Robinson and Gammon (2004) stated that it is unrealistic to identify and list all the motivational variables that could be found in sport tourism; however, Gibson (1998a) listed some of the main motivations like self-development, sense of accomplishment, and demonstration of skills. Kotze (2006) made a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for traveling to participate in competitions or training camps. Emotions and desire for involvement are among intrinsic motivations; rewards, recognition, and prestige are extrinsic forces of the challenge. This study considers Kotze’s (2006) argument but also adds more motivational variables: performances that meet expectations, share the success or the failure of the team, the amount of work that each individual already put into the challenge (Hodge & Hermansson, 2007), to revisit a well-known site or to explore a new environment.

Awareness of opportunities could be building the sport career, meeting key stakeholders, and qualification opportunities for a higher ranked competition or team. Pull factors pull athlete to participate in the competition in a certain site. Sofield (2003) argued that being part of the sport sub-culture is a strong pull factor. In agreement with the original model (Fesenmaier & Uysal, 1990) this study lists attributes of the host destination (nature, weather, culture) and available opportunities for recreation as pull factors.

Subsystem C

On the demand side of the *'economic space'* or *'Subsystem C'* the original model (Fesenmaier & Uysal, 1990) showed the relationship between the consumer, as the central element of this space, and the tourism industry itself. The conceptual framework of this study handles intercollegiate athletes as a distinct market segment. The growing number of competitions for elite and intercollegiate athletes represents a new clientele for the sport tourism industry both on the national and the international level. Elite athletes have very specific needs and expectations while they are under the pressure of performance (Costa, Glinia, & Drakou, 2004). It was also argued (Costa, Glinia, & Drakou, 2004) that on the supply side the tourism industry has to address these demands while also focusing on their dining and leisure preferences. The staff needs to try to reduce the stress due to travel and create an environment that feels like home. Higham and Hinch (2006) discussed implications of this model by arguing that the hotel choice of a team consisting of elite or professional athletes depends on several factors such as the

standard of facilities, the ease of access, and the costs. In the case of commercial sports, other marketing relevant variables also influence the location of the team. The images, the promotional goals, and the status of the team as a sport tourist attraction are taking into consideration by managers (Higham & Hinch, 2006).

METHODS

This section documents methods of the three elements of the present study. These elements are:

1. Intercollegiate female athletes' tourist behavior on sporting aimed tours
2. Athletes' travel needs on sporting aimed tours
3. Athletes' motivations to participate in sporting aimed tours.

Study Sample

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates (Zgonc, 2010) showed a record number of student athletes within NCAA sports for the 2009-10 academic year. Approximately 430,300 collegiate athletes participated, of which 184,426 were women. Rowing is an women only sport in the NCAA with a total of 6,999 female athletes from 143 teams (Zgonc, 2010). In the narrowed study population of Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) schools; the average squad size is around 60 rowers (Zgonc, 2010) including both varsity and novice (freshmen) squads in each of the six universities that have a rowing program.

Following the IRB approval, an initial survey (Survey #1) was conducted with ACC Rowing coaches via email. The email addresses were collected from the official athletic websites of member institutions, with the goal of two coaches' contact information: the head coach and one assistant or novice coach (position is indicated on

the website) from each of the universities upon availability. Open ended surveys (Survey #1) were sent out via email and the responses were used to help to design an online survey for the athletes (Survey #2). Twelve requests were sent out with the goal of 6 responses, one from each school. Survey #2 participants were selected using purposive sampling including female intercollegiate rowers from the six ACC Rowing Programs. Criteria for selecting athletes was primary based on coaches' approval, gender (female) and age (minimum 18 years old). The number of the athletes involved in the research depended on the size of the rowing programs and the coaches approval to send out the survey to their varsity athletes.

The sample was collected from ACC member institutions that have a rowing program. These are Clemson University, Boston College, Duke University, University of Miami, University of North Carolina, and University of Virginia.

Collection Procedures

In phase I, an initial online survey (Survey #1) was collected from ACC Rowing member institution's coaches with the main purpose of access and establishing rapport with coaches. Their email addresses are public and available from the official athletic websites of the six universities. Two emails were sent out to each of the six universities' rowing coaches to invite participants to Survey #1. Two weeks later follow-up emails were sent to those rowing coaches from whom no response arrived. Data was collected

during the summer of 2011 which provided background information on sporting aimed tours.

In phase II, the rowers received emails via their coaches (Survey #2). For the six ACC Rowing Programs' coaches who participated in Survey #1 a second online invitation was sent out with the request to forward the email with the link for Survey #2 to their athletes. With the ultimate goal of getting responses from each of the six programs' rowers, follow-up emails were sent to those coaches whose athletes had not responded. Data was collected during the fall semester of 2011.

Data Instrument

An online survey was developed for coaches that included short questions on social demographic characteristics; and 13 open ended questions on information related to their program and team, and their team's travel behavior and needs (see Appendix A). The online survey began with an introduction and informed consent: description of the study, its purpose and the participant's part in it. The participants were assured that there are no risks involved in completing the survey, that it is confidential, and that their privacy is protected. After they accepted the consent they could start filling out the survey attached to the email.

Survey #2 was designed with the help of the Phase I survey (Survey #1) of coaches. The structure of Survey #2 is similar to Survey #1. However, after the social

demographic characteristics, past experience and categorical data on travel behavior sections, the survey continues with a 5 point Likert scale (i.e. 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree; 1=not important at all, 5=extremely important; 1=it does not motivate me, 5=it motivates me the most) instead of open-ended questions. The scales were used to measure 31 items related to the three main areas of this research: behavior, travel needs and motivations (see Appendix B).

The introduction and the informed consent followed the sample of Survey #1. After the agreement of filling out the survey respondents were asked basic personal information in the social demographic part regarding to age, affiliation and nationality. Following the demographic section, past experience was measured through five “Yes/No” participation questions. Respondents were also asked to answer two multiple categorical data questions about their on and off site free time behavior.

In the behavior scale of Survey #2, 7 items were measured and aimed to answer the following research questions: ‘To what extent do female intercollegiate rowers engage in touristic type behavior on sporting aimed tours?’ and ‘What are the past touristic experiences of female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours?’ Without a previously published and reviewed scale that could have been adopted; the researcher depended on her experiences, the literature, and a consultation with Dr. T. Hinch (personal communication, September 1, 2011), one of the authors of the book: *Sport and Tourism: Globalization, Mobility and Identity*. The respondents were asked to indicate

their level of agreement on a 5 point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

In the next section of Survey #2 questions about the needs of intercollegiate female rowers aim to answer the research questions ‘What are the travel needs and motivations of female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours?’ and ‘How do travel needs and motivations influence travel behavior on sporting aimed tours?’ The dimensions and items used here were adopted from Chu and Choi’s (2000) importance-performance analysis (IPA) that distinguished 5 dimensions of the scales. This study only considers the importance aspect of the original scale. The dimensions are: a) service quality, b) business facilities, c) value, d) room and front desk, e) food and recreation. The present study will use 4 of these dimensions and modify the ‘business facility’ dimension to ‘competition site facilities’ to cover all areas of the research on needs. It has been argued that elite athletes are similar to business travelers (Higham & Hinch, 2009) which justify the modification. Items to measure were imported from Chu and Choi’s (2000) study and specified to the present study. Athletes were asked to rank 11 items on a scale from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important).

The primary goal of the third scale of Survey #2 is to rank the target group’s motivations to participate in sporting aimed tours. The research questions of this section are: ‘What are the motivations and needs of female intercollegiate athletes on sporting aimed tours?’ and ‘How do travel needs and motivations influence travel behavior on sporting aimed tours?’ The scales used in this section are adopted from the Recreation

Experience Preference Scales by Manfredi, Driver, and Tarrant (1996). The dimensions used in this study are those that were strongly relevant to the motivations of athletes and the 14 items used are specific to this target group. On a scale from 1(it does not motivate me) to 5 (it motivates me the most) athletes were asked to rank 14 items under the following dimensions: a) achievement/stimulation b) similar people c) learning d) nostalgia e) escape personal-social pressures.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are approached in different ways. Items to measure behavior, travel needs and motivations for Survey #2 were adopted from well established studies (Manfredi, Driver, & Tarrant, 1996; Chu & Choi, 2000). The researcher further examines the dimensionality of the scales and establish the reliability of the scales by using the Cronbach's Alpha indicator through factor analysis.

A literature review was conducted in the development of this study. The terminology used here reflect the current literature in sport tourism.

Data analysis

In this quantitative study statistical analysis was conducted to answer the research questions of the travel behavior, travel needs and motivation sections of the study. After

the data cleaning, descriptive statistics were run on the sample including demographics, characteristics of the sample and the summary of the behavior items, travel needs and motivation scales. Further descriptive statistics, linear and multiple regression analysis and independent sample t-test statistics were conducted on the three sections of Survey #2: behavior, travel needs, motivations, and their connection to each other.

