Institutional Logic Multiplicity Among NCAA Division I Student Athletes and Their Respective Institutions

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Abstract

Institutional logics, proposed by Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012), provides a construct to evaluate how institutional actors are influenced by, create, and modify various beliefs, values, and expectations in their respective environments. Within the context of NCAA Division I athletics, it is possible that multiple logics may exist, resulting in logic multiplicity. The purpose of the study, framed by Besharov and Smith's (2014) work regarding logic heterogeneity and multiplicity, was to explore the institutional logics perceived and managed by NCAA Division I student athletes. Interviews with 12 student athletes were conducted, transcribed, and coded. Results indicated, Division I student athletes operate in an estranged (low compatibility, low centrality) or dominant (high compatibility, low centrality) environment. Furthermore, we identified four distinct themes: (a) the dominant athletics logic, (b) athletic identity over student identity, (c) family logics enforce athletic and academic logics, and (d) academics is a subsidiary logic to maintain athletic logics.

Introduction

According to Meyer and Rowan (1977), "Institutional environments are often pluralistic…As a result, organizations in search of external support and stability incorporate all sorts of incompatible structural elements" (p. 356). Furthermore, these scholars suggested plurality in institutional environments manifest into incompatible internal organizational arrangements. The field of sport, specifically the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and Division I student athletes who compete in intercollegiate athletics, offer a unique opportunity for examining a pluralistic environment as these organizations often operate with multiple values, goals, or expectations that often times may conflict with one another (Chelladurai, 1987; Trail & Chelladurai, 2002; Washington & Ventresca, 2008).

The query of how sport aligns with the academic mission of the institution has brought forth controversy and disconnect between academics and athletics. The debate over the utilization of athletics within the university setting has seen calls for athletics to take a substantial role in assisting with the academic goals of the institution (Sperber, 1990). Weight, Cooper, and Popp (2015) evaluated the division between college athletics and academics and discovered a divide

exists, resulting in conflict between the two entities. Additionally, scholars have suggested the divide between athletics and academics influences the identity and role of student athletes (Barger & Seward, 2018; Chen, Snyder, & Magner, 2010; Houle, Brewer, & Kluck, 2010; Lally & Kerr, 2005; Miller & Kerr, 2003; Woodruff & Schallert, 2008; Yopyk & Prentice, 2005; Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2014). Although scholars have advanced the understanding of the divide within intercollegiate institutions and the impact to student athlete identities, less is known about how values, beliefs, past experiences, and expectations are interpreted by NCAA student athletes. As student athletes operate within environments that may contain competing logics, understanding the beliefs and values of these student athletes may provide opportunity to leverage these values both in the classroom and on the athletic fields.

To explore the prevalence and implications of multiple institutional demands, Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury proposed the concept of institutional logics. According to the authors, the institutional logics perspective provides a metatheoretical perspective for studying how individual actors are influenced by, create, and modify values, beliefs, and expectations (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012). Sport management scholars have begun to explore the logics of NCAA institutions (Buer, 2009; Nite, 2017; Nite & Naauright, 2019; Nite, Abiodun, & Washington, 2019; Nite, Singer, Cunningham, 2013; Southhall & Nagel 2008; Southhall, Nagel, Amis, & Southhall, 2008) and have suggested the presence of logic multiplicity. However, a magnitude of these scholarly endeavors focused on the institution rather than the actors (i.e., student athletes) who occupy the field, which is a core component to understanding institutional logics.

As indicated by the scholarly work above, there is a presence of multiple competing logics pertaining to the NCAA and student athletes. If a multiplicity of logics is prevalent within an organization, Besharov and Smith (2014) indicated four types of logics will occur: *contested*, *estranged*, *aligned*, or *dominant*. These authors also suggested that understanding how multiple logics manifest within organizations is critical because it has significant implications to understanding outcomes. Based on the framework of Besharov and Smith, the aim of this study is to examine the compatibility and centrality of logics for NCAA Division I student athletes. There remains a dearth in the literature evaluating the logics of NCAA field actors and this study may provide insights and implications into how field actors (i.e., NCAA student athletes) perceive and manage the compatibility and centrality of multiple competing logics.

