

**Freshmen Student-Athletes: An Examination of the Decision-Making
Process and Satisfaction**

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(ABSTRACT)

Major college recruitment of high school athletes is a very competitive process. There are one hundred and seventeen Division I - A NCAA schools for athletes to choose among. Up to this point, coaches and administrators have speculated what is important to the prospective student-athlete in an attempt to improve certain potential factors like facilities, equipment, coaching changes, etc. The purpose of this study was to determine what factors were important in the decision-making process of prospective student-athletes and discover, as freshman, were they satisfied with their ultimate decision.

Eighty-Eight freshmen student-athletes responded to the questionnaire in the months May through July of 2005. The questionnaire was grouped into three main areas of content: Team History, Facilities and Equipment, and Departmental Services. These areas were investigated by means of utilizing a Likert scale and analyzing data by scholarship status, by gender and by team affiliation.

The results revealed that the most important factors in one's decision-making process are Education, Coaches, Success of the Program, and Facilities. From these factors, besides Education itself, the main area of focus for a prospective student-athlete is related to Team History, followed by Facilities and Equipment, with Departmental Services being the final area of concern. Also revealed by this study is the fact that there are some differences between the factors a scholarship student-athlete considers and the factors a non-scholarship student-athlete considers in their decision-making process. Finally, this study showed that of those polled, they were satisfied with their decision to participate in collegiate athletics.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Major college recruitment of high school athletes is a very competitive process. There are one hundred and seventeen Division I - A NCAA schools for athletes to choose among. In addition Division I - AA, Division I - AAA, Division II and Division III schools are vying for these athletes. Some of these schools begin contacting student-athletes from the first day possible, July 1st following the completion of their junior year (September 1st if he/she was with football). So how does an individual end up selecting a particular school to attend? How do they know that is the right institution for them and are they satisfied with their decision to attend? Over time these questions were followed by observations of coaches and athletes.

Coaches tend to be busy individuals whose aim is to foster growth and success in their student-athletes. However, much of their time is spent with administrative duties, disseminating information to the public, and assessing the team's immediate and future needs (i.e. - watching film, scouting potential athletes, and planning recruiting visits). So when posed with the questions above it came as no great surprise that the only real definitive answer was that financial aid was important in the student-athlete's decision. Then sometimes there would be coaches that would contradict themselves. They would tell stories of how a student-athlete was offered more to go elsewhere but in the end decided to go elsewhere.

Players on the other hand, answered those basic questions in a somewhat different light. The answers varied between academic purposes, coach interaction, team cohesion

and environmental reasons to name a few. However, the thought of satisfaction was met with more indirect answers. Observations showed athletes during games and practices discussing problems about various areas, hence turning their attention away from the task at hand. The inconsistencies of answers and observations between coach and athlete, as well as athletes over time, has given rise to this study.

This study was developed to find out what factors are important to entering freshmen student-athletes. More specifically, what was the most important factor in their decision-making process? By looking at the decision-making process we will find out what general opinions have been formulated about a particular factor and its level of satisfaction. The most important factors could then be used to make improvements in the overall satisfaction of the athlete, improve the environment, athlete coach relations, better utilize resources and for enhancing recruiting methods.

The Problem

High levels of stress and dissatisfaction tend to predict poor performance (Cotton, 2002). With this in mind, athletes lead very full, busy, sometimes stressful lives; that is the choice that they make, to be a student-athlete for a university. However, athletes do not have to be dissatisfied with their choice. Dissatisfaction can not only lead to poor performance, but also indirectly to injury or influence an athlete to leave a team. Could dissatisfaction be the reason why on one particular team in the 2003-2004 season, 7 out of 8 freshman decided not to return for their sophomore season?

Often coaches and administrators struggle to find answers to student-athlete satisfaction problems. One way on which to improve satisfaction is through the

environment. When this option is explored many times a coach will consult the team captain. The team captain is often a junior or a senior who has little time left with the team. Often these improvements may take semesters to fully implement and the individual who made the suggestion may not have the team's best interests in mind. Also, a junior or senior's opinion of what needs to be modified and how has changed over time with experience. These experiences have allowed the upperclassmen to develop coping mechanisms to past problems and therefore mask potential problems for underclassmen.

Another problem that occurs is when a coach or administrator assumes they know what an athlete values. When I have posed the question in the past of why they believe student-athletes choose to attend a particular school, I received a varied set of responses. When I asked an athlete from that sport the same question often I received a different response. This could suggest a failure to listen, or an assumption related to the above statement. The assumption could be that a coach's experiences have changed their point of view over time and it no longer matched the relatively limited experiences of the athlete.

The final problem is one of "keeping up with the Jones'." Each and every year in recent history institutions have made improvements for their student-athletes. This means that there is a constant battle to have the best environment possible to satisfy the wants and needs of today's student-athletes. However, without ever asking their opinion how will an administrator know when enough is enough in their minds? The information that this research could provide would reduce spending and allow for other projects to move to the forefront.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine what factors were important in student-athletes' decision-making process. This data is to be used to modify these factors in hopes of improving the student-athlete's overall satisfaction, environment, better allocation of resources, and enhancing recruiting methods.

Research Questions

1. Which of the three areas examined is most important to an athlete during their decision-making process: Team History, Facilities and Equipment, and Departmental Services?
2. Are there any differences between male and female student-athletes satisfaction with regard to their decision to attend Virginia Tech?
3. Which factors are the most important to an athlete during their decision-making process?
4. Are there any differences between scholarship, and non-scholarship students when examining importance of factors in their decision-making process?

Significance of the Study

Providing the best environment for student-athletes can be a daunting task. Quite often the students, coaches and administrators all see things only from their own perspective. Sometimes this can result in moments where the student-athlete is unnecessarily distracted, discouraged or even dissatisfied to the point of quitting the team. This study will attempt to find what factors are important to a student-athlete so that we may improve on the environment that surrounds them daily. It is my hope that this study will also provide us with a better understanding of the type of students that would best fit into the school's environment because the correct environment has positive effects on personal development and social benefits (Litten, 1982). This would also enhance the probability for coach-athlete relationships to improve due to a better cohesion and enhanced performance due to greater satisfaction.

The data provided by this study can also be used to more effectively utilize funds with the goal of improving facilities, equipment, future coaching hires, and enhancing services like the nutritionist services. If the administration and coaching staff knows what is important to an athlete, then they know to extend more funds toward improving those factors. If a factor is found to have low importance then the administration knows it is not necessary to enhance the factor as long as it has no extenuating circumstance (i.e. - media guides, and website have no extenuating health issues.. .strength and conditioning facilities do).

Finally, the last benefit could be the enhancement of recruiting efforts. Recruiting enhancement could occur due to the improvement of the environment, enhanced incite

into the key factors in the decision-making process, and provide coaches with a better profile of their team and what caused them to join this institution.

Definitions

Traditional Student: Any student within the university who is not a student-athlete.

Student - Athlete: Any student within the university who is a member of a varsity sports team.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

History

For many decades higher education has attempted to get into the minds of the decision makers themselves, the students. Administrators have examined various aspects of marketing to push their product into the forefront of the hearts and minds of prospective students. After all, higher education is a big business that has been portrayed in literature, movies, television, word-of-mouth and history as a way to further ones' self, knowledge, future earnings, and job security. It is no wonder that higher education is America's number one export (Crane, 2003).

The most common form of marketing analysis that higher education has utilized to discover their future populations has been through demographic analysis. This form of marketing allows a specific university to zero in on the population that most fits their desires and expectations. Demographic analysis also allows the university to focus marketing efforts more efficiently on the portion of high school students that are most likely to attend higher education. This form of demographic analysis saw a significant boom in research in the early to mid-1970's (Litten, 1980). Demographic analysis still continues today as the primary method of marketing research. The analysis looks at some of the following factors in a student's demographics: family earnings, family members' occupations (Tobias, 2002), family members' educational background (Bratti, 2002), amount of financial aid available to a student (Kim, 2004), cognitive ability (Montmarquette, 2002), ethnicity, sex, and regional location (Litten, 1982).

More recently, from the research of this data, equations began to emerge. These equations used the foundations of demographic analysis and expounded on the data to provide complex formulas in determining entrance into a university. The same equations that describe a university's population and entrance requirements also provided a guide for higher education marketing efforts. Multiple formats of these equations emerged in the 1980's and have continued to evolve to this day (Tobias, 2002). Some of these equations placed various levels of importance on factors like first-time major decisions for a student, parental income, high school attended, parental education, number of siblings and major family purchase decisions (Montmarquette, 2002).

Another form of analysis that is conceptualized in marketing of higher education is somewhat less defined. This analysis looks more at a student's personal preference, rather than the more factual demographic representations that were discussed above. For this reason it is no wonder that Toma (1998, p. 635) once described these differences as "two streams of literature, one reasonably well developed and the other surprisingly unexplored." One of Bratti's (2002) key points as to why this concept of analysis is under-reported is due to the lack of grouping. He discusses that much of the data is reported as an entire school, ethnicity, or sex; when it should be further broken down into sub-categories such as one's major.

Marketing performance is the final form of historical analysis that needs to be discussed in relation to higher education marketing. Marketing performance is an assessment of how efficiently and effectively the university is promoted to the students (Morgan, 2002). This form of analysis is widely used in the study of military recruiting. Effective and efficient military recruiting would look at the number of recruiters in an

area, the number of recruits signing to a specific location, local and national advertising, incentive policies and labor market conditions. When labor market conditions are right the number of recruits signed should increase depending on the other areas of analysis. This tells the regional military recruiters which local recruiting office they should increase efforts toward in marketing (Sohn, 1996). This type of marketing performance analysis is not the direction this study will take. However, due to its importance in the literature, marketing performance analysis needed to be mentioned at this time.

Observed Factors

It has been long agreed on by coaches that the mood of the team can affect performance (Lowther, 2002; Totterdell, 2000). Satisfaction is just one of those facets of mood. Satisfaction can be due to intrinsic or extrinsic factors and can only be decided by the individual. This particular mood of a person can also affect perception, reasoning, decision making, cooperation, creativity and concentration (Cox, 2003; Totterdell, 2000). This is one of the reasons why it is important to coaches to attempt to control an individual's mood. In one study Totterdell (2000) also noted the concept of mood-state, citing that a person's mood remains more consistent with their overall mood-state. In other words, the happier a person is at the start of an activity the more likely they are to return to that state even if there are fluctuations in mood throughout the activity. The same study also found that opposing teams' moods varied inversely during the game. With these facts considered, it is important that a team come into an event or

practice as satisfied as they possibly can be with outside influences without being content with their performance.

One of the downfalls of past research into the subject of satisfaction, when related to performance, is that often different sport teams vary in the factors that contribute toward a positive or negative mood (Terry, 2000). To apply the problem more coherently, sometimes researchers attempt to apply previous sport specific research solutions to a wide array of sports. This can be troublesome when the research has been focused on football and has been applied to a sport such as swimming. These two teams, football and swimming, have different resources and different objectives within the university setting.

Financial aid is just one of those resources that vary widely among sports. Financial aid is one of the most widely agreed upon reasons why a student-athlete attends a particular institution. The same has been said for the traditional student population. Scholarships have been described as playing a critical role in determining enrollment growth (Martin, 2002) and academic quality (Kim, 2004). These descriptions are related to what coaches discuss in terms of the number of scholarships available for an upcoming year. The more scholarships a coach has at his or her disposal for a given year, the more high quality students that can be enticed by financial aid into attending your university. Partial scholarships also play their role in college athletics. Partial scholarships in athletics can be correlated to work-study wages acquired more commonly by the traditional student. Since work-study potentially impacts the enrollment decisions of males and females (Averett, 1996) the same could be correlated with partial scholarships in student-athletes.

Basically, money is a motivator. Coaches know this and use it to their foil strategic advantage. Universities understand this concept and have used this to change a student's reason for attending particular classes. Some universities have flirted with the idea of varied tuition cost depending on major. Other universities have discounted unpopular class times as an incentive to students. Such a policy caused 32% more students to take classes at these so-called unpopular times (Hebel, 2003).