Summary

This chapter described the methods utilized to develop and conduct the online surveys used in this study. It also presented the approach to establish the reliability and validity, and briefly described the statistical analysis of the data.

RESULTS

This chapter includes the results of the data analysis and is presented in two sections. First, the descriptive findings on the study population and its characteristics are discussed. In this section the study sample is profiled and the reliability of the study's scales is presented. The next section provides the results of the testing of the research questions using linear and multiple regression, and independent sample t-test statistics.

The study sample

The study population included female intercollegiate rowers from the six ACC Rowing member institutions: Boston University, Clemson University, Duke University, University of Miami, University of North Carolina, and University of Virginia. Each of the ACC Rowing teams is comprised of a different number of athletes. The publicly posted rosters are as follow: Boston College (n=30), Clemson University (n=36), Duke University (n=27), University of Miami (n=13), University of North Carolina (n=26) and University of Virginia (n=52). An online survey was sent to each of the head coaches of the ACC Rowing teams with instructions to forward it to their varsity rowers. Table 1 shows the distribution of surveys that were sent to ACC Rowing Programs and the number of surveys that were returned. As Table 1 shows, University of Miami had the highest return rate of 69.2%, followed by Clemson University with 61.1%, while the

lowest return rate of 19.2% was from the University of North Carolina. Overall, the response rate was 39.1% with 72 responses out of 184 surveys.

Table 1
Return Rate by Affiliation

	University	Sample	Completed Surveys	Return Rate
#1	Boston University	30	14	46.7%
#2	Clemson University	36	22	61.1%
#3	Duke University	27	7	25.9%
#4	University of Miami	13	9	69.2%
#5	University of North Carolina	26	5	19.2%
#6	University of Virginia	52	15	28.8%
Total		184	72	39.1%

Description of the Sample

In the present study the selected demographic questions focused on characteristics of the sample like age and nationality. Additionally, data were collected which focused on travel behavior, past travel experiences, travel needs and motivations. Table 2 shows demographic characteristics of the sample and Table 3 travel behavior characteristics.

The study sample is 100% female because rowing is women only sport in the NCAA. In this study, 69% of respondents were between 18 and 20. Just one third (31%) of the respondents were between the ages of 21 to 23 years.

The nationality of the respondents was diversified. Although 59.7% of the respondents were from the US, 12.5% were from other countries such as Canada, Ireland, Italy, Hungary and Australia.

Table 2
Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

	Frequency	Percent
Age		
18-20	49	69.0%
21-23	22	31.0%
Nationality		
U.S.	43	59.7%
Other	9	12.5%
Missing	20	27.8%

One of the main indicators of past experience on sporting aimed tours was the number of years an athlete has in rowing. Other indicative factors of past experience include participation in training camps, the ACC Championship, the NCAA Championship, or on an international regatta. Table 3 shows these past experiences of the ACC rowers. It is shown that the average number of years that the respondents have been involved in rowing is 2.33. It is interesting to note that 26.4% of the respondents were first year rowers, the majority of respondents (29.2%) came from second year rowers, 25% of the respondents were third and 16.7% were fourth year rowers.

Participation in a team training camp is the second indicator of the rowers' past experience that is related to past participation on sporting aimed tours. The summary shown in Table 3 suggests that 59.7% of the respondents have participated in team training camps, while 40.3% of the respondents have never been to a team training camp.

Respondents were also asked if they had ever raced at an ACC Championship, a NCAA Championship or at an international regatta. The majority, 75% of the rowers responded “Yes” and only 25% responded “No” regarding ACC Championship participation. The results revealed the opposite in terms of participation at the NCAA Championship. Only 22.2% of the respondents have been to the National Championship. A relatively high percent (35.2%) of the respondents indicated past participation at an international regatta, which gives them a higher level of experience.

Table 3
Past Participation Record

	Frequency	Percent	Mean Score
Years in rowing			
1	19	26.4%	2.33
2	21	29.2%	
3	18	25.0%	
4	12	16.7%	
6	1	1.4%	
7	1	1.4%	
Participation in training camp			
Yes	43	59.7%	
No	29	40.3%	
Participation at the ACC Championship			
Yes	54	75.0%	
No	18	25.0%	
Participation at the NCAA Championship			
Yes	16	22.2%	
No	56	77.8%	
Participation on an International Regatta			
Yes	25	35.2%	
No	46	64.8%	

Reliability of the Study's Scales

To examine the reliability of the scales used in the present study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated. The range of this indicator is between 0.0 and 1.0 and shows the strength of the relationship between items within a scale. The closer the coefficient is to 1.0 the stronger the relationship is between items (Petrick, 1999). According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), any Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.70, is moderately reliable. Table 4 displays the reliability analysis of the scales used in this study.

Table 4
Reliability Analysis of the Scales

	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Behavior Scale	7	0.28
Travel Needs Scale	11	0.83
Motivations Scale	14	0.86

Items for the behavior scale were selected based on the researcher's experiences and a discussion with Dr. T. Hinch (personal communication, September 1, 2011). The reliability analysis showed a low reliability; therefore, the items: the combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours; I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions; I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions; free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours; I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandise on the race site; taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out; and non-racing activities distract me will be analyzed individually because they do not build a

reliable scale. The Cronbach's alphas were relatively high for the travel needs and the motivation scales. The travel needs scale used some of the dimensions and items of Chu and Choi's (2000) Importance-Performance Analysis. The 5 dimensions are: service quality, business facilities, value, room and front desk, food and recreation. The 11 items used in Survey #2 are: the staff are friendly at the hotel; the staff are helpful at the hotel; the staff understand my request at the hotel; facilities on the race site are available and clean; food and beverages are provided by the hosts on the race site; the hotel location is convenient because the hotel is close to the race site; the hotel location is convenient because of the proximity of a downtown area to the hotel; the rooms are comfortable and clean in the hotel; check-in and check-out services are efficient at the hotel; food and beverage facilities have a great variety in the hotel; and food and beverage facilities are high quality in the hotel. The reliability coefficient of the 11-item scale was 0.83.

The 14-item motivations scale contained the following dimensions: achievement/stimulation, similar people, learning, nostalgia, and escape personal-social pressures, and items belonging to these dimension from the Recreation Experience Preference Scale introduced by Manfreda, Driver and Tarrant (1996). The motivation items were: to see what my abilities are; to get a feeling of achievement by the team success; to challenge my abilities; to gain a sense of accomplishment by contributing to the team work; to show others that I can do it and gain recognition and rewards; to become better by developing my skills and potentially build a sport career; to be with members of my group; to meet people in the area; to explore the area; to experience new and different things by spending my free time on and off the race site with non-racing

activities; to think about good times I have had in the past at a certain site; to bring back pleasant memories by revisiting favorite race sites; and to release or reduce some built up tensions by participating in non-racing activities. The reliability of the scale in the present study was 0.86.

Research Questions Testing

Travel Behavior Related Research Questions

Travel behavior related research questions aimed to provide answers to the questions about past touristic experiences of female intercollegiate rowers and the extent they engage in touristic type activities.

The first research question dealt with past touristic experiences of female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours using the conceptual framework adopted from Fesenmaier and Uysal's (1990) tourism system model. The elite sport system framework suggested that past experiences are part of the preparation phase for sporting aimed tours. Respondents were asked about their on-and offsite free time behavior, their experience in rowing related sporting aimed tours and were also asked to rate 7 behavior items on a scale from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The descriptive statistics on individual behavior items were followed by a linear regression analysis to reveal the relationship between experience in rowing and travel behavior.

Research Question 1: What are the past touristic experiences of female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours?

Tables 5 and 6 show the descriptive findings of some of the characteristics of sporting aimed tours. Intercollegiate rowers were asked to indicate what activities they usually do on (Table 5) and off (Table 6) the race site. Multiple answers were accepted.

All the activities related to on and offsite travel behavior in the athletes' survey received answers from the respondents. Listed on-site activities were: have a rest, watch races, go through the recovery process with the trainer, walk around, shop for merchandise, and meet friends. Listed offsite activities were: stay in the hotel room to study/read/watch TV, go out to explore the area, go sightseeing, go to a movie theater, and go shopping. According to the responses, most of the rowers, 91.5% like to watch the races, 76.1% have a rest and 62.0% walk around during their free time at the race site. A high percentage (42.3%) of the respondents were usually engaged in typical tourism activities like shopping for race and rowing related merchandise. Some (38.0%) of the rowers like to meet friends and only 23.9% of them go through the recovery process with a trainer. Respondents were asked to add any activity they were engaged in on the race site. More athletes said that they like to spend time with family but they listed activities such as working out, listening to music, boat bonding, eating/refueling, talking with friends, and studying.