Theoretical Framework

The Institutional Logics Perspective

The definition of institutional logics has advanced from being the significant underpinnings of scholarly work focused on the structure and environment of organizations (Berger & Luckman, 1967; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Selznick, 1948, 1949, 1957; Tajfel, Turner, Austin, & Worchel, 1979; Zucker, 1977) to a metatheoretical perspective focusing on the influence of society in the institutional process. The term "institutional logics" was first proposed by Alford and Friedland (1985) and was then utilized to describe the contradictory practices and beliefs of institutions within western society. Friedland and Alford (1991) later expanded the term to include the context of interrelationships between individuals, organizations, and society.

In developing the definition of logics, these scholars posited that institutions have central logics that organize actors within their organizations and provide these actors with principles and a sense of identity.

Building upon the work of Alford and Friedland (1991), Thornton and Ocasio (1999) proposed that institutional logics must consider the link between individual agency, cognition and socially constructed practices, and rule structures. In their proposed, new definition of institutional logics, Thornton and Ocasio (1999) suggested that the coercive, normative, and cognitive approaches be integrated into one structural concept rather than treated as separate, individualized entities. In the combined approach involving this new theoretical construct, Thornton and Ocasio (1999) defined institutional logics as "the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material substance, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality" (p. 804). Despite variations, the definitions of institutional logics discussed above share a core theory: "to understand individual and organizational behavior, it must be located in a social and institutional context, and this institutional context both regularizes behavior and provides opportunity for agency and change" (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008, p. 102).

Scholarly interest in institutional logics and the societal influence of logics have become amplified in the field of management (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005; Greenwood, Diaz, Li, & Lorente, 2010; Haveman & Rao, 1997; McPherson & Sauder, 2013; Scott, 2001; Smets, Morris, & Greenwood, 2012; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; Thornton et. al. 2012). Recently, scholars within the field of sport management have begun to explore the institutional logics perspective with respect to the sporting industry (Carlsson-Wall, Kraus, & Messner, 2016; Cousens & Slack, 2005; Gammelsaeter, 2010; Gammelsaeter & Solenes, 2013; Gilmore, 2013; Nagel, Schlesinger, Bayle, & Giauque, 2015; Nite, 2017; Nite et al., 2019; Nite & Naauright, 2019; Nite et al., 2013; Nite et al., 2018; Pedras, Taylor, & Frawley, 2019; Skirstad & Chelladurai, 2011; Southhall & Nagel, 2008; Svensson, 2017; Washington & Patterson, 2011). Within these scholarly works, key principles of the institutional logics perspective have been shown to impact sport. New logics have been formed (Svensson, 2017), competing logics have been realized (Nite et al., 2013, O'Brien & Slack, 2003), institutional work and entrepreneurship intitiatives have been demonstrated (Nite, 2017; Nite et al., 2019), and directions for future research have been encouraged (Nite et al., 2018; Washington & Patterson, 2011).

Although sport scholars have expanded the understanding of the presence of logics in the sport field, a scarcity in the literature remains as to how institutional logics materialize and become legitimized. Consequently, Washington and Patterson (2011) have suggested evaluating where logics develop or evaluating the institutional fields for factors that change institutional practices. Furthermore, Nite et al. (2018) has encouraged researchers to evaluate the multilevel structures in which logics reside or examine the institutional and political contexts where behaviors are embedded.

A Model of Multiple Institutional Logics in Organizations

As institutional logics are socially constructed beliefs, rules, and values, each distinct logic provides a set of coherent principles for a realm of social life (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999).

Additionally, Friedland and Alford (1991) suggested that logics often overlap and as such, actors often draw on multiple logics within, not just across, social domains. Building on the premises of Friedland and Ashforth (1991) and Thornton and Ocasio (1999), scholars have associated multiple logics with practices such as contestation or conflict (Battilana & Dorado, 2010), coexistence (McPherson & Sauder, 2013), logic blending (Binder, 2007), organizational demise (Tracey, Phillips, & Jarvis, 2011), and innovativeness (Kraatz & Block, 2008). Furthermore, it is possible for multiple logics to influence the mission or strategy of the organization (Pache & Santos, 2013), or one singular logic may dominate while other logics are peripheral (Jones, Maoret, Massa, & Svejenova, 2012).