Kim (2004) performed a study of the influence of financial aid on a student's first choice of institutions to attend. The study found that 43.4% of white students and 54% of black students stated that financial aid is an important factor in their decision to attend college. Subsequently, financial aid played an even more important role in why students did not attend the institution of their first choice. The study showed 46.5% white students and 68.9% black students stated that low levels of financial aid were an important factor in not attending their first choice.

Financial aid can be a reason why student-athletes opt not to attend a particular university it should be noted that aid can influence one's satisfaction. One's satisfaction with their particular level of financial aid can affect them in both a positive or negative manner. A positive influence can be seen when an athlete's individual aid package is increased after a year improvement. The negative influences of financial aid is found by coaches, when athletes compare their financial aid packages or when the sport is viewed as a job that is controlling to much of an athlete's perception of life (Amorose, 2000).

It should also be noted that financial aid of student-athletes has not been thoroughly studied in recent years. Research performed before Title IX could be

affected due to gender differences and the fact that scholarships levels since Title IX changed the face of women's athletics (Amorose, 2000),

In the decision-making process of which institution to attend one's gender can play a significant role. One such difference was found in a recent study by Kim (2004). The study found that women are less likely to be influenced by financial concerns. Women are actually more likely to be affected by parental previous college experience. A mother's previous college experience is of primary importance (Tobias, 2002). Another gender related difference comes from a student's perceived ability. One's perceived ability can influence the decision-making process of males. Male students are more likely to associate with males of similar ability (Tobias, 2002). It is these reasons why it will be important to examine the difference in decision making based on the gender of the student-athlete.

A study by Price (2003) described a very important stage of the decision-making process. Price described this stage as the information gathering stage. Many coaches have stated that this stage may be the most important stage during their efforts. It is in this stage that visits become important. The NCAA only permits a student-athlete to take five official visits (NCAA, 2004). The official visit is the most opportune time for a coach to show off the institution in a pre-planned manner. Many coaches will often ask students where they have taken other official visits. This gives a coach a glimpse into the type of institutions he or she is considering and then can present information similarly relevant to their preliminary choices. The visit is also an opportunity for a student to build relationships.

In this study, I will be examining the importance of the relationships with the coach, and other teammates. Coach student-athlete relationships are an integral factor in one's decision to attend a specific university. This is much like the relationship between a student and an instructor or an advisor. Wilhelm (2004) reported that students were more likely to choose a course based on the reputation of the instructor, even when that instructor provided a heavier work load for the students. This reinforces the importance of student-athlete coach relations.

However, these are not the only important factors in the relationship. Student-athletes must also find the skills and information a coach provides as stimulating. Students strive for this same type of mental stimulation. Students must be able to understand the instructions coming from their instructor, or in this case coach (Gatfield, 1999). One study found that 38% of students described course worth as an important reason for selecting a specific class (Wilhelm, 2004). Also a coach's training style, decisions, behaviors and the opportunities he or she provides to the athlete, play a pivotal role in the athletes' level of satisfaction with their coach (Amorose, 2000; Balaguer, 2002; Terry, 2000).

Teammate relationships appear to be another important factor in the decision-making process. Coaches have stated that an important component to official visits is that they provide an opportunity for the prospective student to interact with potential teammates. This occurs more effectively during an official visit because the prospective student-athlete stays with and follows a host student. That host student provides an insight to the institution that coaches often fail to acknowledge or are unable to place

enough emphasis on due to the inherent perception of an adult figure. Martin (2002, p. 127) once stated that "Students contribute to the education of other students."

Another article examined the impact of a championship season in football or basketball on future application statistics. After a championship season, most schools had an increase in the amount of students that applied. It was then theorized by Toma (1998), that the most increases appeared to follow the schools that had the most compelling story leading to that championship. Toma later implied that prospective students may feel a bond to the students-athletes whose participation in the championship can be related to their own life's trials and tribulations. After all, in recent history sports has become more visible through the television and media and this builds relationships with fans.

It could be argued that the article by Toma addresses another important fact, success. Perceived future success can be more important of a factor than potential future earnings to a student when selecting a major (Montmarquette, 2002). The same could be applied to student-athletes, after all we know that success builds on the mental confidence of athletes. In Toma's study of the 16 schools that won a football championship, 14 showed an increase in applicants the following year. In the study each institution was paired with a peer institution, of which only 3 of the 16 football championship schools had no gain relative to their peers (1998). Is it the success that brought the students to the institution or was it the media attention?

Mentz (2003) suggests that students are aware of institutional rankings in today's society due to the media. Mentz also suggests that students use the rankings that are important to them, to find institutions that have similar qualities. In other words

rankings provide the students with a basic grouping of institutions. If success is an important factor to student-athletes they may look to rankings or successful conferences as a means toward their own goal. Some coaches have stated that they perceived a particular student-athlete chose to attend an institution because they wanted to be a part of a particular conference. Sometimes this meant that they went to a school because of a particular attitude toward a competitor institution (Toutkoushian, 2001). After all, "success or failure is purely a matter of perception, based on one's values", goals, and dreams (Rogers, 2003, p. 20).

The values, goals and dreams of an individual is an important part of one's self. It is without surprise that institutions try to produce their own media (ie - flyers, brochures, videos, CD-ROMS, VCDs, and websites) that convey a positive, happy image that may play on one's dreams. This self-developed media provides formal information that is designed to play on the institutions' strengths and merits (Hartman, 1997). During a student-athlete's information gathering stage, he/she may decide to contact a prospective coach and ask for such media. However, it has been reported that such media like student information guides may not provide the information the student perceived they should find (Gatfield, 1999). Also students are aware of this positive slant on the information that they are given and may utilize parents to siphon through this material (Litten, 1982). Student and student-athletes alike then begin to look for less guided and more extensive materials such as the internet (Hartman, 1997).

Collegiate athletic websites often provide the student-athlete with an informal means of communication, like a coach's email address or telephone number (Hartman, 1997). This form of information gathering can be important to the student who enjoys

the privacy of searching online to find instant answers to questions (Mentz, 2003).

Student-athletes have informally stated to me that they sometimes utilized websites to view rosters for graduating seniors, media coverage/reporting, schedules for potential opponents and overall team or individual records. It could also be used to take an informal glance at equipment, field conditions, and some facilities.

Some athletic websites are on the fore front of media. A highly informative website can add value to the institution, increase exposure and alter the competitive landscape (Stewart, 2002). Stewart makes an excellent point when he describes media as having the foundations to build loyalty. This is due to the fact that a person chooses to bookmark a website or participate in a particular media event. The viewer of the webpage, in a sense, becomes an active participant and chooses whether to follow a story or interview or simply move on to another university's website. These facts have coaches excited and interested in these presentations. Sometimes the presentation is a coaching announcement (women's basketball recent head coach's announcement), other times it may be the audio for a baseball game being broadcast over the internet. This provides an opportunity for an athlete's parents to view or listen to the game in real time from home. According to Mazzarol (2002), the ease of which a person can obtain this information or interaction can be of major importance to international students. Finally Al Lenio, group manager of Sprint's college and university marketing, says that "if you're not on the internet you're not a player" (Marx, 1995, p. 43). This is why it is very important in this study that we examine the website, and attempt to stay on the forefront of technology. Especially since younger generations are even more fluid with internet

searching and will continue to utilize the internet more and more to research institutions (Mentz, 2003).

Finally, the last factor that we will investigate in the literature is one of resources. "Only a limited number of universities devote the resources to intercollegiate athletics that allow them a reasonable opportunity to win a championship" (Toma, 1998, p. 635). For this reason it is important that as administrators, an athletic department should allocate its resources in the most effective manner possible. If resources are not allocated properly, a certain level of dissatisfaction can manifest itself into short, but frequent inner-squad conversations that student-athletes have about equipment and facilities.

Equipment is at the forefront on many athletes' minds, due to societal obsession with looks, success and portrayal of superstars in the media. Some could say that this began in athletics with the marketing wars of Nike, Reebok, and Adidas. Nevertheless, students are brand conscious and very loyal. Generally students spend \$93 billion dollars a year on things they want (Marx, 1995). Athletes are no different. In fact, companies view students as the entry-level to the up-scale adult market (Marx, 1995). These athletes are bombarded by marketing at an early age and begin to formulate their own opinions about equipment. If funds are going to be spent on equipment, and we need to consider the athletes safety, then it is worth finding out what their opinions could be to find out whether we need to educate them why a product may or may not be beneficial to their safety.

Facilities are an important resource that has a positive impact on the student experience (Price, 2003). Facilities influence the reputation of a school (Mazzarol,

1998) and can be a strategic asset to the institution (Price, 2003). It has also been found that facilities play a major role in the decisions of international students as well as traditional students (Mazzarol, 1998; Discenza, 1985). For these reasons it is important that we poll the athletes for their opinions, so we can more effectively allocate our resources.

In summary, many different factors can play important roles in the outcome of one's decision and one's satisfaction with that decision. Historically, research shows that universities have strived for insight into this process. This insight can show means of improvement, marketing advantages, retention of students, and possibly the right population of people that a university desires. However when discussing the subject of athletes, or in this case an athlete's decision and satisfaction, researchers have failed to provide enough clear insight into one's psychological and emotional decision.

Past research has provided this study with a guide towards which factors should be evaluated. These factors consisted of but are not limited to: financial aid, gender, sport, coach-athlete relationship, teammate relationship, and various resources. These factors have played an important role in the design of the questionnaire, direction of the study, and criteria for which the subjects will be separated.

Chapter 3

Methods

Subjects

The subjects for this study were freshman student-athletes who are enrolled for the fall semester of 2004 at a southeastern United States NCAA Division I university. The subjects were on an active NCAA Division I athletic roster at the time of receiving the questionnaire. The subjects were classified by the following factors: Sport, Gender, and Scholarship Status. Table 1 shows how the subjects were categorized for analysis.

Procedure

There were 147 entering freshmen student-athletes participating in Virginia Tech athletics. At this time there were no remaining student-athletes under the age of 18. These subjects were asked to attend a short meeting after practice one day, after the first of April. The start of this time frame has been chosen as to provide time for the student-athletes to adequately formulate an opinion about the various items expressed in the questionnaire. The exact date was coordinated with the coaching staff as not to interfere with practice and also to produce the best chance of attendance without class conflict.

At the designated meeting site, the subjects were confirmed that they are freshmen student-athletes on an active team roster. They were asked to complete the Freshmen Student-Athlete Questionnaire, which would take approximately 10 minutes. The questionnaire asked them to answer questions about their decision-making process that lead to them attending Virginia Tech and their level of satisfaction with that decision.

The coaching staffs were not allowed in the meeting site. Subjects provided space between each of them as to encourage independent thought. This questionnaire was administered on a team by team basis, again to provide best chance of attendance.

Instrument

The questionnaire (Appendix C) began its evolution to its current form shortly after I began to witness prospect interviews with the coaching staff. During a prospect's official and unofficial visits to campus, the individual, the coach, and usually the parents would sit in on a one-on-one meeting. This meeting preceded more like an interview, each side of the coach's desk presenting a list of questions. After a number of these sessions with prospect after prospect, I began to compile a list of the most common questions. Once I had become familiar enough with the coach's and assistant coach's replies, I was asked to assist in the touring of official visiting prospects. This gave me an opportunity to ask a list of my own questions. These questions were more about inquiring as to what types of environments the prospect was looking for in a university. Due to my nature and my status as not being a coach, the prospects and their parents were much more candid with me than in the initial meetings. This spawned the creation of further questions and a refinement of the questionnaire.

The next step in the process was to develop a valid questionnaire which consisted of interviews and discussions with team coaches which was initiated. This is where I discovered several coaches' thoughts and perceptions of why prospects choose to attend a particular university. As the discussion proceeded, a few of the questioned coaches began to ask me questions about why I was inquiring so in-depth. After a brief

explanation of my intent they produced several questions of their own that they would like to see on the questionnaire. These added questions mainly consisted of the inquiries into field conditions and athletic equipment, especially when compared to other universities.