Table 5
On Site Free Time Behavior

	Frequency	Percent
Have a rest	54	76.1%
Watch races	65	91.5%
Go through the recovery	17	23.9%
Walk around	44	62.0%
Shop for merchandise	30	42.3%
Meet friends	27	38.0%

Note: Values do not equal 100% because multiple categories could be selected.

Off the race site behavior answers were more one-sided with 95.8% of the athletes staying in the hotel to study, read or watch TV during their free time. Other less popular options included going out to explore the area (14.1%), going sightseeing (9.9%), going to see a movie (14.1%) and going out for shopping (9.9%). Additional comments of respondents on the onsite behavior question indicated that athletes do what the team does or what the coach says and meeting the family reappeared again as an activity.

Table 6
Offsite Free Time Behavior

	Frequency	Percent
Stay in the hotel room to study/read/watch TV	68	95.8%
Go out to explore the area	10	14.1%
Go sightseeing	7	9.9%
Go to a movie theater	10	14.1%
Go shopping	7	9.9%

Note: Values could not equal 100% because multiple categories could be selected.

In the behavior section of the survey respondents were asked to rate items on a scale from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. The 7 items were used independently because the reliability analysis did not show strong relationships between them. Descriptive statistical analysis was run on the number of responses, while mean and

standard deviation was identified on each of the behavior items. Respondents agreed the most on the item: “Taking a break and utilizing my free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out” with a mean of 3.99 and standard deviation of .978; they rated “The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours” the second highest with an average score of 3.79 and standard deviation of .860. The third most frequently reported response was the likeliness of shopping for race and rowing related merchandise. Additionally, they indicated that free time activities are not important for them during sporting aimed tours, with the lowest mean of 1.99 and standard deviation of .978.

Table 7
Summary of the Behavior Section

	Item	N	Mean	SD
#1	The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours	71	3.79	.860
#2	I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions	72	3.15	.929
#3	I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions	69	3.00	1.111
#4	Free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours	71	1.99	.978
#5	I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandise on the race site	72	3.42	1.084
#6	Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out	71	3.99	.978
#7	Non racing activities distract me	70	2.40	.969

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Respondents were given the opportunity to add to the list of behaviors with additional activities. Four athletes suggested that during sporting aimed tours they often like to go out with parents and meet friends outside of the team. Other responses revealed that athletes like doing homework/studying, shopping, going to the movies, stretching, bonding with teammates, photographing races and going on walks to see the area as travel activities on sporting aimed tours.

Linear regression analysis was used to determine how the years spent in intercollegiate rowing is predictive ($p < .05$) on female intercollegiate rowers' travel behavior. The regression was run on the seven behavior items respectively as it is shown in Table 8.

H₁: There will be significant differences in behavior as years spent in rowing increases.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in behavior as years spent in rowing increases.

The results of the linear regression analysis in Table 8 show that years spent in rowing are significantly predictive ($R^2 = .063$, $F_{(69)} = 4.742$, $p = .033$) on shopping behavior. It is found that athletes like to shop for race and rowing related merchandise less ($B = -.218$) as their experience in rowing increases. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected. This suggests that years spent in rowing is predictive on behavior.

Table 8

The Influence of Years Spent in Rowing on Behavior during sporting aimed tours (N=72)

	Behavior Items	B	SE	β	t-value	SIG(p)
#1	The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours	-.058	.082	-.085	-.708	.482
#2	I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions	.064	.088	.086	.721	.473
#3	I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions	-.156	.126	-.149	-1.235	.221
#4	Free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours	.123	.093	.157	1.321	.191
#5	I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandises on the race site	-.218	.100	-.252	-2.178	.033*
#6	Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out	.026	.103	.031	.254	.800
#7	Non-racing activities distract me	-.042	.093	-.055	-.452	.653

*Significant at the .05 level

Note: Independent variable: How many years have you been rowing for your university?
 Dependent variable: individual behavior items.

The findings of the first research question led to a deeper understanding of what female intercollegiate rowers do on sporting aimed tours and also suggested that female intercollegiate rowers do not change their travel behavior over time with the one exception of shopping. Rowing related activities dominate over touristic type activities.

The second research question was closely related to the first research question; however, it was aimed to investigate the extent to which female intercollegiate rowers engage in touristic type activities. In addition to the results shown in Table 7 about mean scores on travel behavior items, further statistical analysis was run after the respondents were categorized into age groups and according to their past participation record in order

to fully understand the differences in female intercollegiate rowers behavior on sporting aimed tours and reveal the extent to which they engage in touristic type behavior.

Research Question 2: To what extent do female intercollegiate rowers engage in touristic type behavior on sporting aimed tours?

Independent sample t-tests were run to differentiate between the responses of age groups and groups who have participated in team training camps, at the ACC Championship, at the NCAA Championship or at an international regatta.

H₂: There will be significant differences in behavior between the two age groups (18-20; 21-23) of the respondents.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in behavior between the two age groups (18-20; 21-23) of the respondents.

Table 9 shows the behavioral differences between age groups of female intercollegiate rowers. The majority of respondents, 69%, belong to the lower age group of 18 to 20 years old. The rest of the sample, 31%, is in between 21 and 23 years. Independent sample t-tests were run to determine the differences between age groups.

In a comparison of means between the older and the younger age groups, the result for the item “I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandises on the race site” showed a significant difference ($t_{(69)}=2.122$, $p=.037$) in travel behavior. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was rejected. This suggests that the younger athletes reported more importance of shopping opportunities for race and rowing related merchandise than the older group did.

H₃: There will be significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have been to a team training camp and those who have not.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have been to a team training camp and those who have not.

Table 10 shows the behavioral differences between groups of female intercollegiate rowers who have and those who have not been to a team training camp. According to the frequency analysis, 59.7% of the female intercollegiate rowers have already been to a training camp with their team, while the rest (40.3%) has not participated in a team training camp before.

There were significant differences between the two groups of athletes with regards to the importance of free time activities and shopping for race and rowing related merchandise. For those athletes who have been to a team training camp, free time activities were more important ($t_{(69)}=2.176$, $p=.033$) than for those who have not participated in a team training camp before. The results show the opposite in the case of shopping behavior. Those athletes who have not been to a training camp are more likely ($t_{(70)}=-2.018$, $p=0.47$) to shop for race and rowing related merchandise on sporting aimed tours than those who have attended a camp. Thus, the third null hypothesis was rejected. This suggests that there is a difference in behavior between the two groups of respondents.

H₄: There will be significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have participated at the ACC Championship and those who have not.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have participated at the ACC Championship and those who have not.

Table 11 shows the differences between groups of female intercollegiate rowers who have and those who have not been to the ACC Championship. The majority, 75% of the respondents have participated at the ACC Championship before, while only 25% of the rowers have not been to the conference championship.

There was no significant difference found between athletes who have participated and those who have not participated at the Atlantic Coast Conference Championship. The respondents reported similar answers on the questions relating to their behavior on sporting aimed tours. Thus, the fourth null hypothesis was accepted. This suggests that the two groups of athletes do not behave differently on sporting aimed tours.

H₅: There will be significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have participated at the NCAA Championship and those who have not.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have participated at the NCAA Championship and those who have not.

Table 12 shows the differences between groups of female intercollegiate rowers who have and those who have not been to the NCAA Championship. The ratio of athletes regarding participation at the National Championship was opposite than with the Conference Championship. Fewer athletes (22.2%) have been to the NCAA Championship than those who have not (77.8%).

The mean comparison shows no significant difference between the two groups of athletes. Those rowers who have and those who have not been to the National Championship reported similar answers on the behavior items of the survey. Therefore, the fifth null hypothesis was accepted. This suggests that the two groups of athletes do not behave differently on sporting aimed tours.

H₆: There will be significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have been to an international regatta and those who have not.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in behavior between those respondents who have been to an international regatta and those who have not.

Table 13 shows the differences between female intercollegiate rowers who have and those who have not been to any international regattas. A relatively high percentage (35.2%) of the respondents has raced outside the US before. The rest of the rowers (64.8%) indicated no international experience.

The comparison between the means of two groups of the population showed a significant difference ($t_{(68)}=-2.395$, $p=.019$). Athletes who have participated in an international regatta before reported a lower importance of free time activities during sporting aimed tour than those who have not raced outside of the US. Thus, the sixth null hypothesis was rejected. This suggests that the two groups of athletes behave differently on sporting aimed tours.

Overall, the results of the second research question show that travel behavior is similar across groups of athletes, however, shopping behavior changes under different conditions.