Expanding upon these scholarly works, Besharov and Smith (2014) proposed the heterogeneity of multiple logics is dependent upon two central premises: *logic compatibility* and *logic centrality*. Logic compatibility is "the extent to which the instantiations of logics imply consistent and reinforcing organizational actions" (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 367). At the field level, compatibility can be influenced by the number of professional institutions and the relationship of the institution as they influence the members who carry a particular logic (Jones & Dunn, 2007). As each group carries a specific logic, it may decrease an actor's level of compatibility as those logics may be incompatible with another group's logics. Further, if multiple logics are present, these logics will compete against each other in an effort to gain legitimacy and control (Dunn & Jones, 2010). Logic centrality refers to "the degree to which multiple logics are each treated as equally valid and relevant to organizational functioning" (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 369). The level of centrality has been shown to be influenced by actors' social networks and organizational position. Additionally, when an actor has stronger ties with a particular logic, they will adhere more strongly to that logic then others (Greenwood, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011). Regarding the degree of centrality, scholars have posited when members have close relationships, they are motivated towards more compatible ways to enact multiple logics (Smets et al., 2012) which enables effective organizational action and group cohesion (McPherson & Sauder, 2012).

Besharov and Smith (2014) proposed four distinct types of logic multiplicity exist within organizations: *contested*, *estranged*, *aligned*, and *dominant*. Contested organizations "embody multiple logics with low compatibility and high centrality. In these organizations' compatibility leads actors to confront and grapple with divergent goals, values, and identities as well as different strategies and practices for achieving these goals" (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 371). In an organization with contested logics, the institution may lack clear guidelines as to which goals should prevail. The presence of multiple contested logics has been shown to lead to internal conflict (Glynn, 2000; Nite & Nauright, 2019; Southhall & Nagel, 2008) and may create difficulty for an organization to establish legitimacy and gain support from stakeholders (Purdy & Gray, 2009).

Estranged organizations exhibit low compatibility and low centrality. According to Besharov and Smith's model "low compatibility means that logics offer inconsistent implications for organizational action, leading actors to grapple with divergent goals and divergent means of achieving these goals…however, low centrality leads one logic to exert primary influence over organizational functioning" (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 372). An organization with estranged logics will have moderate levels of conflict rather than extensive conflict as suggested in contested organizations.
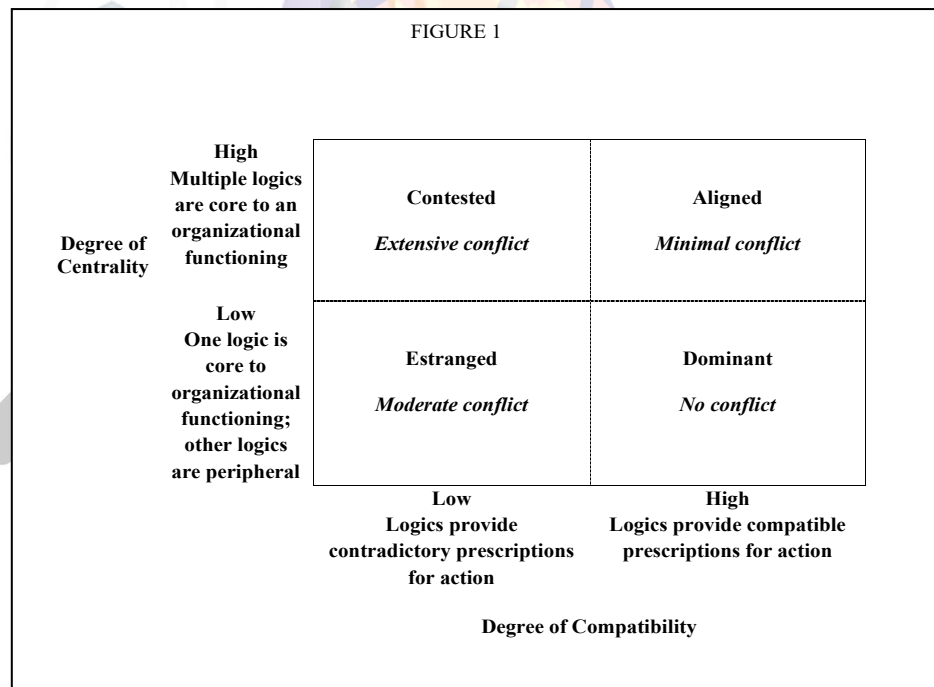
Aligned organizations will demonstrate high compatibility and high centrality between multiple logics. "High compatibility leads actors to draw of logics that offer consistent implications for organizational action. High centrality leads multiple logics to exert strong influence over organizational functioning" (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 373). When an organization's logics are aligned, the core of the organization is united and reflects the goals, values, and identities of actors (Besharov & Smith, 2014).