The questionnaire then went through several moderate adjustments after being piloted to two groups of approximately 30 student-athletes. These student-athletes consisted of a variety of sports and all were of the class status sophomore and above. The main focus of the pilot studies was to examine whether the questions were clear and concise. During the pilot studies the students were given the opportunity to add questions to the instrument. Further enhancement of the questionnaire developed due to guidance from my doctoral committee.

Analysis

Analysis of the second pilot study (the first pilot study is no longer available) may have suggested some of the results I can expect to see in the final study. However, there were a large number of full scholarship student-athletes. In this study of 30 student-athletes, 23 were full scholarship, 3 were partial scholarship and 4 were non-scholarship. This could be attributed to the manner of which I obtained their assistance in the pilot, mainly asking kids that came into the compliance office for questions. This bias should be diminished because I was attempting to attain responses from all of the freshmen athletes on a current active roster. There could be some bias toward scholarship athletes

if there is a large number of non-scholarship athletes that quit the various teams or dependent on the number of scholarships available and awarded this season.

Among full scholarship athletes all 100% rated their relationship to the Head Coach as either very important or important in their decision. The same respondents had a varying level of satisfaction in regards to the Head Coach with 35% very satisfied, 48% satisfied, 4% neutral and 13% slightly unsatisfied. The 3 partial scholarship respondents rank the same questions with 100% very important, 67% very satisfied and 33% satisfied. Among the 4 non-scholarship respondents the questions supplied answers with 75% very important, 25% neutral, yet all 100% were satisfied. These results could suggest that Head Coaches play a more important role in the decision to attend Virginia Tech than I had anticipated, especially in the non-scholarship athletes.

Another interesting set of results came in the question pertaining to importance of athletic conference. The athletic conference was very important or important to all but 2 full scholarship respondents, who replied with somewhat not important. Partial scholarship respondents were even in maintaining neutral, important and very important replies. Non-scholarship athletes responded in a similar manner with 2 replies toward neutral. This is interesting to me because I would have expected partial scholarship athletes to rate this question very important. Also I expected all of the full scholarship students to rate above neutral. A note worthy response from the two neutral athletes was that academic counseling services very important. This correlation could be interesting to watch in the final study, as well as the question pertaining to the level of satisfaction in Virginia Tech Academics in their field of study (seeing as how this question was later added after advisement from the doctoral committee).

In the question regarding athletic facilities at other school there were not many answers to this question. However some of the notables consisted of the following: practice turf soccer field like William and Mary, swimming and diving facility like UNC-Chapel Hill, baseball field lights, baseball stands like Clemson, and an Olympic sports weight room facility like West Virginia. It is my hope that in the study more respondents will reply to this question. One of these suggestions, baseball field lights, has already been put into place.

Finally, there was one more question that was interesting at this time. The recruiting information packet received overall ratings from effective to not effective in all but one student-athlete. One partial scholarship student-athlete rated the recruiting information packet as very effective. Of those respondents that replied to the next question, most replied that more academic information was needed.

Due to the variety of sports represented in the second pilot study, there were not enough responses to adequately compare within sports. Again my main focus in the pilot studies was to ascertain the clarity and understanding of the questions presented to the student-athletes.

Analysis of the study would be performed by simple percentages. These percentages would primarily be examined according to scholarship status within a team. Certain sports such as basketball, soccer, swimming, tennis and track will also be examined by gender. Although most studies of this nature might would consider examining men's baseball percentages against women's softball percentages this study will not, because each program has a different field.

However, correlations would not be used in the analysis of this study for several reasons. One of the most important reasons is the complexity of the factors contributing to the population. To better explain this I shall have to briefly explain the effect of Title IX and how it relates to scholarship composition within a team.

Title IX basically says that the opportunity for women to participate in athletics has to be met in one of three different methods. The particular method that this Division I university subscribes to means that the scholarships have to meet proportionally to the student body population. Each year the student body is estimated ahead of time so the athletic department can estimate what the scholarship percentages must be to meet federal law. Then take into consideration that football takes up a majority of male scholarships; you end up with the rest of the male teams being told to keep a maximum number of player with a minimum number of scholarships. In other words, the male sports have a much better chance at having non-scholarships and partial scholarship kids, then female sports. This is especially important because of the overall financial bias that is received by football programs compared to other Olympic sports. This then makes football unfairly skew the results for men.

Title IX also causes some in-advertent issues with statistics in the manner for which the sports are calculated. The NCAA has decided that football, men's and women's basketball, women's volleyball, and women's tennis are what are referred to as head count sports in financial aid. All other sports at this university are considered equivalency sports. To make it simple, in a head count sport if you get 50% of a scholarship you count as one, where as in the equivalency sports only the 50% counts against the team maximum.

A problem behind using non-parametric tests such as chi-square is related to sample size. No matter how I examine the possible combinations of variables, sample size can become a problem. In order for chi-square to be calculated in an accurate manner for which it was intended, one must meet three basic assumptions. The assumptions are that the sample must be random, scores must be independent, and that the sample size is large enough for at least 5 expected frequencies to occur in 80% of the categories (Green, et al, 2000). The last assumption I cannot guarantee due to having a possible maximum of 147 respondents. There are several questions that I expect to have less than 5 frequencies.

Chapter 4

Results

Procedure Review

Out of 147 total freshmen student-athletes, 88 student-athletes were able to respond to the survey instrument. While this appears to be a 59.86% return rate, the actual percentage is greater. The original calculation of 147 was based on the total number of freshmen student-athletes that participated at some point of time during the 2004-2005 academic year. When the study was granted permission to proceed with data collection the academic year had all but concluded. Several of the possible respondents had quit their respective teams or been dismissed from these teams. In the end, based on the number of contacts that was provided by coaches, 41 possible respondents were unable to or did not wish to participate in this study. Therefore, based on the total number of possible respondents the final numbers come out as follows: 129 total possible respondents, 88 surveys processed, with a final possible return rate of 68.21%. These surveys were collected during "Reading Day" (the day preceding exams) in the spring semester until the conclusion of second summer session.

Results

Of the 88 total respondents, 65 were student-athletes receiving a scholarship while 23 student-athletes were not receiving athletic department scholarships (non-scholarships). Table 2 provides a break down within each sport of the number of respondents and whether or not they were receiving athletic department scholarships.

The scholarship athletes made up 74% of the total number, while the non-scholarship athletes made up 26%. This is not a coincidence. At this Division - I university the women's sports are fully funded, meaning that the university gives out the maximum allotment of scholarship dollars that the NCAA allows for each of the respective sports. Within the men's sports only football and basketball are fully funded sports. However, wrestling, golf and soccer was not far behind the total allowable scholarships, hence the men constitute 57% of the total number of non-scholarship student-athletes.

From the surveys collected 56% were male and 44% female. This brings the final results to 41% male scholarship student-athletes, 15% male non-scholarship student-athletes, 33% female scholarship student-athletes, and 11% female non-scholarship student-athletes from the total number of surveys. The results will be organized as follows: examination of the factors that are important to an athlete's decision making process, examination of scholarship differences, examination of satisfaction related questions, and examination of team specific differences.

Factors Results

The results of question 39 (Please list the three most important factors and two least important factors in your decision to come to...) provided a variety of different replies. Table 3 shows all of the answers supplied for Most Important Factor (Question 39), broken into male and female totals. The top five Most Important Factors for males were revealed as: Coaches, Education, Success of program, Players, and Sports. While the top five Most Important Factors in a female's decision-making processes were:

Education, Coaches, Facilities, Players, and tied for fifth, Conference, Environment, Location and Team. There are two other notable factors that stand out. One factor is that Money appears to be slightly more important to men in the decision-making process than women. The previous scenario seems to be reversed when one looks at the factor Coach/Player relationship. Women appear to place more importance on this factor than men.

Table 4 shows all of the answers supplied for Least Important Factor. The top five Least Important Factors for males in the decision-making process were revealed as: Website, Location, Media, Student life services, and Facilities. The women provided five similar yet slightly different answers for the top five Least Important Factors with: Location, Student life services, Website, Media, and Success of program. Now that the leading factors have been identified from question 39, let us examine the data from previous factor related questions.

Question 8 (Chart 1) reveals that males and females both view one's relationship to the Head Coach to be an important factor. Males reported that in 43% of them the relationship with the Head Coach was very important. While an additional 22% reported the relationship to be important in their decision-making process. Females reported that 49% felt the relationship was very important, with 28% the relationship was somewhat important in their process.

Question 11 (Chart 2) examined the level of importance related to Head Coaches' philosophy. Males reported that the Head Coaches' philosophy was very important in 40%, somewhat important in 31% and neutral in 25% of the total male responses. For

the same question, females recorded 41% very important, 28% somewhat important and 23% neutral.

Question 12 examined the level of importance in the relationship with the teammates; the data suggests that it is an important factor as shown in Chart 3. Females recorded slightly higher levels of importance compared to the males. Females reported the relationship with teammates as 41% very important and 39% somewhat important. While males had slightly lower levels with 41% very important, 25% somewhat important and 27% neutral.

Question 14 (Chart 4) examined the importance of Conference affiliation in their decision-making process. Males and females both rated the Conference as important in their decision-making process. The males recorded values at 47% very important, 25% as somewhat important for a total of 72%. Females recorded values at 31% very important and 44% as somewhat important for a total of 75%.

Question 30 (Chart 5) examined how important success in one's sport may effect the decision-making process. Males produced percentages of 51% very important, 27% somewhat important and 10% neutral. Females provided percentages of 33% very important, 41% somewhat important and 18% neutral.

Question 31 was an attempt to look at the effect of very successful sports like football and see if the success of other teams in the university was a factor in the decision-making process. Chart 6 shows the females recording percentages of 8% very important, 42% somewhat important, 37% neutral, and 8% somewhat not important. On the other hand males produced a more evenly dispersed trend with 18% very important, 25% somewhat important, 22% neutral and 22% not important. This question also

concludes the informal grouping of Team History within the Importance Factors which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The next informal grouping examines the issue of Facilities and Equipment. What is the level of importance in regard to practice facilities in the decision-making process? Question 18 (Chart 7) examined this possible factor with somewhat less distinctive, although important results. Males recorded that practice facilities were very important in 22% of the total results with values at 41% somewhat important and 27% neutral. Females also showed 18% viewed practice facilities very important, 50% somewhat important and 26% neutral.

Question 19 (Chart 8) examined competition facilities as a possible factor in one's decision to attend a particular university. Females recorded values of 23% very important, 51% somewhat important and 17% neutral. Males recorded values at 35% very important, 33% somewhat important and 27% neutral.

The next facility to be evaluated for importance was sports medicine. Chart 9 (Question 21) begins to show some diverging between the male/female decision-making process. Females recorded values at 33% very important, 33% somewhat important, 15% neutral and 10% somewhat not important. Males showed less importance toward this question with values at 14% very important, 37% somewhat important, 29% neutral, and 16% somewhat not important.

In question 22 (Chart 10) males, not surprisingly, viewed the question as important in their process. This question examined the level of importance the strength and conditioning facility plays in one's decision-making process. Males recorded values

of 33% very important, 41% somewhat important and 22% neutral. Females recorded values at 15% very important, 51% somewhat important and 18% neutral.

The final informal grouping of questions investigates the topic Department Services. The first question examined the level of importance of the academic counseling services (Chart 11). In question 25, males produced values of 35% very important, 31% somewhat important, 18% neutral and 10% not important. The women provided responses of 31% very important, 39% somewhat important, 10% neutral and 10% not important.

Question 27 examined the level of importance of the nutritionist. This factor received the 2 least important replies from both the men and women in question 39 and some of the lowest ratings seen up to this point. In Chart 12 it can be seen that the females produced percentages of 8% very important, 24% somewhat important, 40% neutral, and 16% somewhat not important. The men provided percentages that came to 10% very important, 33% somewhat important and neutral, with 12% for each of the remaining values.