Table 9
T-Tests for the Behavior Items between Age Groups (N=72)

	ITEM	AGE GROUP	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
#1	The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours	18-20	3.85 (.799)	1.201	.234
		21-23	3.59 (.595)		
#2	I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions	18-20	3.14 (.957)	-.161	.872
		21-23	3.18 (.907)		
#3	I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions	18-20	2.90 (1.096)	-1.180	.242
		21-23	3.24 (1.136)		
#4	Free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours	18-20	1.81 (.842)	-1.788	.078
		21-23	2.23 (1.020)		
#5	I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandises on the race site	18-20	3.57 (.979)	2.122	.037*
		21-23	3.00 (1.195)		
#6	Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out	18-20	4.02 (.934)	.622	.536
		21-23	3.86 (1.082)		
#7	Non-racing activities distract me	18-20	2.39 (1.017)	-.239	.812
		21-23	2.45 (.887)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Table 10

T-Test for the Behavior Items through Participation in Training Camp (N=72)

	ITEM	PART IN TC	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
#1	The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours	YES	3.72 (.908)	-.821	.415
		NO	3.89 (.786)		
#2	I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions	YES	3.07 (.961)	-.922	.360
		NO	3.28 (.882)		
#3	I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions	YES	2.93 (1.104)	-.659	.512
		NO	3.11 (1.133)		
#4	Free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours	YES	2.19 (1.110)	2.176	.033*
		NO	1.69 (.660)		
#5	I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandises on the race site	YES	3.21 (1.059)	-2.018	.047*
		NO	3.72 (1.066)		
#6	Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out	YES	3.88 (.981)	-1.092	.278
		NO	4.14 (.970)		
#7	Non-racing activities distract me	YES	2.46 (.925)	.648	.519
		NO	2.31 (1.039)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Table 11

T-Test for Behavior Items through Participation at the ACC Championship (N=72)

	ITEM	PART ACC	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
#1	The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours	YES	3.83 (.871)	.694	.490
		NO	3.67 (.840)		
#2	I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions	YES	3.04 (.971)	-1.862	.067
		NO	3.50 (.707)		
#3	I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions	YES	3.02 (1.086)	.245	.807
		NO	2.94 (1.211)		
#4	Free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours	YES	1.98 (1.028)	-.070	.944
		NO	2.00 (.840)		
#5	I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandises on the race site	YES	3.30 (1.110)	-1.651	.103
		NO	3.78 (.943)		
#6	Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out	YES	4.00 (.943)	.207	.837
		NO	3.94 (1.110)		
#7	Non-racing activities distract me	YES	2.39 (.960)	-.175	.862
		NO	2.44 (1.031)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Table 12

T-Test for the Behavior Items through Participation at the NCAA Championship (N=72)

	ITEM	PART NCAA	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
#1	The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours	YES	3.88 (.885)	.453	.652
		NO	3.76 (.860)		
#2	I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions	YES	2.81 (.834)	-1.682	.097
		NO	3.25 (.939)		
#3	I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions	YES	3.13 (.990)	.522	.603
		NO	2.96 (1.149)		
#4	Free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours	YES	2.20 (1.146)	.954	.344
		NO	1.93 (.931)		
#5	I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandises on the race site	YES	3.19 (.911)	-.958	.341
		NO	3.48 (1.128)		
#6	Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out	YES	4.19 (.834)	.936	.353
		NO	3.93 (1.016)		
#7	Non-racing activities distract me	YES	2.13 (1.025)	-1.299	.198
		NO	2.48 (.947)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Table 13

T-Test for Behavior Items through Participation on an International Regatta (N=72)

	ITEM	PART INTL REG	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
#1	The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours	YES	3.96 (.841)	1.161	.250
		NO	3.71 (.869)		
#2	I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions	YES	3.00 (1.041)	-.940	.351
		NO	3.22 (.867)		
#3	I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions	YES	3.29 (1.083)	1.531	.131
		NO	2.86 (1.112)		
#4	Free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours	YES	1.63 (.711)	-2.395	.019*
		NO	2.20 (1.046)		
#5	I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandises on the race site	YES	3.20 (1.080)	-1.192	.238
		NO	3.52 (1.090)		
#6	Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out	YES	3.79 (1.021)	-1.294	.200
		NO	4.11 (.948)		
#7	Non-racing activities distract me	YES	2.65 (.885)	1.592	.116
		NO	2.26 (.999)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

Travel Needs and Motivations Related Research Questions

Travel needs and motivations related research questions aimed to explore female intercollegiate rowers travel needs on sporting aimed tours and motivations for attending these tours. The influence of these two variables was further investigated on athletes' travel behavior. The third research question dealt with travel needs and motivations of female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours. In the conceptual framework, motivations were included among push factors. However, travel needs of elite athletes were in another subsystem that describes elite athletes as a distinct market segment with specified needs. Descriptive statistical analysis was run to summarize the travel needs and motivations scales, mean scores were calculated for both scales, and independent sample t-tests were used to determine the differences between groups of female intercollegiate rowers.

Research Question 3: What are the travel needs and motivations of female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours?

Descriptive statistics were run on the travel needs and motivation scales resulting in a high reliability. Table 14 displays the eleven items of the travel needs scale with their total number of respondents, mean, and standard deviation. The scale (1=not important at all to 5=extremely important) measured the importance of each item for female intercollegiate rowers on sporting aimed tours. According to the results shown in Table 14, the three most important items for the rowers were: comfortable and clean rooms in

the hotel (Mean=4.37, SD=.745), available and clean facilities on the race site (Mean=4.08, SD=.858) and the proximity of the hotel to the race site (Mean=4.04, SD=.859). The item with the lowest mean score was the proximity of the hotel to the downtown area (Mean=2.55, SD=1.169).

Table 14
Travel Needs Scale Statistics

	Item	N	Mean	SD
#1	The staff are friendly at the hotel	71	3.38	.884
#2	The staff are helpful at the hotel	71	3.61	.948
#3	The staff understand my request at the hotel	70	3.54	1.017
#4	Facilities on the race site are available and clean	71	4.08	.858
#5	Food and beverages are provided by the hosts on the race site	70	3.50	1.060
#6	The hotel location is convenient because the hotel is close to the race site	70	4.04	.859
#7	The hotel location is convenient because of the proximity of a downtown area to the hotel	71	2.55	1.169
#8	The rooms are comfortable and clean in the hotel	70	4.37	.745
#9	Check-in and check-out services are efficient at the hotel	71	3.65	1.110
#10	Food and beverage facilities have a great variety in the hotel	71	3.45	1.025
#11	Food and beverage facilities are high quality in the hotel	70	3.77	1.092

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Travel Needs scale of 1=not important at all to 5=extremely important.

Respondents added travel needs to the list such as quietness, good quality breakfast, washer/dryer, and the proximity to a healthy restaurant.

Table 15 shows the number of responses (N), the mean, and the standard deviation (SD) for the 14-item motivations scale (1=it does not motivate me at all to 5=it motivates me the most). The 14 items were organized into 5 dimensions: achievement/stimulation, similar people, learning, nostalgia, and escape personal-social pressures (Manfredo, Driver, & Tarrant, 1996) which measure female intercollegiate rowers' motivations to go on sporting aimed tours. Items of the achievement/stimulation and similar people dimensions had the highest scores with the mean above 4.05. The highest mean score (4.65) was found in: "To get a feeling of achievement by the team success" with a standard deviation of .510. The lowest mean score (2.30) was "To experience new and different things by spending my free time on and off the race site with non-racing activities." The standard deviation is 1.147.

Table 15
Motivation Scale Statistics

	Item	N	Mean	SD
#1	To see what my abilities are	71	4.39	.597
#2	To get a feeling of achievement by the team success	71	4.65	.510
#3	To challenge my abilities	71	4.45	.628
#4	To gain a sense of accomplishment by contributing to the team work	71	4.52	.557
#5	To show others that I can do it and gain recognition and rewards	71	3.77	.913
#6	To become better by developing my skills and potentially build a sport career	70	3.51	1.189
#7	To be with members of my group	70	4.07	.937
#8	To meet people in the area	70	3.14	1.107
#9	To explore the area	69	2.36	1.098
#10	To experience new and different things by spending my free time on and off the race site with non-racing activities	70	2.30	1.147
#11	To think about good times I have had in the past at a certain site	70	3.07	1.278
#12	To bring back pleasant memories by revisiting favorite race sites	71	2.96	1.292
#13	To release or reduce some built up tensions by participating in non-racing activities	71	2.80	1.226
#14	To give my mind a rest by being engaged in activities that are not directly relate to rowing	70	3.01	1.291

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Motivation scale from 1=it does not motivate me at all to 5=it motivates me the most.