Lastly, dominant organizations exhibit multiple logics that have high compatibility and low centrality. Besharov and Smith (2014) suggested:

> dominant organizations likely have limited or no conflict arising from multiple logics. Because centrality is low, one logic clearly dominates among members and in the organizations mission, strategy, structure, identity, and core work practices. Moreover, the high compatibility among logics results in complimentary implications for organizational goals and enables multiple logics to coexist (p. 374).

To illustrate the types of logic multiplicity within organizations, Besharov and Smith proposed Figure 1 below.

FIGURE 1

Degree of Centrality	High Multiple logics are core to an organizational functioning	Contested *Extensive conflict*	Aligned *Minimal conflict*
	Low One logic is core to organizational functioning; other logics are peripheral	Estranged *Moderate conflict*	Dominant *No conflict*
		Low Logics provide contradictory prescriptions for action	High Logics provide compatible prescriptions for action

Degree of Compatibility

As previously discussed, the field of sport, specifically the NCAA and Division I student athletes who compete in intercollegiate athletics, offer a unique opportunity for examining a pluralistic environment as these organizations often operate with multiple values, goals, or expectations that often times may conflict with one another (Chelladurai, 1987; Trail & Chelladurai, 1987; Washington & Ventresca, 2008). Sport scholars have suggested the presence of multiple competing logics within the NCAA (Nite, 2017; Nite et al., 2019; Nite & Naauright, 2019; Nite et al., 2013; Nite et al., 2018, Southhall & Nagel, 2008), however thus far, research has not focused on the field actors (i.e., students athletes) who experience, perceive, and identify with the multiplicity of logics present on a college campus. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the types of logic multiplicity experienced by NCAA Division I student athletes. The results of this study may provide

evidence into the degree of centrality and compatibility of multiple logics experienced by student athletes on a college campus and may lead to a more unified organization that reflects the goals, values, identities, and practices associated with NCAA membership. Utilizing the theoretical perspective of institutional logics (Thornton et al., 2012) and a model of logic multiplicity (Besharov & Smith, 2014), the following research questions guided the inquiry:

> RQ1: What logics are perceived, experienced, and managed by NCAA Division I student athletes?
> RQ2: If a multiplicity of logics is experienced by NCAA Division I student athletes, which type of logic heterogeneity exists: *contested*, *estranged*, *aligned*, or *dominant*?

Methods

To investigate the multiplicity of logics experienced by NCAA Division I student athletes, the current research employed qualitative research methods, specifically, an interpretivist epistemology was utilized. The interpretive approach allowed for participants to interpret subjective experiences and for the researchers to infer the complex views of the participants (Creswell, 2013). Moreover, Creswell suggested that it is through complex meanings, views, and experiences by participants that themes develop. In the current study, participants values, beliefs, principles, and practices were sought with the optimism of better understanding how institutional logics influence and shape NCAA Division I student athletes. To ensure trustworthiness of the study the researchers strictly adhered to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) methods of establishing trustworthiness: credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability, and authenticity. Specifically, the authors employed methods such as providing extensive description of the study context, utilizing purposive sampling and triangulation techniques, and implementing an audit trail for future replication (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985,). In all, the data collection techniques demonstrate the authors' effort to achieve trustworthiness for the study.

Participants

In the current study, 12 NCAA Division I student athletes were interviewed from Power Five and Mid-Major conferences competing in varying athletics competitions from across the country. Power Five conferences included the Southeastern Conference, Big 12 Conference, Big Ten Conference, PAC 12 Conference, and the Atlantic Coast Conference. Mid-Major conferences included institutions competing in collegiate athletics in conferences such as the Big Sky Conference, Conference USA, Mountain West Conference, Sunbelt Conference, or the West Coast Conference. The current study included eight male participants and four female participants between the ages of 18 and 22, encompassing freshman, sophomores, juniors, and seniors, who represented eleven different NCAA sports, from multiple conferences across the country (see Table 1). All participants in the current study were provided pseudonyms to support confidentiality.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling methods, in order to provide rich and descriptive information on the topic of logics experienced by intercollegiate student athletes (Jones, 2015). Data collection for the current study was conducted until saturation was realized

or until the point where further data collection did not produce any new or meaningful information relating to the subject of interest (Gratton & Jones, 2010).