In a similar fashion question 28 received unfavorable marks. Both the men and women ranked student life services in their least important category for question 39. In Chart 13 one can see that the percentages are moving more toward neutral. The females recorded percentages at 23% somewhat important, 39% neutral, 18% somewhat not important, and 15% not important. The men were more evenly dispersed with 27% somewhat important, 25% neutral, 25% somewhat not important, and 14% not important.

For purposes of this study the grouping of Departmental Services also included media coverage, due to sports information directors, and a website question. The importance of media coverage for the university's sports in one's decision-making process was the 32nd question (Chart 14). Females produced values at 26% somewhat important, 39% neutral, 15% somewhat not important, and 18% not important. Males produced comparable values at 31% somewhat important, 35% neutral, 10% somewhat not important, and 12% not important.

A question inquiring as to whether or not the website was an important factor may be somewhat strange to some people, but with society developing faster and better internet service this could be a tool someday. Question 33 (Chart 15) found that men view this as 29% somewhat important, 20% neutral, 12% somewhat not important, and 35% not important. Women also provided low data percentages at 23% neutral, 28% somewhat not important, and 26% not important.

The final two questions for this grouping were provided by coaches that wanted to examine how important information that they give student-athletes was perceived. Chart 16 provides the results of question 36 regarding recruiting information packets. Females provided percentages of 18% very important, 56% somewhat important, and 15% neutral. Men were also favorable with 29% very important, 33% somewhat important, and 29% neutral.

The final question provided by coaches was to examine the importance of the sometimes expensive media guides (Question 38, Chart 17). Males recorded 12% very important, 27% somewhat important, 39% neutral, and 10% somewhat not important. Females recorded 8% very important, 44% somewhat important, and 36% neutral.

Scholarship Results

In this study the question was asked whether or not an individual received a scholarship from the university they are attending. Another question also asked them to reveal whether they were offered a scholarship to another university; and if so how much of a scholarship. For example, if they were offered a scholarship was it to be partial or full. This part (the example provided above) was removed from the first question in the study when certain facts about this university's financial aid limits were realized. Every woman's sport at this university is fully funded. In turn this means that partial scholarships would be at a minimum and while they would be slightly more in the men's side the odds of having a large enough population to effectively examine would be small.

In this study there are two possible ways of examining scholarship differences. The first evaluation method would look at sex and scholarship level within each question asked. The second evaluation method would examine current scholarship level and possible scholarship level from another university within each question. Only those questions that provide a deviation from the percentages that we have previously observed will be presented. The reason for presenting the data this way is because as one begins to further segment the population, the data sets tend to reveal less and less information.

Therefore I will begin by presenting the differences that were observed between scholarship and non-scholarship athletes within each sex. The first question that shows some subtle differences in percentage is Question 11 (Chart 18 and 19) regarding the importance of a Head Coach's philosophy in the decision-making process. Male

scholarship athletes provide percentages of 49% very important, 31% somewhat important, and 20% neutral. However, male non-scholarship athletes provide percentages of 15% very important, 31% somewhat important, 39% neutral and 15% not important. Female scholarship athletes recorded percentages of 48% very important, 28% somewhat important, 21% neutral and 3% not important. The female non-scholarship athletes recorded percentages of 20% very important, 30% somewhat important, 30% neutral, and 20% not important.

Question 12 (Chart 20 and 21) examined the level of importance in the relationship with teammates. Female scholarship athletes recorded percentages of 52% very important, 35% somewhat important, and 14% neutral. Female non-scholarship athletes recorded percentages of 10% very important, 50% somewhat important, 20% neutral and 20% not important. Males scholarship athletes recorded percentages of 50% very important, 28% somewhat important, 17% neutral, and 6% somewhat not important. Male non-scholarship athletes provided percentages of 15% very important, 15% somewhat important, 54% neutral, and 15% not important.

Question 21 examined the level of importance the sports medicine facilities plays in the decision-making process. Female scholarship athletes recorded percentages at 35% very important, 35% somewhat important, 17% neutral and 14% somewhat not important. Female non-scholarship athletes recorded at 30% very important, 30% somewhat important, 10% neutral, and 30% not important. Male scholarship athletes recorded percentages of 19% very important, 28% somewhat important, 33% neutral, and 17% somewhat not important. Male non-scholarship athletes provided percentages at

62% somewhat important, 15% neutral, and 15% somewhat not important. These differences can be better visualized upon examination of Charts 22 and 23.

The second type of difference occurs when I examine scholarship/non-scholarship athletes from the perspective of whether or not they would have received a partial or full scholarship at another university. This breakdown can be more easily visualized if you examine Table 5.

In question 8, importance of the relationship with Head Coach, current non-scholarship athletes that would have received a partial scholarship at another school showed a divergence from the previously observed percentages. These athletes reported 10% very important, 20% somewhat important, 30% neutral, 10% somewhat not important, and 30% not important. These particular individuals also showed similar percentages in Question 14 regarding Conference. Notably, most of these individuals are in Lacrosse and replied heavily toward the factor "Players." From these ladies 50% reported very important, 33% somewhat important and 12% neutral. One should caution against suggestions due to the fact that there were only 6 lacrosse players in this grouping.

Satisfaction Results

The first factor to be examined from the stand point of amount of satisfaction was one's relationship with the Head Coach. In Question 9 (Chart 24) females recorded the following percentages: 54% very satisfied, 31% somewhat satisfied, 8% neutral, and 3% somewhat not satisfied. Males provided the following percentages: 43% very satisfied, 29% somewhat satisfied, 14% neutral, and 12% somewhat not satisfied.

Question 13 (Chart 25) examined the amount of satisfaction in regards to one's relationship with teammates. This factor received the highest percentages of satisfied athletes. Females provided percentages of 74% very satisfied, and 26% somewhat satisfied. Males provided percentages of 63% very satisfied, 33% somewhat satisfied, and 4% neutral.

Question 15 (Chart 26) examined one's level of satisfaction with their decision to participate in athletics at their university. Females responded with the following percentages 74% very satisfied, 21% somewhat satisfied, and 5% neutral. Males responded with the following percentages 70% very satisfied, 20% somewhat satisfied, 4% neutral and 6% somewhat not satisfied.

Question 16 (Chart 27) revealed a high amount of satisfaction with the university as a whole, from females. 87% of females were very satisfied with the university as a whole. 10% of females were somewhat satisfied with the university and 3% were somewhat not satisfied. Males reported that 55% were very satisfied, while 35% were somewhat satisfied and 10% neutral.

In Question 17 (Chart 28), the respondents were asked to report their level of satisfaction with the universities facilities. Females reported 64% very satisfied, 31% somewhat satisfied, 3% neutral and 3% somewhat not satisfied. Males provided percentages of 65% very satisfied, 22% somewhat satisfied, 8% neutral, and 4% somewhat not satisfied.

Question 24 (Chart 29) examined one's level of satisfaction with the equipment. Now this did not differentiate between practice and competitive equipment. Nonetheless, females report the following levels of satisfaction: 36% very satisfied, 46%

somewhat satisfied, 10% neutral, and 8% somewhat not satisfied. The men reported percentages at 45% very satisfied, 37% somewhat satisfied, 10% neutral, and 6% somewhat not satisfied.

Question 26 (Chart 30) asked the respondents to evaluate their level of satisfaction in regards to university academics in their planned major/field of study. Females contributed as follows: 49% very satisfied, 39% somewhat satisfied, 10% neutral, and 3% somewhat not satisfied. The men recorded percentages of 44% very satisfied, 31% somewhat satisfied, 23% neutral, and 2% somewhat not satisfied.

Finally in question 29 (Chart 30), one can begin to see some separation between the male and female percentages. Question 29 examined the level of satisfaction towards the departmental services provided at this university. Females provided percentages of 40% very satisfied, 37% somewhat satisfied, 21% neutral, and 3% somewhat not satisfied. Males provided percentages of 25% very satisfied, 38% somewhat satisfied, 33% neutral, and 2% somewhat not satisfied.

Team Differences

Baseball had a number of various universities that this university was competing with for prospective student-athletes against. The list was obtained on question 4, which asked respondents to list all of the schools in which they took official and unofficial visits. Basically, these are the schools the students were evaluating on their list before selecting this university to attend. These schools were Columbia, Harvard, Radford, Wake Forest, JMU, Charlotte, ETSU, Duke, MTSU, Louisiana-Lafayette, Memphis, Mary Washington, Washington and Lee, and VMI. In baseball the student-athletes had

attended a number of all-star style camps and one at FSU. Baseball student-athletes said a number of things that they liked about their coaching staff. These consisted of ability to communicate, attention to detail, honesty, reliable, experience, knowledge and easy to talk to. These student-athletes felt like the need improvements to the facility were as follows: better drainage, adequate playing surface like NCST, better baseball facility, indoor hitting cage at field, and lockers at field. These student-athletes preferred the brands Nike, and TPX. A suggested website that the university should look at was suggested to be FSU. Finally, the last suggestions baseball had for improving recruiting were more available resources, improve facilities, recruit all over the country, and just increase the intensity of recruiting.

The next sport on the list to examine is football. These student-athletes had placed visits to the following school: UGA, FSU, MD, UVA, Penn St., Naval Academy, ECU, Richmond, Army, JMU, Delaware, Army, NCST, Rutgers, Syracuse, Florida, Clemson, Michigan, Tennessee, Princeton, Harvard, Wake Forest, Marshall, and UNC. The football players felt that the coaching strengths were as follows: family oriented, felt wanted, honest, friendly, personal conversations, involvement, intensity, continuity of coaches, unity, team oriented, knowledge, appreciative, trust, and fun to be around. These student-athletes had attended the following camps: Georgia Tech, UVA, Tennessee, SMU, Maryland, and Miami. Suggested improvements for the facilities were glove/shoe dryer like UVA, AC in dorms, bigger showers, improved cheerleading training facility, continued stadium improvements, and improve the weight room like WVU. There were only two brands that were mentioned, Nike and Under Armor. The

few comments provided towards how to improve recruiting were players lounge, be sure to include in every letter a phone list, and more free stuff.

In the sport of golf the athlete had been on visits to UVA and JMU. The golfer stated that the most impressive factors about this coach were organization and success. Nike and Ping were the preferred brands. The golfer suggested that bios be put up for golf on the website because they were the only ones without bios this year. The suggested recruiting enhancements were to make sure that every recruit attends a football game and has a chance to go through the tunnel.

In the sport of Men's Basketball the player had taken visits to Penn St., Pittsburgh, and Fresno. He stated the most impressive traits the coaches possessed were honesty and realism. His only suggested improvement that would help recruiting was a nutritional program like the one at Penn St.

In Men's Swimming, the athletes had visited Yale, NCSU, Penn St., Tennessee, Indiana, UVA, Drexel, JMU and ECU. The athletes stated that the best qualities were innovative, passionate about the sport, team unity, and a solid program. Nike, TYR, and Speedo were the preferred brands of these gentlemen. To improve recruiting the gentlemen suggested the following: more scholarships, new pool equipment, and a new facility.

Men's track athletes had taken the following visits University of Massachusetts, UNC, Rutgers, Clemson, Pitt, Lafayette, Penn St., Iowa, Marquette, Miami of Ohio, Mercer, William and Mary, Christopher Newport, UVA, NCSU, Villanova, and Colorado. These athletes had attended camp at Brevard and Wisconsin. The most impressive attributes the coaches have are as follows: smaller team, positive outlook,

attention to the women's program, plans to grow, and general coaching abilities. The suggested improvements to the facilities were more seating for indoor, seating around entire track and massage therapist. Nike and Adidas were the preferred brands. To improve recruiting these gentlemen suggest more website functionality, improved success, and improving level of commitment by other athletes.