Additional comments from athletes further emphasized the achievement/stimulation dimension of the motivation scale. Respondents indicated that participating in races, feeling improvement, and beating rivals were important for them.

Simple mean scores were calculated (Table 16) for the travel needs (MSTN) and motivation scales (MSM) including all variables.

Table 16
MSTN & MSM

	Travel Needs Scale	Motivation Scale
N Valid	67	65
N Missing	5	7
Mean	3.63	3.28
Median	3.64	3.21
Mode	4.09	3.71

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Travel Need scale of 1=not important at all to 5=extremely important; and the motivation scale from 1=it does not motivate me at all to 5=it motivates me the most.

The composite score or simple mean score for the travel needs scale is MSTN=3.63 and for the motivation scale it is MSM=3.28.

Independent sample t-test were used to determine if there is any difference between athletes' travel needs and motivations in different ages or with different past participation record.

H₇: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between the two age groups (18-20; 21-23) of the respondents.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in travel needs and motivations between the two age groups (18-20; 21-23) of the respondents.

Table 17 shows the result of the age group related t-test. According to the result there was no statistically significant difference between the two age groups regarding travel needs and motivations. Therefore, the seventh null hypothesis was accepted. This suggests that the two groups of respondents reported similar answers on the travel needs and motivation scales.

H₈: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have been to a team training camp and those who have not.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have been to a team training camp and those who have not.

Table 18 shows the results of the mean comparison for travel needs and motivations between female intercollegiate rowers who have been and those who have not been to a team training camp. The independent sample t-test did not show any significant difference in travel needs and motivations between the two groups of athletes. Thus, the eighth hypothesis was accepted. This suggests that the respondents reported similar answers on the scales.

H₉: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have participated at the ACC Championship and those who have not.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have participated at the ACC Championship and those who have not.

Mean differences between the two groups of athletes' responses were calculated for travel needs and motivation. The first group contained athletes who have been to the ACC Championship; the second contained those who have not been to the ACC Championship. According to the t-test results there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the travel needs scale, but the two groups of athletes reported statistically different answers ($t_{(63)} = -2.278$, $p = .026$) on the items of the motivation scale. Therefore, the ninth null hypothesis was rejected. This suggests that athletes who have not participated at the ACC Championship before are more motivated than those rowers who have participated at the ACC Championship.

H₁₀: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have participated at the NCAA Championship and those who have not.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in travel needs and motivations between those respondents who have participated at the NCAA Championship and those who have not.

Independent sample t-test was used to determine the travel needs and motivational differences between athletes who have and those who have not participated at the NCAA Championship, as shown in Table 20. The mean comparison did not reveal any significant difference between the scores of the two groups. Thus, the tenth null hypothesis was accepted. This suggests that athletes who have and those who have not been to the National Championship scored similar on the items of the travel needs and the items of the motivation scales.

H₁₁: There will be significant differences in travel needs and motivations between respondents who have been to an international regatta and respondents who have not.

H₀: There will not be any significant differences in travel needs and motivations between respondents who have been to an international regatta and respondents who have not.

Table 21 shows the mean comparison between athletes who have participated at an international regatta and those who have not raced outside of the US. The results of the t-test showed no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the travel needs and the motivation scale. Thus, the eleventh null hypothesis was accepted. This suggests that rowers who have raced internationally and rowers who have not scored similar on these scales.

Female intercollegiate rowers' top travel needs and motivations are strongly race and rowing related. Age and past participation record has little influence on what they need and on what motivates them to go on sporting aimed tours.

Table 17

T-Test for the Travel Needs and Motivation Scales through Age Groups (N=72)

SCALE	AGE GROUP	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
TRAVEL	18-20	3.65 (.597)	.857	.395
NEEDS	21-23	3.52 (.569)		
MOTIVATION	18-20	3.30 (.553)	.745	.459
	21-23	3.19 (.519)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Travel Needs Likert scale of 1=not important at all to 5=extremely important; and the motivation scale from 1=it does not motivate me at all to 5=it motivates me the most.

Table 18

T-Test for the Travel Needs and Motivation Scales through Participation in a Training Camp (N=72)

SCALE	PART TC	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
TRAVEL	YES	3.60 (.663)	-.437	.664
NEEDS	NO	3.67 (.517)		
MOTIVATION	YES	3.28 (.551)	.192	.848
	NO	3.26 (.537)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Travel Needs Likert scale of 1=not important at all to 5=extremely important; and the motivation scale from 1=it does not motivate me at all to 5=it motivates me the most.

Table 19

T-Test for Travel Needs and Motivation Scales through Participation at the ACC Championship (N=72)

SCALE	PART ACC	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
TRAVEL	YES	3.60 (.592)	-.636	.527
NEEDS	NO	3.71 (.672)		
MOTIVATION	YES	3.20 (.494)	-2.278	.026*
	NO	3.55 (.621)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Travel Needs Likert scale of 1=not important at all to 5=extremely important; and the motivation scale from 1=it does not motivate me at all to 5=it motivates me the most.

Table 20

T-Test for the Travel Needs and Motivation Scales through Participation at the NCAA Championship (N=72)

SCALE	PART NCAA	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
TRAVEL	YES	3.66 (.503)	.284	.777
NEEDS	NO	3.62 (.641)		
MOTIVATION	YES	3.13 (.359)	-1.128	.264
	NO	3.32 (.578)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Travel Needs Likert scale of 1=not important at all to 5=extremely important; and the motivation scale from 1=it does not motivate me at all to 5=it motivates me the most.

Table 21

T-Test for Travel Needs and Motivation Scales through Participation in an International Regatta (N=72)

SCALE	PART. INT. R.	MEAN (SD)	t-value	SIG(p)
TRAVEL	YES	3.47 (.614)	-1.477	.144
NEEDS	NO	3.70 (.596)		
MOTIVATION	YES	3.22 (.588)	-.534	.595
	NO	3.30 (.525)		

*Means significantly differ $p < .05$.

Notes: Rating obtained from a 5 point Travel Needs Likert scale of 1=not important at all to 5=extremely important; and the motivation scale from 1=it does not motivate me at all to 5=it motivates me the most.

The fourth research question focused on the influence of travel needs and motivation on travel behavior. Multiple regression analyses were used to indicate that the travel needs and motivations of athletes were significantly predictive ($p < .05$) of behavior. The analyses were run with each of the seven behavior items.

Research question 4: How do travel needs and motivation influence travel behavior?

H₁₂: Travel needs and motivations can be used to predict behavior.

H₀: Travel needs and motivations cannot be used to predict behavior.

Table 22 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis. Travel needs and motivations together had a significant influence on how important free time activities are during sporting aimed tours for the athletes. The results of the regression indicated that the two variables explain 10.7% of the variance ($R^2 = .107$, $F_{(57)} = 3.413$, $p = .040$). Both travel needs ($B = .437$) and motivations ($B = .322$) were positively related to the importance of free time activities during sporting aimed tours.

The two scales were also significantly predictive ($R^2 = .275$, $F_{(58)} = 11.012$, $p < .001$) of the likeliness of shopping for race and rowing related merchandise on the race site. The two scales combined explained 27.5% of the variance, and both travel needs ($B = .468$) and motivations ($B = .832$) were positively related to the shopping behavior.

The result shows that travel needs and motivations together were predictive ($R^2 = .126$, $F_{(57)} = 4.105$, $p = .022$) on the item “taking a break and utilizing their free time helps the athletes to recover and prevents them from burning out.” Both travel needs ($B = .098$) and motivations ($B = .561$) were positively related to this behavior item.

Therefore, the twelfth null hypothesis was rejected. This suggests that travel needs and motivations have a predictive power on behavior.

Table 22

Influence of Travel Needs (TN) and Motivations (M) on Athletes' Behavior during Sporting Aimed Tours (N=72)

	Model	B	SE	β	t-value	SIG(p)
#1	The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time during sporting aimed tours					
	Constant	3.868	.914		4.232	
	TN	-.208	.200	-.138	-1.041	.302
	M	.217	.211	.136	1.026	.309
	$R^2=.031$; $R^2_{adj}=-.003$; $F=.900$; $p=.412$					
#2	I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions					
	Constant	1.022	.942		1.084	
	TN	.384	.201	.239	1.861	.068
	M	.196	.219	.115	.896	.374
	$R^2=.081$; $R^2_{adj}=.049$; $F=2.542$; $p=.087$					
#3	I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions					
	Constant	3.019	1.204		2.508	
	TN	-.389	.266	-.192	-1.462	.149
	M	.416	.271	.201	1.533	.131
	$R^2=.064$; $R^2_{adj}=.031$; $F=1.921$; $p=.156$					
#4	Free time activities are important for me during sporting aimed tours					
	Constant	-.686	1.031		-.665	
	TN	.437	.224	.248	1.946	.057
	M	.322	.240	.171	1.345	.184
	$R^2=.107$; $R^2_{adj}=.076$; $F=3.413$; $p=.040^*$					
#5	I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandise on the race site					
	Constant	-1.019	.979		-1.041	
	TN	.468	.214	.249	2.183	.033*
	M	.832	.227	.417	3.663	.001*
	$R^2=.275$; $R^2_{adj}=.250$; $F=11.012$; $p<.001^*$					
#6	Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out					
	Constant	1.855	.901		2.059	.044
	TN	.098	.199	.062	.493	.624
	M	.561	.211	.337	2.665	.010*
	$R^2=.126$; $R^2_{adj}=.095$; $F=4.105$; $p=.022^*$					
#7	Non-racing activities distract me					
	Constant	1.231	1.009		1.220	.228
	TN	.194	.221	.116	.878	.384
	M	.124	.234	.070	.528	.600
	$R^2=.021$; $R^2_{adj}=-.012$; $F=.635$; $p=.533$					

*Significant at $p<.05$ level

Note: Independent variable: Travel Needs (TN) and Motivation (M) Scales

Dependent variable: individual behavior items.