Table 1.

Participant	Gender	Age	Year in school	Sport	School Type
Alex	Female	21	Senior	Tennis	Major Division I
Kelly	Male	22	Senior	Football	Major Division I
Corey	Female	21	Junior	Volleyball	Major Division I
Sam	Female	23	5th year Senior	Track/CC	Major Division I
Tyler	Male	19	Redshirt Sophomore	Men's Basketball	Mid-Major Division I
Riley	Male	20	Sophomore	Football	Major Division I
Jamie	Male	21	Redshirt Junior	Baseball	Major Division I
Bryce	Male	23	Graduated	Baseball	Major Division I
Casey	Male	22	Senior	Golf	Major Division I
Kris	Male	22	Senior	Football	Major Division I
Erin	Male	18	Freshman	Wrestling	Major Division I
Jordan	Female	21	Senior	Track	Major Division I

Procedures

After receiving IRB approval, participants were solicited for participation via email. Participants for this research were acquired through purposive sampling methods, specifically the utilization of snowball sampling. To start the process, three preliminary participants were chosen from the researchers' primary contacts and then each participant was asked to refer participants in an effort to accumulate new information rich cases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Subsequentially, upon their agreement to participate, and their verbal acceptance of the IRB documentation, an interview was scheduled for either a face-to-face or telephone interview. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes and consisted of semi-structured, audio-recorded interviews pertaining to the participants understanding of how institutional logics are experienced and managed by NCAA Division I student athletes. The semi-structured nature of interviews allowed for elaboration and clarification of responses in an effort to produce deep and meaningful data (Kvale, 1996). Data collected from these interviews were housed in a secure password encrypted file by the primary researcher per IRB guidelines.

Instruments

Based on previous literature (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012, Weight et al., 2015), the guidance of research experts in the field of institutional theory and institutional logics perspective (Thornton et al., 2012) and the knowledge of the research team, semi-structured interview questions were developed. These questions served as preliminary discussion topics to further understand the institutional logics experienced

by student athletes. Sample questions for the interviews included: (a) There appears to be a divide between being a student and an athlete, what does your experience suggest about this divide? (b) Do you identify as a student, an athlete, or a student athlete? (c) How has your family influenced your identity as a student athlete? (d) How do you prioritize where your values lie when considering academics, athletics, and social life? (e) How have you integrated yourself to the social networks on campus? (f) Do you prioritize the values of academics over athletics or vice-versa? (g) How have you had to manage yourself to accommodate the values of athletics, academics, and social life?

Analysis

In the current study, the researchers adhered to Gratton and Jones (2004; 2010) four step coding framework. Throughout the analysis process, the researchers worked both individually to read and code participant responses and then met collectively to discuss the analysis. In step one, the researchers extensively read through each of the transcribed interviews individually and each researcher assigned codes for each participants' respective response. In step two, Gratton and Jones (2004) recommend the researcher rereads the data to search for statements that fit into the stage one categories. During this step in the process, the researchers discussed collectively each interview response and how that response corresponded to the categories developed in step one. In the third stage of coding, Gratton and Jones (2004) suggested the researcher must become analytical in search of patterns and explanations in the codes that were derived. Therefore, the research team collectively discussed how these inductive themes could highlight the multiplicity of logics experienced by NCAA Division I student athletes. Subsequentially, in the final stage the authors reread the data individually and then as a collective group and selected specific cases that illustrated the analysis (Gratton & Jones, 2004).

Results

The purpose of this study was to explore the types of logic multiplicity experienced by NCAA Division I student athletes and to understand how the compatibility and centrality of multiple logics influenced these individuals. Student athletes in this study experienced a multiplicity of logics including academic success, athletic success, social life challenges, and family influences. The findings of this study indicated that NCAA Division I student athletes operate in either an estranged (low compatibility, low centrality) or dominant (high compatibility, low centrality) organization as suggested by Besharov and Smith (2014). Moreover, the participants responses suggested the presence of four distinct logic themes: (a) the dominant athletics logic, (b) athletic identity over student identity, (c) family logics enforce athletic and academic logics, and (d) academics is a subsidiary logic to maintain athletic logics. In the subsequent sections, the current authors provide deep and meaningful data (Kvale, 1996) to illustrate the four themes and then discuss how presence logic multiplicity impacted centrality and compatibility within the organization.