Men's soccer athletes had visited with Connecticut, Clemson, Dayton, UVA, Duke, Princeton, St. John's, Rutgers, William and Mary, and Notre Dame. Some of these athletes had attended camp at Penn St. They listed the coaching attributes as upfront, team they had put together was all friends, and attitude. Suggested facility improvements were restrooms at the field, nicer locker rooms, improve the weight room like Rutgers, and to place stands behind the goals. Nike and Adidas were the preferred brands. Items they included toward recruiting improvements were new uniforms, better practice gear, and to take players to the football stadium.

The wrestling student-athlete that responded to this study had made visits to Bloomsburg and Pittsburgh. What impressed him the most about the coaching staff was their experience and talent. He suggested that to improve the facilities, it should be modeled after Iowa where there are three practice mats, a weight room and multiple types of cardio equipment in the same facility. Asics was the preferred brand. No other improvements were suggested.

Softball student-athletes had made visits to Oregon St., UCLA, Oklahoma, Illinois St., and Longwood. These athletes had attended camp at ECU and Illinois. They listed the coaches' attributes as warmhearted, down to earth, easy to relate to, lots of interaction with the players, and disciplined. These ladies suggested to improve facilities one would

need to put lights on the field like UCLA, improve the stands and better batting practice facility. Nike, Ringor, Adidas, TPX and Louisville Slugger were the preferred brands of these ladies. The only recruiting improvement mentioned was to branch out recruiting to other states.

The volleyball ladies had taken visits to St. John's, Dayton, Bucknell, Cornell, Coastal Carolina, Missouri, Indiana, Notre Dame and Austin Peay. They had attended camp at Pittsburgh, St. Petersburg and Austin Peay. They described the coaches attributes as young, easy to talk to, friendly, care about the program, down to earth and honest. The only facility improvement was locker rooms. Nike and Mizuno are the preferred brands. In order to improve recruiting they suggested better timing of visits, better record, new warm-ups, and better locker rooms again.

Women's soccer athletes had taken visits to JMU, Vanderbilt, Brown, BU, UGA, George Mason, MTSU, Maryland, UNC-W, FSU, Delaware, UVA, Duke, Clemson, Mississippi, ECU, VCU, NCST, Charlotte, UMBC, St. Mary's, and College of Charleston. These ladies had attended camp at Maryland, UNC, VCU and JMU. The most impressive coaching qualities are eager to improve program more than others, worked well together, enthusiastic, seemed to care, energetic, relates well, interest in her, honest and upfront, played at a high level, and the sense of family. The suggested improvements for the facilities were bathrooms, stands, and a turf field like VCU. Nike and Adidas are the preferred brands. Finally the improvements they stated to help recruiting were nicer equipment, placing in NCAA's and that they believe the players are helping with this.

The women's basketball player that responded to this survey suggested fixing the practice facility like those at Maryland. Nike is her preferred brand. No other suggestions or comments were made.

The women's track athletes had visited Richmond, JMU, Greensboro, Mary Washington, Georgetown, and VCU. These athletes were impressed by the following qualities in the coaches: organized, good team, knowledgeable, trust in the staff and down to earth. These ladies suggested the facilities be improved by having a permanent indoor track, and fixing up the outdoor track. Nike and Asics are the preferred brands. No other comments were provided.

The women's swim athletes had taken visits to Maryland, Penn St., Rutgers, William and Mary, Colorado St., Illinois, Kentucky, Villanova, Purdue, and Richmond. They had attended camp at UNC and USC. The notable coaching attributes consisted of desire to advance the program, good guy, and that the coach had her best interest at heart. The suggested facility improvement was a new competition pool. Nike, Under Armor and Speedo were the preferred brands. The suggested improvements to enhance recruiting were new equipment, new facility, and underwater video taping like Rutgers.

The lacrosse ladies had taken visits to Marist, New Hampshire, Drexel, Towson, Loyola, JMU, Delaware, La Salle, Mt. St. Mary's, and George Mason. These ladies had attended camps at Lehigh, Maryland, UNC, Duke, George Mason and Princeton. The attributes the ladies were keen on noting about the coaches were very close staff, approachable, made them feel like home, easy to talk to, try to have meetings to fix problems, and they are genuinely interested in the ladies as people. Suggest facility improvements were locker rooms close to the field, turf field, better weight room, taking

better care of the game field, and bigger stands like UVA. Nike, Under Armor and Puma were the preferred brands. To improve recruiting they suggest improve our record, more clothing, recruit all around, increased level of play and improved coaching knowledge of recruiting.

The last team on our list is the women's tennis team. These ladies made visits to NCST, Mississippi, UVA, Bucknell, Lafayette, Lehigh, Maryland, Georgia Tech, Furman and Davidson. The coaches' attributes were described as stressed academics come first, open, honest, well prepared and eager to develop a better program. Suggested facility improvements consist of cardio machines in the gym and a bigger weight room. Nike is the preferred brand of equipment. To improve recruiting they suggest improving our winning percentage and better lighting for the courts.

Chapter 5

Final Discussion and Conclusions

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine what factors were important in student-athletes' decision-making process and what was their level of satisfaction with this decision. From this goal, four research questions were developed. The first research question was to find out which of the three areas examined was most important to an athlete during their decision-making process. The three areas being referred to were Team History, Facilities and Equipment, and Departmental Services. Team History was clearly the most important both in direct questioning and through various questions utilizing the Likert scale. The term Team History was intended to encompass questions based on coaches, players, relationships, conference and team success.

The first results that directly support these statements come from question 39 (Please list the three most important factors and two least important factors in your decision to come to...). The top five most important factors for males were revealed as: Coaches, Education, Success of Program, Players and Sports. Education is the one factor that does not fit into the area of Team History, let alone any of the other areas. This is because Education is an essential component to being a student-athlete, yet is interesting to see where this topic surfaces in these results. The top five most important factors for females were revealed as: Education, Coaches, Facilities, Players, and tied for fifth, Conference, Environment, Location and Team. Fifty percent of the factors listed here are from the area Team History. While 37.5% of the factors listed here for women are from the area Facilities and Equipment, yet Education topped the list for women.

This difference between males and females could be related to the facts of gender differences in the decision-making process that were presented in chapter two. This information showed that females are more likely to be affected by parents' previous college experiences where as males related more to males with similar ability (Tobias, 2002). Hence, females place more importance on education, moving this to the top of the list and making facilities possibly an important factor. Another possible explanation for the male results consists of the previous discussion in Chapter Two on reputation of the instructor. That research showed that students were more likely to choose a course based on the reputation of the instructor, even when that instructor provided a heavier work load (Wilhelm, 2004). This could imply why in males Coaches were the number one factor and why Success of Program is the third most important factor to males. Success can be a part of one's reputation. This could also help explain the results found in Question 8, 11, and 30.

Question 8 showed high levels of importance in both males and females regarding the importance of the relationship with the Head Coach. Question 11 showed high levels of importance in both males and females related to Head Coach's philosophy. Both of these questions can further be supported by the previous research that indicated a student must be able to understand the instructor and one's decision to select a particular course based on the amount of course worth perceived by the student (Gatfield, 1999; Wilhelm, 2004). In this situation, course worth is perceived as a Head Coach's philosophy. Question 30 revealed that success in one's sport is an important factor and supports Team History heavily with 78% male and 74% of the females stating that it is important.

The results of question 12 (level of importance in the relationship with the teammates) continue to support Team History as the most important area both for males and females. Male and female results showed the highest percentage was 41% very important. While the remaining percentages fell slightly for males this could be explained simply by the fact that males have more testosterone and aggression toward other males.

In question 14, the area of Team History continued to receive high marks. Males stated that conference was somewhat important to very important in 72% of the population. While female results showed similarly high importance in 75% of those polled. This can be explained by the fact that an athletes overall goal is to win against the best competition possible.

Finally, the last question related to the area of Team History shows the lowest percentages of any question in this category. This could be because of the intent of this question. Question 31 was an attempt to look at the effect of very successful sports like football at this school, and see if the success of other teams in the university was a factor in the decision-making process. The results showed that 50% of the females thought that this was at least somewhat important, 37% neutral, and 8% somewhat important. Males on the other hand showed 43% felt that this was at least somewhat important, 22% neutral, and 22% not important at all. This could have been because the intent was focused around the success of football and the fact that the male vote consisted of 43% football players.

The next most important area found in the results of this study was Facilities and Equipment. The area of Facilities and Equipment encompassed practice, competition,

sports medicine, strength and conditioning facilities, as well as inquiring as to specific brands equipment. These questions have some varied results but easily appear to be more important than the factors involved in Departmental Services. To begin one should refer back to the results of question 39 again. Facilities and Equipment based responses accounted for 37.5% of the females most important factors. Based on the previous discussion, one knows that instructor reputation plays a factor in one's decision to attempt a particular class. When it comes to facilities, the facilities themselves can influence the reputation of a school (Mazzarol, 1998). Females also stated that Environment was an important factor in their decision-making process, which suggests that they are more aware of the environment from the standpoint of facilities.

Questions 18 and 19 examined the importance of practice and competition facilities. In the results males stated at least somewhat important in 63% of the practice facility question and 68% of the competition facility. While females stated at least somewhat important in 68% of the practice facility and 74% of the competition facility. Overall, these percentages are slightly lower than most of the combined percentages from the questions in the area of Team History. At first glance one could be surprised at the fact that the women appear to place more importance in the facilities than men, but the previous discussion is a quick reminder that women are more conscientious of their environment.

This same observation follows suit in the results of Question 21. Question 21 examined the importance of the sports medicine facility in one's decision. In 66% of the females the sports medicine facility was at least somewhat important in their process. In the men only 51% said that the facility was at least somewhat important. When

explaining the difference between the two genders one can't help but wonder if maturity level plays a part in how this question is answered. At this age women are more mature than men and maybe are able to realize the fact that they are not indestructible on the field of competition. Since women are more mature, this facility could be seen as a strategic asset to the institution (Price, 2003).

The concept of strategic asset could also begin to explain the difference between males and females in Question 22. However, there are many more possible reasons that males recorded at least 74% somewhat importance toward the strength and conditioning facility compared to the 66% of females. At this particular university there are two separate strength and conditioning facilities. One is extremely nice and extravagant, while the second is adequate but lacks the state of the art feel of the other. Also the second facility is limited in space and numbers of equipment. It just so happens that the football, men's basketball, women's basketball and volleyball teams utilize the nicer facility. The remaining sports utilize the other facility. This means that the male proportions can drive these results up. One could also make the argument that males and females value the benefits of the strength training activities differently. Many strength and conditioning coaches describe females as taking longer to accept the programs they are given because of both, myths and lack of previous experience in the weight room. Also since males have had more experience in a weight room they can relate to this facility more easily.

Finally the least important area of Departmental Services encompasses anything that the athletic department provides as part of its support staff. Each facet was represented in this study to the best of my knowledge. This area also included recruiting

materials that have been developed in the athletic department to be dispersed by the coaches. Again one should refer to the top most important factors revealed in Question 39. While no factors were provided that directly fall under the scope of Departmental Services, the factor of Education may be the reason Question 25 received some of the highest percentages for this area.

Question 25 examined the level of importance of the academic counseling services. In males 66% of the responses felt that the academic counseling services were at least somewhat important. For women the combined responses came to 70% were at least somewhat important. This slight elevation in responses from the women could be the reason Education was first for women and second in men in Question 39. Therefore in some way academic counseling services could be a part of the deciding process, just maybe not high enough on the priority list to place it into the top factors.

Question 27 examined the level of importance of the nutritionist. The low percentages provide proof that Department Services deserves to be the lowest area. Females recorded only 8% felt that this factor was very important and 24% said somewhat important. The males were also much lower on their percentages with 10% very important and 33% somewhat important. This could be that athletes at this stage in life simply lack the educational background to understand how much nutrition can affect their performance. This could prove to be evidence that more educational efforts should be focused on underclassmen.

One's stage in life and lack of exposure to student life services could be the reason Question 28 received low percentages as well. Female results showed that 28%

felt the services from student life were at least somewhat important; males followed suit with only 32%.