The findings of the fourth research question supported the earlier findings by further emphasizing the items that appeared to be important in the response for the previous research questions.

Summary

This chapter discussed the results of the different statistical analyses used to answer the four research question of the study. The subsequent chapter will present the discussion and conclusion of the study, suggest implications and ideas for future research.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the sport tourism niche market of female intercollegiate athletes in rowing by focusing on their travel behavior, travel needs and motivations on sporting aimed tours. By using a modified version of Fesenmaier and Uysal's (1990) Tourism System Model as a conceptual framework the study was able to reveal the main characteristics of these female rowers' past touristic experiences on sporting aimed tours, the extent to which they are engaged in touristic type behavior on sporting aimed tours, their motivations and travel needs and how these two influence travel behavior during sporting aimed tours. Discussion and findings are presented in relation to the study objectives.

Summary of the Demographics

Three teams out of the six ACC Rowing Programs had a response rate close to 50% (Boston University – 47.7%, Clemson University 61.1%, and University of Miami 69.2%), while none had lower than 19% (University of North Carolina – 19.2%). Duke University and University of Virginia had a response rate of 25.9% and 28.8%, respectively. The researcher's connection to the teams and coaches' attitudes toward participation in the study could have caused differences in the return rates among the six ACC Rowing teams participating in the study. Overall, from the total of 184 ACC rowers; 72 rowers responded to the survey resulting in a 39.1% response rate.

From the 100% female sample, the respondents can be divided into two age groups: 18 to 20 and 21 to 23. The majority, 69% of the respondents belong to the younger age group, while 31% of the respondents are in the older age group. The nationality of the respondents showed that 59.7% are US citizens and 12.5% are from other countries.

Answers for the past participation questions showed that the majority of the respondents have been rowing for their university for 3 or less years (one year – 26.4%, two years – 29.2%, three years – 25%) and 16.7% of the respondents have 4 years of experience. More respondents have participated in team training camps (59.7%) and at the ACC Championship (75%) than those who have not. Although, participation was significantly lower at the NCAA Championship (22.2%) and at any international regatta (35.2%). This tendency can be explained by the increasing prestige of the latter events and the accessibility and requirements to enter the certain teams to the National Championship (NCAA) or to a foreign country's regatta.

Summary of the Descriptive Statistics

Behavior

According to the literature (Higham & Hinch, 2009), athletes do not consider themselves as tourists however there are elements of tourism in their activity. They are

similar to business travelers because they travel domestically and internationally to a destination with the ultimate goal of work or performance. They also explore the new city, region or country.

Questions in the athletes' survey (Survey #2) were directly interested in on and off site free time behavior, where the respondents were able to choose multiple answers and also complete the list of activities presented by the researcher. The findings supported the literature in the way that the respondents scored high on activities that are essentially related to races, while touristic elements appeared in a much smaller scale. Generally, more athletes indicated that they watch the races (91.5%) and have a rest (76.1%) on the rowing site, however, shopping for merchandise (42.3%), a typical touristic activity proved to be popular among the study sample. The answers were less diversified in the case of the offsite free time behavior. The vast majority of female intercollegiate rowers do not leave the hotel (95.8%) and a much smaller percentage are usually engaged in tourism activities like sightseeing (9.9%), shopping (9.9%), exploring the area (14.1%) or going to a movie theater (14.1%). Additional comments suggested a higher degree of tourism activities. Athletes like to spend time with their families, go out to dinner with them, shop, see a movie, or go on walks to see the area. As Reeves (2000) and Higham and Hinch (2009) pointed out in their comparison between athletes and business travelers, elite athletes have less autonomy per se, which is supported in the results. Athletes' comments revealed that they do "what the team does" or "what the coach says."

In relation to tourism new roles of the ever changing concept of sport have emerged. One of them is the appearance of elite athletes as a market segment where the athletes and the supporting staff become a certain type of tourist (Higham & Hall, 2003). Higham and Hinch (2009) agreed with Hall's (as cited in Higham & Hinch, 2009) definition which suggests that those who are engaged in any sort of sporting aimed tours are '*partial tourists*.' Uriely (2001) argued that athletes travel to pursue their career while sometimes engaging in tourism activities. The present study aimed to explore to what extent tourism activities are involved in sporting aimed tours.

The summary of the behavior section of Survey #2 shows contradictory results. Literature (Hodge & Hermansson, 2007; Higham & Hinch, 2009) suggested that for elite athletes it is important to find a balance between racing and relaxing to ensure a proper psychological state of mind and avoid burnout. According to Higham and Hinch (2009), tourism activities can prevent teams and individual athletes from burning out. They can gain balance by having recreation time. Rowers' responses support the literature to some extent. The athletes agreed that taking a break and utilizing their free time helps them to recover and prevents them from burning out ($M=3.99$, $SD=.978$); however, they reported the lowest scores, therefore disagreed with the statement that free time activities are important for them during sporting aimed tours ($M=1.99$, $SD=.978$). They somewhat disagreed that non racing activities would distract them from racing ($M=2.40$, $SD=.969$). Additionally, the rowers tend to agree that the combination of races, practices and dining take all their time on sporting aimed tours ($M=3.79$, $SD=.860$), but they neither agreed or disagreed that they have some free time on ($M=3.15$, $SD=.929$) and off the rowing site

(M=3.00, SD=1.111). The findings could suggest that athletes' perception about free time is influenced by many factors. Taking a break and utilizing free time is not equal for them with being engaged in free time activities. It could mean that the time they have outside of racing, practicing and dining has to be spent in a passive way like relaxing to be able to recover for the next physical activity. Also their free time is relatively scattered because of the schedule of the events. Usually more prestigious regattas offer more downtime during the event.

Travel Needs

Regarding travel needs on sporting aimed tours, the literature (Reilly, Waterhouse, Burke, & Alonso, 2007; Hinch & Higham, 2004; Costa, Glinia, & Drakou, 2004) agreed that elite athletes have very specified needs and demands while they are on tours and under high pressure and stress. Their primary goal is to enhance performance. Therefore they need efficiency and they seek a destination where they can prepare uninterrupted, have easy access to competition, training sites, eating opportunities, and other performance related services. Costa et al. (2004) suggested that the tourism industry has to address these special demands while also focusing on their dining and leisure preferences. Empathy of the staff towards the elite athletes is seen as a key element in eliminating the stress of being in an unfamiliar environment and accommodating the athletes (Costa et al., 2004). The present study used the importance aspect of Chu and Choi's (2000) importance-performance analysis to rank intercollegiate athletes' travel

needs. It was found that for female intercollegiate rowers, comfortable and clean rooms (M=4.37, SD=.745) are the most important features of a destination regarding travel needs, followed by available and clean facilities on the race site (M=4.08, SD=.858), and the proximity of the hotel to the race site (M=4.04, SD=.859). A good quality breakfast before races provided by the hotel is also a significant characteristic according to additional comments from the respondents. However, staff friendliness (M=3.38, SD=.884) and helpfulness (M=3.61, SD=.948) or their understanding of the athletes (M=3.54, SD=1.017) were all ranked lower, which contradicts the existing literature on the topic (Costa et al., 2004). The least important thing for the athletes surveyed is the proximity of the hotel to a downtown area (M=2.55, SD=1.169), which is also explained by these athletes travel behavior, indicating that they do not usually leave the hotel during their free time off the race site.