The Dominant Athletics Logic

The data from this study pointed to a very distinct dominant athletics logic. All participants in the study indicated the logics preserved by their respective team superseded a magnitude of other

logics of their institution including student identity, campus involvement, and academic success. Participants responses suggested much of their focus is given to their craft as an athlete and the multiplicity of other logics becomes subsided.   Moreover, the findings indicated a high centrality with athletic logics, but a low compatibility with the multiplicity of other competing logics. Consider the following:

> *Riley:*
> *To be honest, right now it is all about athletics. I mean, growing up there has always been a dream of just like playing football professionally. And because of that, I feel like I'm at a time in my life when it's either this year or next year and that is my only chance. And so, I feel like that's what I want to do, so that is what I am focusing on.*

> *Casey:*
> *I would identify myself more as an athlete than a student personally. I just think all the way through school I have always been. And that is what I love to do and sports is a big part of my life. So that is what I love to do. And then school, well it's kind of an add on.*

> *Bryce:*
> *It was difficult. My first two years at a Power Five was hard to integrate sports and academics because I was ultimately at my school to play baseball. And so that was always my main priority.*

Athletic Identity Over All Other Identities

All participants in the current study indicated challenges associated with identifying with the general student population on their respective campus. Several athletes spoke to the philosophies of their coaches when speaking about the incompatible logics of the general student population versus student athlete. Furthermore, participants discussed the inability to attend campus wide events due to their athletic requirements. These findings suggest the possibility of an estranged organization where low centrality causes the athletic identity to exert primary influence over the student athlete's identity. Considering the following:

> Sam:
> *Our coaches they say you can have two of three kinds of words like sleep, social life, or sport. And you should decide against a social life. So, basically, I've never really felt like part of the student population, I just basically associate with my teammates and other athletes.*

> *Erin:*
> *I mean I don't really get to go out and go and do random things. I mean I guess I just go to school, practice, study hall, and back home. I mean sometimes there are events or things like football games that are happening, but I can't go because I have practice or study hall, so I mean there are definitely things I miss out on.*

Jordan:
I know in freshman orientation they tried to mingle everyone together and stuff, but I really just stayed with my track team. I really didn't branch out because it is hard. I mean you have your teammates and those are the people who you usually affiliate with.

Family Logics Enforce Academic and Athletic Logics

A third theme presented by all athletes in the study was the importance of family on developing or concreating specific logics, either academic or athletic. Several athletes whose family insisted on the duality of academics and athletics, suggested an aligned organization with high centrality and high compatibility. Moreover, athletes who family valued their athletic abilities enforced the dominant logic of athletics where high compatibility and low centrality existed. However, family logics was suggested to have a significant influence on a student athletes' level of centrality and compatibility logics. Consider the following:

Tyler:
Family has a huge role first of all, it's something I grew up with and how they taught me to live my life. The people I surround myself with is my identity and I want them to bring out the best in me. During the season, we always talk about basketball. But there are more important things happening in the classroom because they constantly instill in me there is life after basketball.

Corey:
My family really pushes me that sports aren't going to last forever and don't ever give less to school because of volleyball. They want me to work hard in everything I do, but school and my education and my career is going to last longer then volleyball and sticks with me forever. So they encourage me in both, but ultimately school I'm sure would be more important.

Alex:
When I was 16, I told my mom I wanted to go pro and didn't want to go to school. But I think from my parent's perspective I think they were focused on academics because it was important to get an education rather than being a pro athlete. I mean they both have a degree; my brother has a degree and I think that really helped them to advance their lives.

Academics is Subsidiary Logic to Maintain Athletics Logics
Many of the athletes interviewed discussed the importance of maintaining their academic logics, to support their athletics logics. Participants spoke about their required study hall sessions, their eagerness to maintain a specific GPA to be eligible to compete in college athletics, or the challenges they faced completing academics while traveling for athletic competitions. The academics as subsidiary theme provided multiple examples of contested, aligned, estranged, and dominant logics. Considering the following:

Erin:
I mean our coach makes sure we have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA. He constantly monitors the days and times we are there and if we get a bad grade, he knows about it from our

advisors right away and is instantly on us. So, you really need to take the steps forward to maintain that 3.0 or else you will have to get a tutor.