Question 32 continued to show why Departmental Services was the lowest area. This question examined the level of importance of media coverage for the university's sports. Females only stated that 28% felt it was at least somewhat important, while males stated that 43% felt it was at least somewhat important. This difference between the two values can be attributed to the nature of media coverage across the country. Football, men's basketball and women's basketball are the primary (money) sports covered by the media and hence can explain the difference between males and females.

Question 33 had the most surprising results in my opinion. Question 33 examined the importance of that school's website in one's decision-making process. One could have expected slightly higher percentages on this question since mainstream media coverage focuses most heavily on the money sports. One could also have expected slightly improved percentages on this question considering the day and age of the internet that we live. However, one must look back at the heart of the question and the possible impact. The question focuses on the importance of the website in one's decision to attend that school and if the parents are not computer literate then this question may not weigh heavily on one's mind. Another possible scenario lies in the fact that many athletic department websites all have a similar look and feel. There are very few schools in the Division I ranks that produce their own website. Many of the Division I schools utilize either one of two main companies to produce the look and feel of their website. The overall product is just a cookie cutter mold dressed in that university's colors. If many of them look alike, then it may not be as important for the

prospective student-athlete to consider. The result was that 35% of males and 26% of females said that this was not important.

Question 36 and 38 examined the examined the importance of information packets and media guides in one's process. While these percentages were more favorable for the area of Departmental Services, the percentages were not high enough to move this area up the figurative ladder. Information packets are more important for women than for men. This could show supporting evidence to why women have Education as the number one factor in Question 39. While media guides were more important to women than men the explanation for this is not easy to describe. One reason could be that in the football and basketball guides freshmen are not written about like sophomores, juniors and seniors. However this is not an uncommon practice. Freshmen have no collegiate statistics to write about, yet this still does not explain why the men recorded lower than women. One could contribute it to women being more conscious about one's appearance and therefore more attentive to this guide. Another possible explanation could be due to Title IX. Early this study looked at the fact that with the emergence of Title IX women are now having more and more athletic role models and the media guide could serve as reinforcement to this concept.

The second research question was created to determine whether there are any differences between male and female student-athletes' satisfaction when examining their decision to participate in athletics. This question was specifically asked in the survey as well as several other satisfactions based questions. First, one should discuss the results of Question 15, which specifically asked about the individuals' satisfaction with their decision to participate in athletics at their university. Females responded

overwhelmingly with the following percentages of 74% very satisfied, 21% somewhat satisfied, and 5% neutral. While males followed closely with 70% very satisfied, 20% somewhat satisfied, 4% neutral and 6% somewhat not satisfied. One should not be surprised at these percentages because even though one year has concluded one does not know what their expectations were for the first year. Also the presence of some neutral, and in the case of the men some that were somewhat not satisfied, shows that there is some uncertainty amongst a few individuals. This is to be expected. Another reason for the high percentages could relate to the population that completed the survey. Those that were truly not satisfied may not have completed the form nor had the opportunity. Remember this study occurred at the conclusion of the semester and many individuals had already quit by this point in the survey, possibly causing abnormally high values. With this question answered and the previous statement fresh in one's mind, one should continue discussing the remaining satisfaction based questions.

Question 9 examined one's satisfaction with their relationship with the Head Coach. Not surprising these percentages provided correlate closely to those of Question 15. There are a few neutral and somewhat not satisfied individuals. However, the best explanation for this is the last statement discussed in Question 15. Many people have already quit or did not respond to the questionnaire and could possibly increase these mixed feelings.

Question 13 examined the amount of satisfaction in regards to one's relationship with teammates. Females recorded higher percentages than males. This can be explained by the fact that women are more social than men in general. Could this suggest that women create larger bonds with teammates than men, possibly?

Nonetheless, 100% of women said they were at least somewhat satisfied with their relationship with their teammates as opposed to 96% of men.

Question 16 revealed a high amount of satisfaction with the university as a whole. This was especially prevalent from women who said 87% were very satisfied, while males reported that 55% were very satisfied. Question 17 revealed one's level of satisfaction toward the university facilities. Females reported that 95% were at least somewhat satisfied and males recorded 87%. Both of these questions can be explained by the previous statements.

Question 24 had somewhat different results, but expected based on previous discussion. Question 24 examined one's level of satisfaction with equipment. Males and females both were 82% at least somewhat satisfied with the equipment they were provided.

Question 26 evaluated one's level of satisfaction in regards to university academics in their respective planned major/field of study. Females recorded slightly higher percentages which again provide proof to why the factor Education was first among women.

Last but not least, Question 29 evaluated the level of satisfaction in regards to the departmental services provided at this university. While the male and female responses were similar there was some deviation between the categories of very satisfied and neutral. Females had a larger percentage that felt they were very satisfied. This could be due to the fact that females consistently had slightly lower percentages of importance in Departmental Services based questions. In other words, if the departmental services

are lower in importance, then it could take less to be satisfied with the service currently provided.

The third research question was created to determine exactly which factors are the most important to an athlete during the decision-making process. The most important factors are Education, Coaches, Success of Program and Facilities. However, these were not the only ones. In fact many factors are important in this process and should not be ignored. The most important factors should provide a staff with a starting block of what to examine, enhance, and expound upon. Coaches can see the points that impressed the players in their sport and use that knowledge to enhance these qualities and understand what qualities one should improve. Specific facilities improvements were provided directly from these student-athletes for a reason, to allow you to better prioritize future projects. Also to provide insight as to what types of facility projects are most important to different types of sports.

The final research question was created to examine some of the subtle differences between scholarship and non-scholarship athletes. While this was not as successful as one had intended, some subtle differences were apparent. Scholarship and non-scholarship athletes differed on the importance of a head coach's philosophy, relationship with the teammates, and the sports medicine facility.

Question 11 (Chart 18 and 19) provided an examination into the importance of the Head Coach's philosophy in one's decision-making process. According to the majority of scholarship males most felt that the Head Coach's philosophy was either very important or at least somewhat important. However, in the non-scholarship males the majority appear to either say it is somewhat important or neutral on the subject. The

same general observation occurs between female scholarship and non-scholarship athletes on this subject. One explanation for this could be that the non-scholarship student-athletes are not being forced to be at this school by a scholarship and therefore place more emphasis on other factors in their process.

Question 12 (Chart 20 and 21) examined the level of importance in the relationship with teammates. The majority of male and female scholarship athletes stated that this was very important to their process. The majority of male and female non-scholarship athletes stated that this was neutral in their decision-making process. This should not be surprising considering that most scholarship athletes are invited for an official visit to campus. During an official visit the individual is on campus with the team and coach for 48 hours, often even staying with one of the team members overnight. However, the same opportunity is not traditionally offered to those individuals that are non-scholarship students. Therefore this individual may never consider this factor in their process, because they have never been exposed to this fact. Also each prospect is allowed 5 official visits in a year. Many times, the scholarship student-athlete takes at least 2 of those opportunities, if not all five.

Question 21 (Chart 22 and 23) examined the importance of the sports medicine facility in one's process. In the results, female scholarship and non-scholarship student-athletes recorded similar percentages. On the other hand, male scholarship student-athletes reported that 28% felt it was somewhat important and 33% neutral. Meanwhile, male non-scholarship student-athletes reported that 62% felt it was somewhat important and 15% neutral. This could be due to the fact that the total number of non-scholarship

athletes is low at 13 for males and 10 for females. With a small group to sample from it takes very little variation to swing the percentages in one direction or another.

Implications

This study was performed on a specific school with a specific financial aid profile. The financial aid profile of this school allows them to provide a large number of full scholarship athletes. Therefore this study should be considered an important document to a school which has a similarly large number of full scholarship student-athletes. Understanding this means that if a school has a larger number of non-scholarship student-athletes then it becomes important to remember that there can be differences. Although these differences were subtle in this study, they could be more dramatic with a more balanced population. This would suggest that a school in this scenario should conduct their own study to determine the factors that are important to their population.

The financial aid profile of a school should also be taken into consideration when a school wishes for a sport to offer more scholarships in an attempt to increase their winning percentage. A drastic increase in these funds would mean that the type of factors considered by the incoming population could be different than the existing population. The only way to successfully tell would be to perform a study similar to this one.

Another important implication of this study would be in the hiring process. This study showed that the coach is a very important factor to incoming student-athletes. In my opinion, this means that it should be important to assess the teams' reaction to a

particular candidate. This practice is not always utilized by schools, but should now be considered.

A study of this nature can reveal many characteristics about a particular team. This study was able to reveal what schools are competing for their athletes, the type of equipment preferred by a team, and the type of facility improvements that appear to appealing to this caliber of student-athlete. For this school the information can allow them to plan future projects, prioritize projects, and give direction when attaining certain types of equipment contracts. This type of insight could save money in the long run if used properly by this school. Other schools can use this information to provide insight toward possible projects to consider. The most cautionary point of this study is that the study itself only provides insight into the minds of the prospective student-athlete and freshmen views about those early thoughts. This study doesn't examine the thoughts of a student-athlete as they progress through school, experience more, see more places, hear more stories, and formulate new thoughts about old concepts.

The final implication of this study should be directed to the coach's attention. This study showed that Education is the most important factor of all. Therefore, it should be the primary selling point of any official visit, unofficial visit, phone call, email, or whatever type of communication that is occurring between the prospect and the coach. A coach should strive to find out what that new prospective student-athlete wants to study and how they can get to that point. Sometimes the most basic fact is the most powerful.

Recommendations for Further Research

In the future this type of study may need to be performed near the conclusion of the first semester in the year. While this could hamper questions pertaining to satisfaction due to the shorter evaluation period, one would have less of a problem from students quitting the team and coaches being uncooperative. Another possible direction for this type of study could be longitudinal where each year these students are questioned and you can track the change in response. The responses that are consistent would possibly be the areas that need to be improved the most.

Another suggestion would be to perform this survey every year to freshmen. Over the span of four years you would have a larger population that is more representative of the students you are currently training. As the freshmen graduate, one would remove that year from the data totals.

I would be interested in creating similar questions that could be provided to freshmen, and then again as seniors. This is interesting because overtime their view points of what is important to them will change. The items that remain the same are the better ideas for improvement, because these items are the most important and remain at the forefront of peoples minds.

Another potential avenue of study would be to examine the prospective student-athletes that choose not to attend a particular university. This could be achieved by securing access to a coach's recruiting log. Due to NCAA regulations, most schools require their coaches to keep recruiting logs. These logs usually show every conversation they have with a prospective student-athlete. A set of parameters would have to be established that state which prospect would be sent a questionnaire and which

prospect would not. For example, if a coach goes to a tournament every athlete at that tournament would have to show up in their log. However, if this is a large tournament like those held in soccer the coach may see 40 teams and yet only talk with a handful of prospects. From this brief conversation the coach may only follow-up with a handful of these prospects. This would be the group one would want to follow-up with and see if they would participate in the study. This type of study would be the most revealing about a particular school from the eyes of a prospect. This type of study may require an interview strategy as questionnaires may have such a poor return rate as to not reveal as much information as originally intended.

The last suggestion that I have in a study like this is to reduce the number of questions. As I began examining the raw data, several surveys looked as if they were simply speeding along after about question 15 to 20. Finally, one would have to consider clarifying certain questions depending on the intent of the study. In this study my goal was to see what the factors are; however there are several of the written responses that can be interpreted in different ways. For example, when someone puts down strength and conditioning as an important factor what exactly are they making reference towards? It could be to the program, the facility, or the strength coaches. It was because of these factors that a person has to take caution on making definite observations without a follow-up.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study should be utilized as one piece of a complex puzzle. This study revealed that the most important factors in one's decision-making process are Education, Coaches, Success of the Program, and Facilities. From these factors, besides Education itself, the main area of focus for a prospective student-athlete is related to Team History, followed by Facilities and Equipment, with Departmental Services being the final area of concern. Also revealed by this study is the fact that there are some differences between the factors a scholarship student-athlete considers and the factors a non-scholarship student-athlete considers in their decision-making process. Finally, this study showed that of those polled, they were satisfied with their decision to participate in collegiate athletics.