Motivations

Higham and Hinch (2009) argued that sport related mobility includes a diversifying range of competitive motivations. Athletes travel to pursue their sport career with the main focus on performance, while sometimes they engage in tourism activities on the tour so they “can be easily characterized as business travelers/tourists” (Higham & Hinch, 2009, p. 89). Uriely (2001) classified athletes as *‘traveling workers’* but also *‘working travelers.’*

Items for the motivation scale were adapted from the Recreation Experience Preference Scale introduced by Manfreda, Driver, and Tarrant (1996). Supporting the literature (Higham & Hinch, 2009), the items under the achievement/stimulation dimension received the highest scores suggesting that athletes' primary goal is performing well on sporting aimed tours. Intercollegiate female rowers are the most motivated to: get a feeling of achievement by the team success ($M=4.65$, $SD=.510$), to gain a sense of accomplishment by contributing to the team work ($M=4.52$, $SD=.557$), to challenge their abilities ($M=4.45$, $SD=.628$) and to see what their abilities are ($M=4.39$, $SD=.597$). All of these motivational elements directly belong to their and their team's performance. The least motivating factors to go on a sporting aimed tour according to their responses are to explore the area ($M=2.36$, $SD=1.098$) and to experience new and different things by spending free time on and off the race site with non-racing activities ($M=2.30$, $SD=1.147$). The results suggested that in the case of a typical team sport like rowing, the participants main goal is to contribute to the team's success.

Summary of the Hypothesis Testing

Behavior

There were only a few cases where significant differences over expected beliefs concerning female intercollegiate rowers' travel behavior were noticed. It was expected

that the number of years in rowing, age, and past participation in team training camps, at ACC Championships, NCAA Championships, and at any international regattas influence travel behavior on sporting aimed tours. Differences occurred in the case of the ACC and NCAA Championships. Those female intercollegiate athletes who have and those who have not participated in these events behave similar on sporting aimed tours.

The result of the linear regression indicates that past experiences, like more time spent in a rowing program, influence travel behavior specially for the likelihood of shopping for race and rowing related merchandise ($t=4.742$, $p=.033$). The number of years spent with rowing does not alter athletes' perception of how much free time they have or how they spend their free time, but the more experienced the rower is, the less likely she is to buy new rowing merchandises. It could happen because athletes buy new merchandise if the event has an element of novelty or increased importance in their career. Going through similar schedules each season could lower the level of novelty and the uniqueness of the events.

To further explore the travel behavior of the sample differences were identified between age groups and regarding past participation record. The literature talked about elite (Higham & Hinch, 2009; Reeves, 2000) and intercollegiate (Coakley, 2001) athletes in general, while this study also takes rowing experience into consideration to differentiate between groups of female intercollegiate rowers. It was found that the older rowers do not like to shop for race and rowing related merchandise as much as their younger teammates ($t_{(69)}=2.122$, $p=.037$). This supports the earlier finding that suggested

that as the number of years spent in rowing increases the amount of rowing merchandise purchased decreases. The athletes reported similar answers on the rest of the items, which means that there is no significant difference between the two age groups' (18-20, 21-23) perception on the amount of free time they have or the importance of free time activities during sporting aimed tours. However, using past participation record to distinguish between two groups of the sample shows different results. For those female intercollegiate rowers who have been to a training camp, free time activities are more important in comparison to those who have not been to a team training camp ($t_{(69)}=2.176$, $p=.033$). It is also true for those female intercollegiate rowers who have not been to an international regatta ($t_{(68)}=-2.395$, $p=.019$). Those athletes who go to team training camps are more exposed to the environment of the competitions. They live together and they spend more time together, which could explain their higher need for free time activities. Shopping for race and rowing related merchandise is the other significantly different ($t_{(70)}=-2.018$, $p=0.047$) travel behavior between those who have and those who have not been to a training camp. Excluding these cases female intercollegiate rowers behave similarly. Past participation in a training camp, the Atlantic Coast Conference Championship, the National Championship or in an international regatta does not alter their behavior from those rowers who have not been to any of these events.

Travel Needs and Motivations

There were more areas concerning travel needs and motivations where significant differences over the expected beliefs were experienced. In spite of the expected outcomes, there were no differences in travel needs found between any groups of the respondents: age groups, athletes who have or have not been to any training camps, ACC Championship, NCAA Championships or to any international regatta. Motivational differences among groups of female intercollegiate athletes were further examined. It was found that age, and past participation do not make any difference in the motivations to go on a sporting aimed tour. However, differences were found between athletes who have and those who have not been to the ACC Championship. Those rowers who have not made it to the ACC Championship proved to be more motivated ($t_{(63)}=-2.278$, $p=.026$). The results could differ if every team would go to the NCAA Championship just like they go to the ACC Championship.

No literature was found on the connection between elite athletes' travel needs, motivation and travel behavior on sporting aimed tours. The results suggested that travel needs and motivations are not significant predictors for most of the intercollegiate female rowers' travel behavior: participating in the combination of races, practices and dining take all the time, the extent of free time on and off the rowing site, and the extent of how much non-racing activities distract rowers during sporting aimed tours. However, on other behavior items travel needs and motivations proved to have a predictive influence. It was found that higher travel needs and more motivation to go on a sporting aimed tour

mean that free time activities are more important for the athletes ($F_{(57)}=3.413$, $p=.040$) and they are more likely to shop for race and rowing related merchandise ($F_{(58)}=11.012$, $p<.001$). While the results of shopping behavior are consistent through the study, the importance of free time behavior generated contradictory responses. Another result of the regression analysis is that travel needs and motivations also positively influence athletes' need to take a break and utilize free time to recover ($F_{(57)}=4.105$, $p=.022$), which proved to be the strongest item on the ranking of the behavior variables. Higher travel needs and higher motivations are usually associated with more important prestigious events. If the athletes travel far to participate in such events they could be more open to engage in free time activities that help them to recover outside of the traditional racing schedule. Going to the same destinations for lower ranked events could motivate the performance oriented athletes less than new challenges and opportunities for accomplishment.

Conclusion

The present study contributes to the existing literature on sport tourism by examining travel of elite athletes. The findings focus on the characteristics of female intercollegiate rowers' travel behavior, travel needs and motivations on sporting aimed tours. Using a modified version of Fesenmaier and Uysal's (1990) tourism system model, the relationships between elite athletes' as a distinct market segment and the tourism industry were identified. The findings reflected on some these relationships by

emphasizing the specific demands of elite athletes, the host destination attributes in terms of travel needs and the achievement oriented motivations of the rowers.

To summarize the behavior section, the likeliness of shopping for race and rowing related merchandise proved to be the most important tourism characteristic of sporting aimed tours. In spite of the original purpose of the present study of finding out what these intercollegiate athletes do on sporting aimed tours, more questions emerged relating to free time behavior. Free time is a subjective concept for the respondents and they mostly perceive it as a structured downtime of the races. They usually spend their free time passively, staying in the hotel helps them to recover for the next race. However, if higher travel needs and more motivations can be associated with more important and new events, then athletes' need of spending the breaks with active free time activities increases. Being engaged in non-rowing related activities outside of the team setting could also offer them an escape and help them to recover.

As the conceptual framework shows (Fesenmaier & Uysal, 1990), the tourism industry has to address the special needs of elite athletes in order to accommodate them. The present study both supported and contradicted the literature on the topic (Costa et al., 2004; Higham & Hinch, 2009). The most important hotel attributes are clean and comfortable rooms in the hotel that allow the athletes to rest and allows them to feel comfortable in the unfamiliar environment, and proximity of the hotel to the rowing site, the closer the site is the less stress that evolves from transportation. Costa et al. (2004)

suggested that hotel staff has an important role in stress reduction by ensuring the athletes of their understanding and empathy; however, the findings did not confirm that.

The summary of the motivation section supports the literature (Higham & Hinch, 2009) by suggesting that the achievement oriented (Manfredo, Driver, & Tarrant, 1996) motivations dominate when intercollegiate athletes on sporting aimed tours. Within this dimension the emphasis shifted from individual accomplishments to the desire to be involved in and contribute to the team's success. The challenges that these regattas offer are also determining motivational factors for the athletes. Typical tourism activities do not play a significant role in motivating the rowers to go on the tour, however exploring the area occasionally appear in their responses as an open comment.

Study Limitations

This quantitative study aimed to reveal intercollegiate female athletes behavior, travel needs, and motivations on sporting aimed tours. The lack of qualitative interviews may not capture the depth of the phenomenon of athletes' travel. The researcher found general patterns of female intercollegiate rowers travel behavior, travel needs and motivations, but not on the individual level.

Another potential limitation could be the researcher's background and experience in the world of elite athletics and rowing that could have caused bias in the survey questions.

The social desirability bias (King & Bruner, 2000) could also occur when survey respondents answer the questions in a way that reflects social norms. Athletes might have responded to the survey questions in such a manner to meet their peers,' coaches,' or the researcher's expectations.