Jamie:
I think we need a C average to participate, but our coach raised it to a 2.5 so it was really you need to take care of business in the classroom or you are not going to be able to compete on the field. And that was never really addressed during recruiting but, you just have to take care of business in the classroom to get back to the field.

Kris:
I believe our team has like three or four levels of required tutoring. The most intensive is like 20 hours a week to no requirements if you have a certain GPA. They also have class checkers in the more common majors and classes where they feel student athletes may not be as trustworthy. Me as a mechanical engineer major, I have not had either study hall or class checkers, but I know we have both in our program to make sure the athletes can remain eligible and stay on the field.

Discussion

Based on the aforementioned results, this study contributes to previous research and provides for an understanding of institutional logics at the NCAA Division I intercollegiate level. Particularly, this research extends the conversation of how institutional logics are perceived and managed by field actors. Thus far, researchers have explored the logics of the NCAA at large (Nite, 2017; Nite et al., 2019; Southhall & Nagel, 2008) and the logics at individual NCAA membership institutions (Nite & Nauright, 2018; Nite et al. 2013). However, as Thornton and Ocasio (1999) indicated, institutional logics must consider the link between individual agency and cognition and socially constructed practices and rule structures. Therefore, this study provided an examination of the field actors who enact the values, beliefs, and guiding principles of these institutions, the NCAA student athlete. Moreover, this study extends the conversation of logic multiplicity in the NCAA with a focus on the centrality and compatibility of multiple competing logics.

The purpose of this research was multifaceted. First, the authors intended to determine what logics are perceived, experienced, and managed by NCAA Division I student athletes. Second, if multiple logics were present what type of logic heterogeneity exists: contested, estranged, aligned, or dominant? Participants in the study suggested they experienced multiple logics which derived from their interaction with the athletic department, academic department, campus social environment, and their family. Furthermore, an analysis of participants viewpoints demonstrated that some of the competing logics were compatible and central to their belief system, while others were not. Therefore, a conclusion drawn from the study was that NCAA Division I student athletes operate in an estranged or dominant environment.

According to Besharov and Smith (2014) an estranged organization will exhibit low compatibility and low centrality. When low compatibility is present, logics offer inconsistent implications for organizational action, leading to divergent goals. When low centrality is present, one logic tends to exert primary influence over organizational functioning. Participants in the current study indicated family values, social identity, and academic logics were present in their everyday lives,

however all participants highlighted their primary influence was related to athletics and their identity as an athlete. A dominant environment was also suggested by the participants in this study. Besharov and Smith (2014) indicated a dominant organization results in high compatibility and low centrality. In this environment a single dominant logic is reinforced by one of more subsidiary logics. As discussed above, the athletic logics seemed to be dominant among all participants. However, a magnitude of student athletes suggested the logics of family and academics did influence their athletic identity. This may suggest that although athletic logic is dominant, the athletic logic is reinforced by the presence of other logics.

One concept discussed by Besharov and Smith (2014) that should be considered is the notion that compatibility and centrality are continuous dimensions and organizations and actors can exist between these ideal types. Previous scholars have suggested a divide is present between academics and athletics on college campuses (Sperber, 1990; Weight et al., 2015) which would ultimately result in a contested environment with low compatibility and high centrality. Participants in our study indicated less of a contested environment as previously proposed and enforced that although athletic and academic logics may not always align, they do in fact support each other. Evidence of this was prevalent in discussions relating to maintaining GPA levels, attending classes, and the support of their professors. This would indicate that although a contested environment may be present (Sperber, 1990; Weight et al., 2015), student athletes are able to successfully manage these multiple logics. One area where a contested environment may exist is the social identity of the student athlete. A majority of our participants expressed that they did not feel a part of the student population due to their athletic commitments. Many expressed a desire to join in campus activity, but their role as an athlete did not allow for these opportunities. Furthermore, participants discussed the fact that they only identify as an athlete and not a member of the student population. This could pose significant threats to the institution as it may create an athlete versus non-athlete environment as suggested by Weight et al. (2015). Participants also demonstrated aligned logics, where high compatibility and high centrality existed. Most prominently suggested were the alignment of family logics and academic and athletic logics for student athletes. All athletes discussed their parent's philosophy of excelling in the classroom, as well as on the field. Our results indicated that student athletes' values often aligned with the family logics when considering the need for education. This may suggest that although a student athlete does adhere strongly to the logics of athletics, other subsidiary logics do in fact play a role.