This study provides insight into the mind of those student-athletes that choose to attend this particular school. This study also failed to catch those individuals who may have left the team or in fact did feel unsatisfied. This study also does not peer into the needs and feelings of sophomores, juniors and seniors, which could provide a more complete picture. However, this study was an excellent starting point. With time and refinement, a study of this nature could be a standard part of a schools' internal evaluation of its student-athlete population, and future goals of a schools' athletic endeavors.

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APPENDIX A**Table 1**

Sport by Gender	Scholarship	Non-Scholarship
Baseball		
Football		
Men's Basketball		
Men's Golf		
Men's Soccer		
Men's Swimming		
Men's Tennis		
Men's Track		
Men's Wrestling		
Women's Basketball		
Women's Lacrosse		
Women's Soccer		
Women's Softball		
Women's Swimming		
Women's Tennis		
Women's Track		
Women's Volleyball		

Table 2

Sport by Gender	Scholarship	Non-Scholarship	Total
Baseball	7	2	9
Football	20	1	21
Men's Basketball	1	0	1
Men's Golf	0	1	1
Men's Soccer	3	1	4
Men's Swimming	2	1	3
Men's Tennis	0	0	0
Men's Track	2	7	9
Men's Wrestling	1	0	1
Women's Basketball	1	0	1
Women's Lacrosse	5	3	8
Women's Soccer	9	2	11
Women's Softball	2	2	4
Women's Swimming	4	0	4
Women's Tennis	2	2	4
Women's Track	3	1	4
Women's Volleyball	3	0	3

Table 3

<u>MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS</u>		
	Female	Male
ACADEMIC SUPPORT		1
BUILDING PROGRAM		1
COACH PHILOSOPHY	2	2
COACH/PLAYER RELATIONSHIP	4	1
COACHES	21	22
CONFERENCE	7	6
EDUCATION	22	17
ENVIRONMENT	7	6
FACILITIES	10	2
FAMILY		3
FOOD	1	1
FRIENDS		1
GAME ATMOSPHERE		1
HOSPITALITY		2
LOCATION	7	6
ME		1
MONEY	1	5
PEOPLE		2
PLAYERS	8	8
PLAYING TIME		1
POSITION PERSONEL	1	2
POTENTIAL	1	
RESPECT OF COACH		1
SIZE OF SCHOOL	3	4
SPORTS	3	7
STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING		2
STRENGTH OF SCHEDULE		1
SUCCESS OF PROGRAM	4	15
SUPPORT SERVICES	1	
TEAM	7	3
TEAM UNITY	1	2
TOWN	2	1
TRADITION		2
WOMEN		1

Table 4

LEAST IMPORTANT FACTORS		
	Female	Male
ACADEMIC SUPPORT	1	1
ACC	2	2
BRAND	2	
CLASS SIZES	1	
COACHES	1	2
DORMS	1	
EDUCATION	3	3
FACILITIES	3	4
FANS		1
FOOD	1	
FRIENDS		1
GRAD RATES		1
LIVING ON CAMPUS	1	
LOCATION	6	5
MEDIA	4	5
MEDIA GUIDE	1	
MONEY	3	3
NUTRITIONIST	2	2
OTHER SPORTS	2	2
PLAYERS		1
RECRUITING PACKET		1
SCHOOL COLORS	1	
SIZE OF SCHOOL	3	2
STRENGTH PROGRAM	1	
STUDENT LIFE SERVICES	5	5
SUCCESS OF PROGRAM	4	
TEACHERS	1	
WEATHER		1
WEBSITE	5	6
WOMEN		1

Table 5

Current University Offer	Scholarship		Non-scholarship	
Possible University Offer	Partial Scholarship	Full Scholarship	Partial Scholarship	Full Scholarship