Implications and Directions for Future Research

This study has implications for the sport tourism industry and future research. Intercollegiate athletics generate a significant travel flow of athletes and there is no literature on their tourist behavior, travel needs, and motivations that would help the tourism industry to understand this niche and provide a special service for them. It was suggested (Hinch & Higham, 2004) that hosting elite athletes is beneficial for locals of the hosting city or country, but requires a different attitude, facility, and service. This study can be used by the sport tourism industry suppliers who aim to target elite or intercollegiate athletes rather than recreational sport tourists, coaches who can compare their team's behavior to similar groups, event organizers looking at athletes' needs, etc. The study also has applications for in academia to point out new directions for research.

Following the quantitative side of the research; this study could be extended to the elite and professional athletes who are performing on the international level and therefore travel longer distances, stay longer, and face new challenges due to the different nature of the sporting aimed tours. On the US national level, the relationship between the team behavior and team success is worth examining to determine whether the input of free

time and tourism activities influence the overall ranking of the team. However, more qualitative research could depend on the present study to reach a deeper understanding and richer data on athletes' behavior, travel needs, and motivations. In-depth interviews would allow the researcher to better understand this niche market. There is a lack of information in the literature on athletes' perception. It would be interesting to see if elite or intercollegiate athletes' perception of the natural environment, services of the host site, hotel, and dining influence their overall satisfaction with the event. In terms of nostalgia sport tourism, the willingness of former athletes to revisit competition sites in the future would lead to new directions in the research of sport tourism.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Survey #1

Rowing Study

Welcome to the Rowing Study Survey. This survey will ask you questions about your experiences as a rowing coach, information regarding to rowing regattas and sites and athletes' behavior as tourists during travel to sporting events. In taking the survey, your responses will be added together with others and recorded as a group. Special precautions have been established to protect the confidentiality of your responses. If the results of this project are published your identity will not be made public. You may refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason.

There are no foreseeable risks to you as a participant in this project. At the end of the survey you will have an opportunity to provide an email address if you want to request the summary report from this survey. This email address will be kept confidential and only known by the Principal Investigator and his research team. It will not be linked to your response in any published or public documents. The report will be made available to participants at a later date.

To assure anonymity and confidentiality, all study related documents will be securely stored by the Principal Investigator in his office on the Clemson University campus during the study and for three years after the study termination. Any electronic data will be stored by the Principal Investigator on the Clemson University server or a password protected computer operated by the Principal Investigator.

The survey is expected to take approximately 25 minutes of your time. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Ken Backman, by email at frank@clemson.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research project, please contact the Clemson University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) at 864-656-6460 or irb@clemson.edu <<mailto:irb@clemson.edu>>. If you are outside of the Upstate South Carolina area, please use the ORC's toll-free number, 866-297-3071.

1. I agree to the above consent information and will participate in the remainder of the survey.

Yes

Please tell me more about yourself!

2. Gender

- Male
- Female

3. Nationality

4. Current employer

5. Other rowing programs that you worked for:

6. Number of years of experience as a coach

- 0-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 20 or more

7. Size of the team

- < 50 athletes
- 51-100 athletes
- > 100 athletes

8. NCAA participation

- Yes
- No

The following questions ask about your travel as a team to destinations that are other than your home practice water.

- 9. What is the most visited destination by your team during the spring and fall seasons?**

- 10. How often does the team travel to participate in training camps on a year to year basis?**

- 11. What is the favorite destination for that purpose? Why is that?**

- 12. What is the favorite destination for that purpose? Why is that?**

- 13. How much does the schedule differ from year to year - how constant is it?
How much influence do you have in choosing certain regattas?**

14. Do athletes have free time during the events? If so what activities do they usually engage in? How often do they have the opportunity to engage in free time activities during the trip?

15. How early does the team arrive to the regatta location? How long are the downtimes?

16. What kind of accommodation does the team usually use? What is the average number of nights for lodging? Where do the athletes eat?

17. What is the average distance of travel for regattas you attend? What type of transportation does the team prefer?

18. How big is your budget for travel? Does it often change year to year? How big is the impact of a successful season on your travel budget?

19. Are there any places that you would consider to revisit for purely tourism purposes?

20. Is there any regatta in your home venue? If yes, what are the biggest strengths and weaknesses of your home regatta as a destination?

21. What are those experiences that predispose you to return to a certain destination?

Thank you very much for your cooperation and time to participate in this research!

APPENDIX B

Survey #2

Athletes' Rowing Survey

Welcome to the Athletes' Rowing Survey. This survey will ask you questions about your experiences as an intercollegiate athlete, information regarding to your behavior, needs and motivations on sporting aimed tours such as regattas and training camps. In taking the survey, your responses will be added together with others and recorded as a group. Special precautions have been established to protect the confidentiality of your responses. If the results of this project are published your identity will not be made public. You may choose not to answer any question(s) for any reason.

There are no foreseeable risks to you as a participant in this project; however you must be minimum 18 years old to fill out the survey. At the end of the survey you will have an opportunity to provide an email address if you want to request the summary report from this survey. This email address will be kept confidential and only known by the Principal Investigator and his research team. It will not be linked to your response in any published or public documents. The report will be made available to participants at a later date. To assure anonymity and confidentiality, all study related documents will be securely stored by the Principal Investigator in his office on the Clemson University campus during the study and for three years after the study termination. Any electronic data will be stored by the Principal Investigator on the Clemson University server or a password protected computer operated by the Principal Investigator.

The survey is expected to take approximately 10 minutes of your time. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Ken Backman, by email at frank@clemson.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research project, please contact the Clemson University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) at 864-656-6460 or irb@clemson.edu <<mailto:irb@clemson.edu>>. If you are outside of the Upstate South Carolina area, please use the ORC's toll-free number, 866-297-3071.

1. I agree to the above consent information and will participate in the remainder of the survey.

Yes

Please tell me more about yourself!

2. Age

- 18-20
- 21-23
- 24 and above

3. University

- Boston College
- Clemson University
- Duke University
- University of Miami
- University of North Carolina
- University of Virginia

4. Nationality

5. How many years have you been rowing for your university?

6. Have you ever participated in a training camp with your current team?

- Yes
- No

7. Have you ever raced at the ACC Championship?

- Yes
- No

8. Have you ever raced at the NCAA Championship?

- Yes
- No

9. Have you ever raced on an international regatta?

- Yes
- No

10. What do you usually do at the rowing site during your free time?

- have a rest
- watch the races
- go through the recovery process with the trainer
- walk around
- shop for rowing merchandise
- meet with friends from other teams

Other, please specify:

11. What do you usually do off the rowing site during your free time at a competition?

- stay in the hotel room to study/read/watch TV
- go out of the hotel to explore the area
- go sightseeing
- go to a movie theater
- go shopping

Other, please specify:

Please rate the following items!

12. On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) what is your opinion on the statements below?

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree		
The combination of races, practices and dining take all my time on sporting aimed tours (competition and training camp)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I have some free time on the rowing site during competitions	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I have some free time off the rowing site during competitions	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Free time activities (sightseeing, movie theater, shopping) are important for me during sporting aimed tours	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I like to shop for race and rowing related merchandises on the race site	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Taking a break and utilizing free time helps me to recover and prevents me from burning out	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Non-racing activities distract me	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>					

13. On a scale from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important) how important are the services below for you?

	Not important at all				Extremely important
The staff are friendly at the hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The staff are helpful at the hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The staff understand my requests at the hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities (locker room, restrooms) on the race site are available and clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food and beverages are provided by the hosts on the race site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The hotel location is convenient because the hotel is close to the race site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The hotel location is convenient because of the proximity of a downtown area to the hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The rooms are comfortable and clean in the hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check-in and check-out services are efficient in the hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food and beverage facilities have a great variety in the hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food and beverage facilities are high quality in the hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify:					

14. On a scale from 1 (it doesn't motivate me) to 5 (it motivates me the most) what motivates you the most to participate in rowing regattas and training camps?

	It does not motivate me			It motivates me the most		
To see what my abilities are (what result I can achieve)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To get a feeling of achievement by the team success	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To challenge my abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To gain a sense of accomplishment by contributing to the team work	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To show others that I can do it and gain recognition and rewards	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To become better by developing my skills and potentially build a sport career	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To be with members of my group	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To meet other people in the area (networking in the rowing community)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To explore the area	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To experience new and different things by spending my free time on and off the race site with non-racing activities	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To think about good times I have had in the past at a certain site	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To bring back pleasant memories by revisiting favorite rowing sites	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To release or reduce some built-up tensions by participating in non-racing activities	<input type="checkbox"/>					
To give my mind a rest by being engaged in activities that are not directly relate to rowing	<input type="checkbox"/>					

I have other motivations such as:

15. I would like to have a summary from the results of the survey. My email address is:

Thank you very much for your cooperation and time participating in this research!

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