In conclusion, NCAA Division I student athletes develop logics from an array of organizational environments including: athletics, academics, social environments, and family values. Our findings suggested that most student athletes who compete at this level, reside within either the estranged or dominant environment. In either of these environments, student athletes indicated a low centrality to multiple logics where a single dominant athletic logic remains prevalent. As this study focused on the field actors (i.e., student athletes) who operate within an organization (i.e., NCAA membership institution), the results provide an advanced understanding of how field actors perceive and manage logic multiplicity within an intercollegiate setting.

Limitation, Practical Implications & Future Research

This research, as with all studies, is not without limitations. First, this study only captured the experiences of Division I NCAA athletes. There could be very disparaging results if this study

were conducted at the Division II or III levels. Second, this study only captured a small segment of Division I student athletes and can not be generalized to the entire population of student athletes. Third, a majority of our population from this study were derived from Power Five conferences and there could be differences between Power Five and Mid-Major conferences not captured in our results. Finally, as this study was intended to be an exploratory investigation of the phenomenon of interest, we did not gather data from specific demographic groups which may have a bearing on the outcome of the results.

This study provided insight into how Division I student athletes experience, perceive, and manage multiple competing logics. The findings indicated a strong and singular athletic identity which could have implications for college administrators, coaches, and professors. Specifically, athletes feel isolated from the general student population and this isolation could be a source of the divide between student athletes and the general population. Weight et al. (2015) found a clear divide between the athletics department and academics department and it appears a singular identity could be a source of a similar divide between student athletes and the general student body. Therefore, college administrators, coaches, and professors could integrate student athletes more effectively in the classroom and on college campuses. This may include partnering student athletes with non-athletes in the classroom, utilizing athletes as spokespersons for non-athletic events, or incorporating non-athletes in athletic department events. This integration, both in the classroom and on campus, could reduce the singular athletic identity expressed by student athletes.

Secondly, although the academic logics are prevalent in student athletes, subsidiary logics are also central and compatible to student athletes. Therefore, professors could use these underlying logics to address any division that may be present between academics and athletics. In other words, if professors understand the specific logics of the athletics department and academics department, these professors could use a combination of academic and athletic logics to motivate student athletes. Additionally, the student athlete could act as a conduit between competing logics, if professors understand how central and compatible these logics are. In addition, college administrators, coaches, and faculty could utilize the Faculty Athletic Representative on their respective campus to foster these subsidiary logics, as these individuals have been shown to operate between a multiplicity of logics on a college campus (Martyn, Fowler, Kropp, Oja, & Bass, 2019).

Lastly, an understanding of family logics may be valuable to college administrators, coaches and professors. It appears that family logics strongly influence the logics of student athletes. Therefore, understanding the logics of the family life could have significant influence on situations such as recruiting and enrollment. Moreover, if college administrators, coaches, and professors fully understand the importance of family logics on student athletes, they may be able to attract high-quality student athletes, with strong family values, who strive for more than just athletic success. Therefore, we encourage college administrators, coaches, and faculty to heavily incorporate a student athletes family into the college process, which may shed light into the theme of family logics enforce both academic and athletic logics.

The findings of this study help to advance on the field actors' logics. However, there is opportunity for future research. This study only evaluated student athletes at the Division I level. Future scholars should explore this phenomenon at multiple levels of the NCAA (i.e., Division I,

II, and III). Second, a cross sectional comparison between NCAA divisional levels may reveal significant findings not realized in the current study. Third, as coaches, professors, and administrators influence the logics of these student athletes, scholars could explore Besharov and Smith's (2014) model with a hierarchical approach to logic multiplicity. Fourth, future researchers could investigate demographic features such as race, gender, or participation in specific sports to determine if demographic features influence the multiplicity of institutional logics. Lastly, scholars could undertake an ethnographic approach to understand why student athletes experience a low centrality for logic multiplicity.

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