APPENDIX B

Chart 1

Question 8

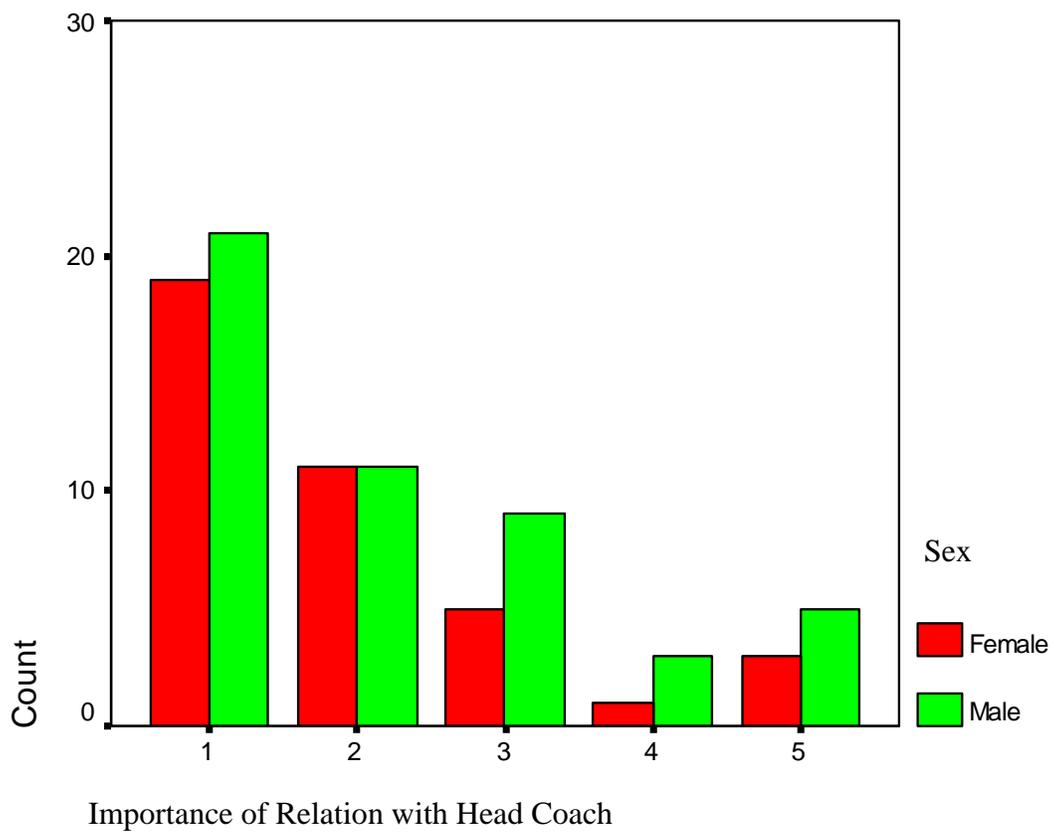


Chart 2

Question 11

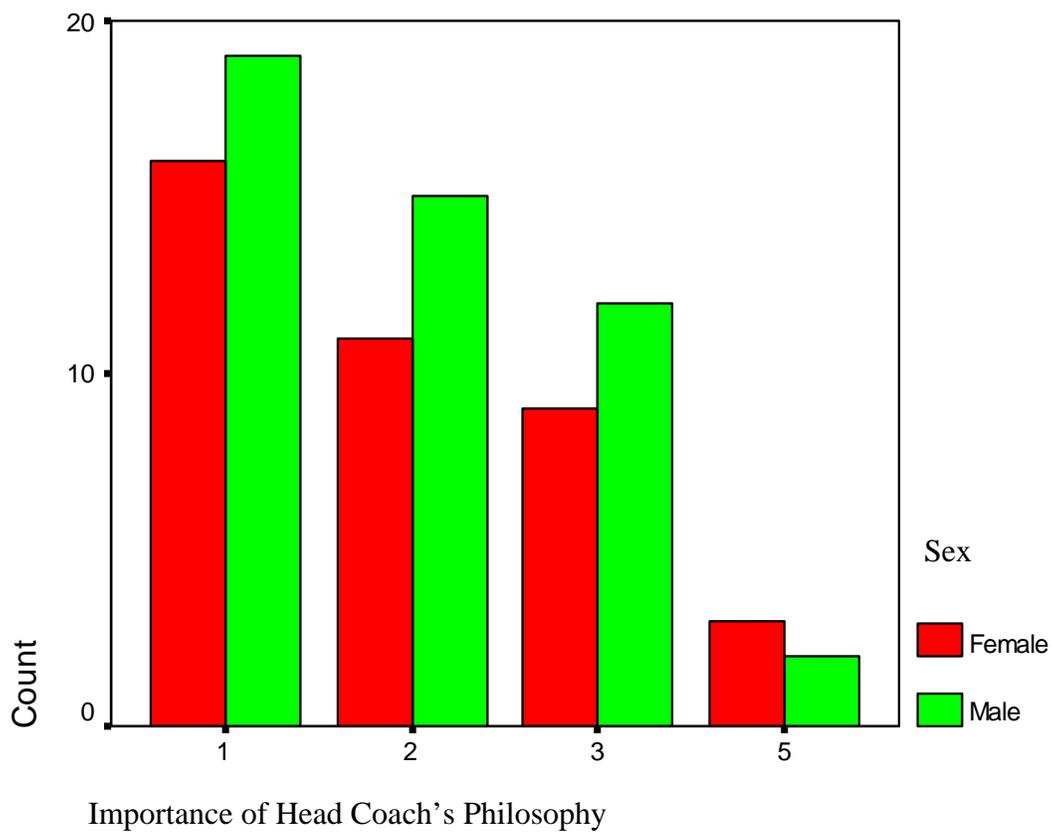


Chart 3
Question 12

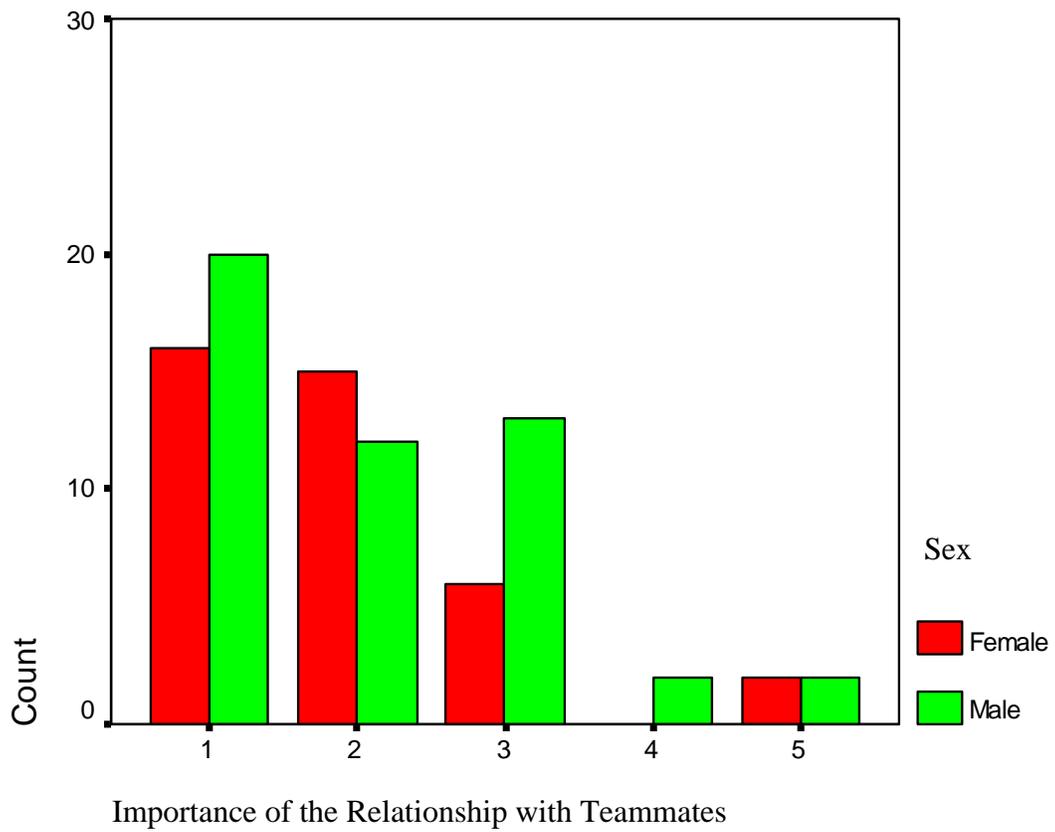


Chart 4
Question 14

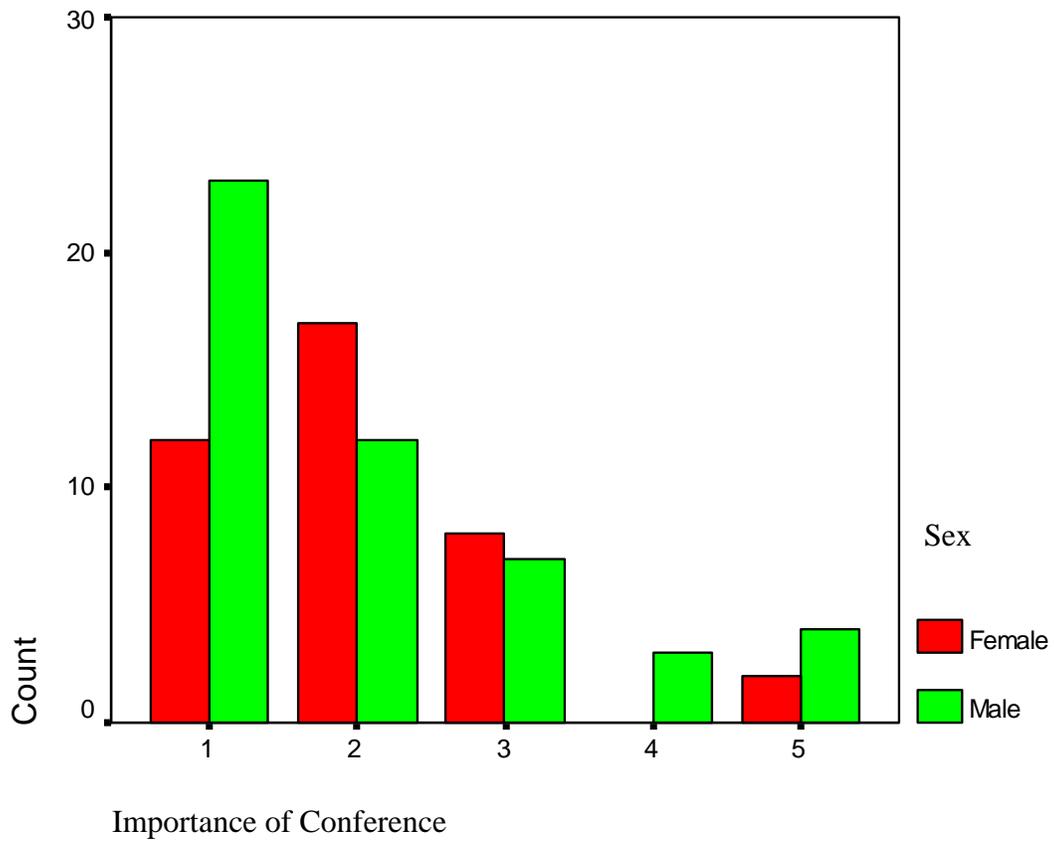


Chart 5
Question 30

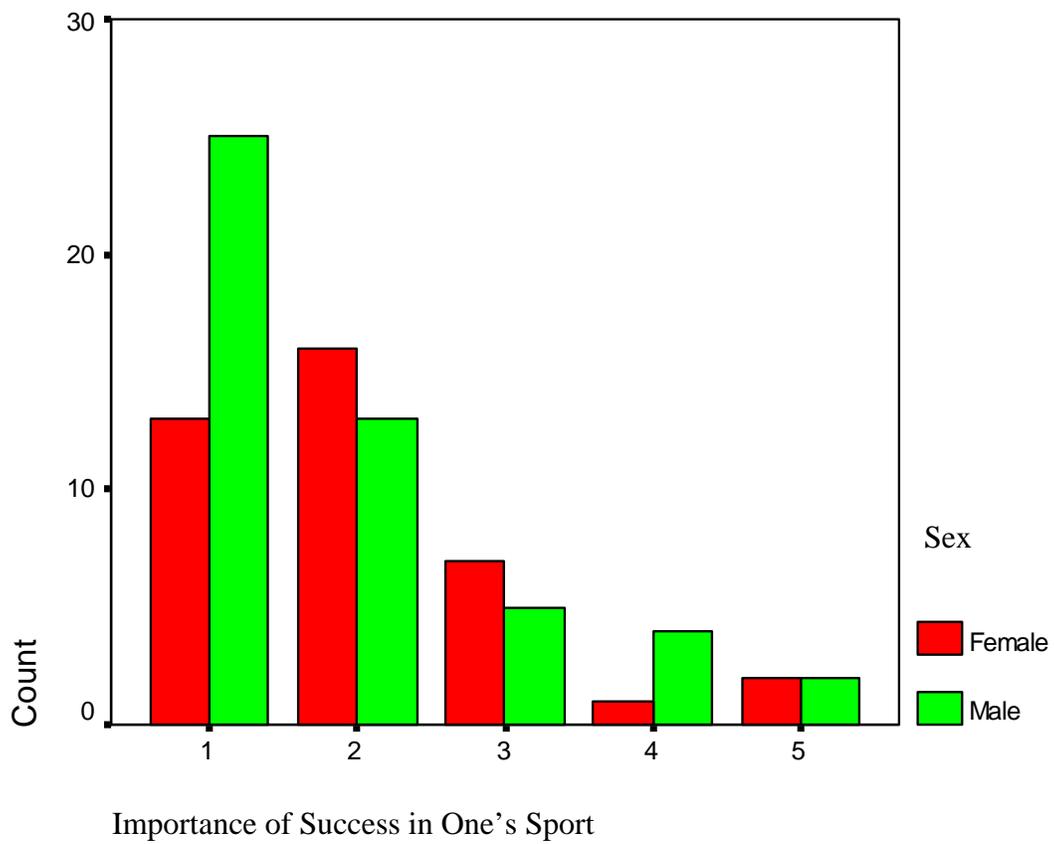


Chart 6
Question 31

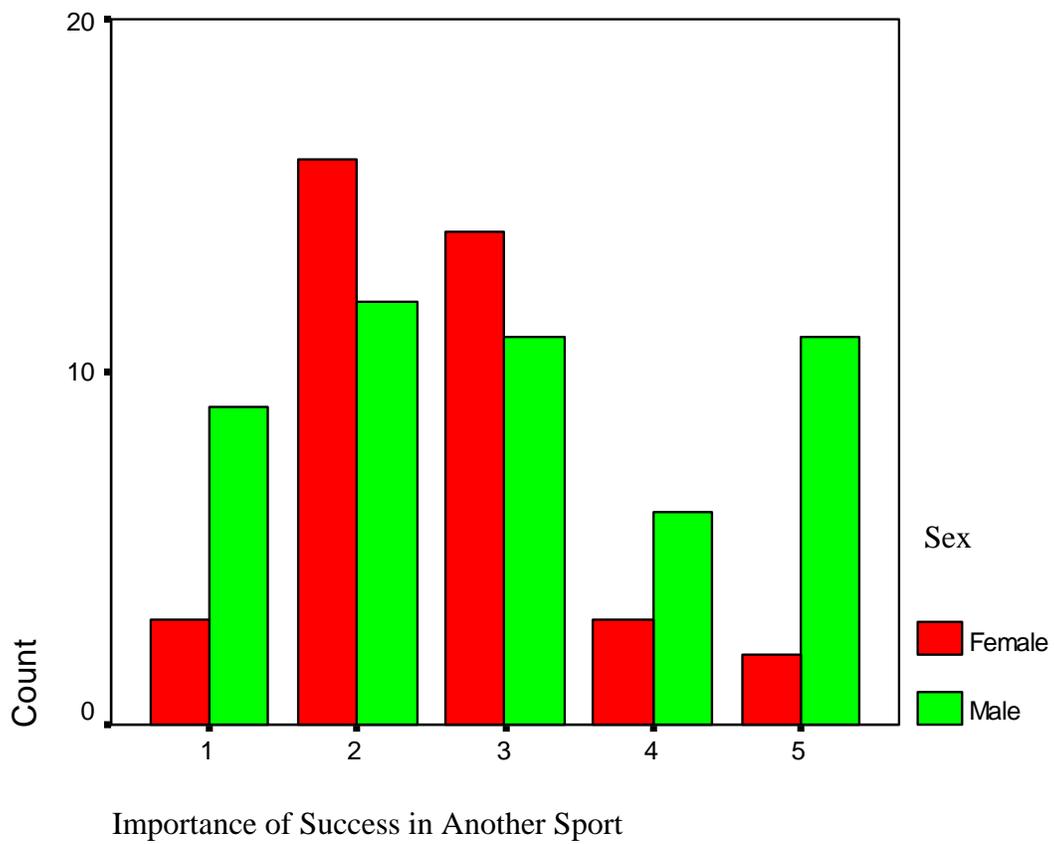


Chart 7
Question 18

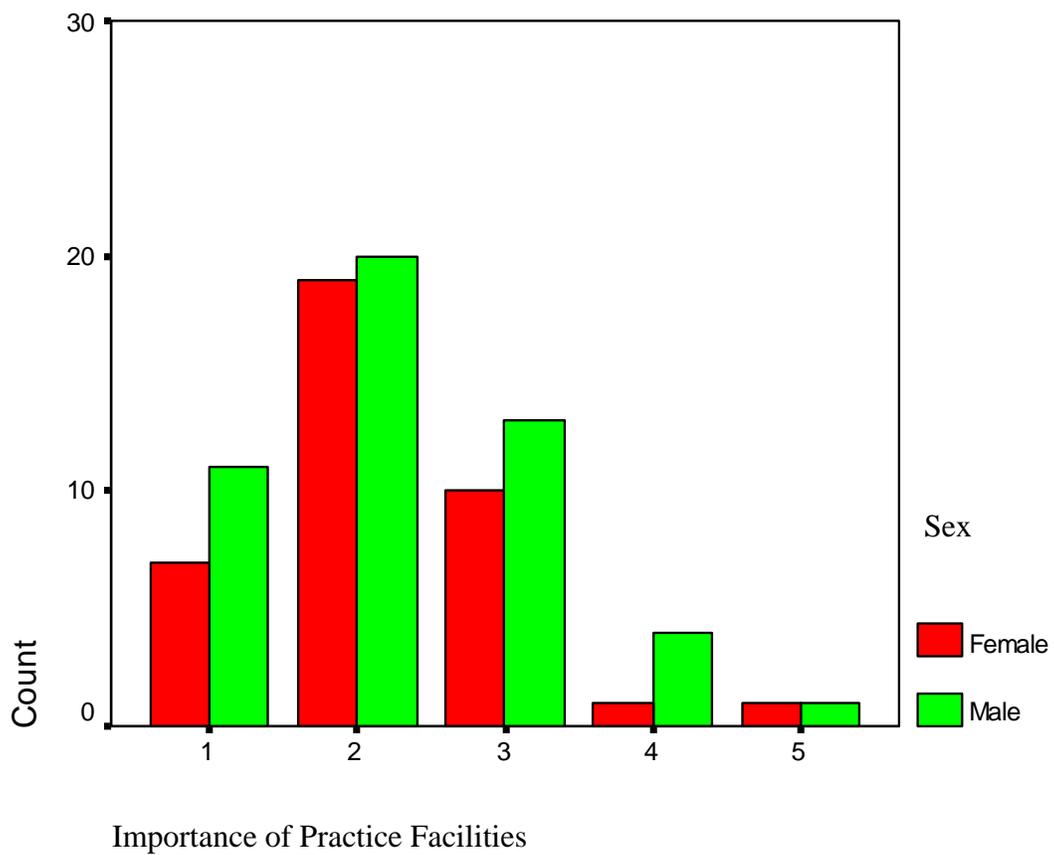


Chart 8
Question 19

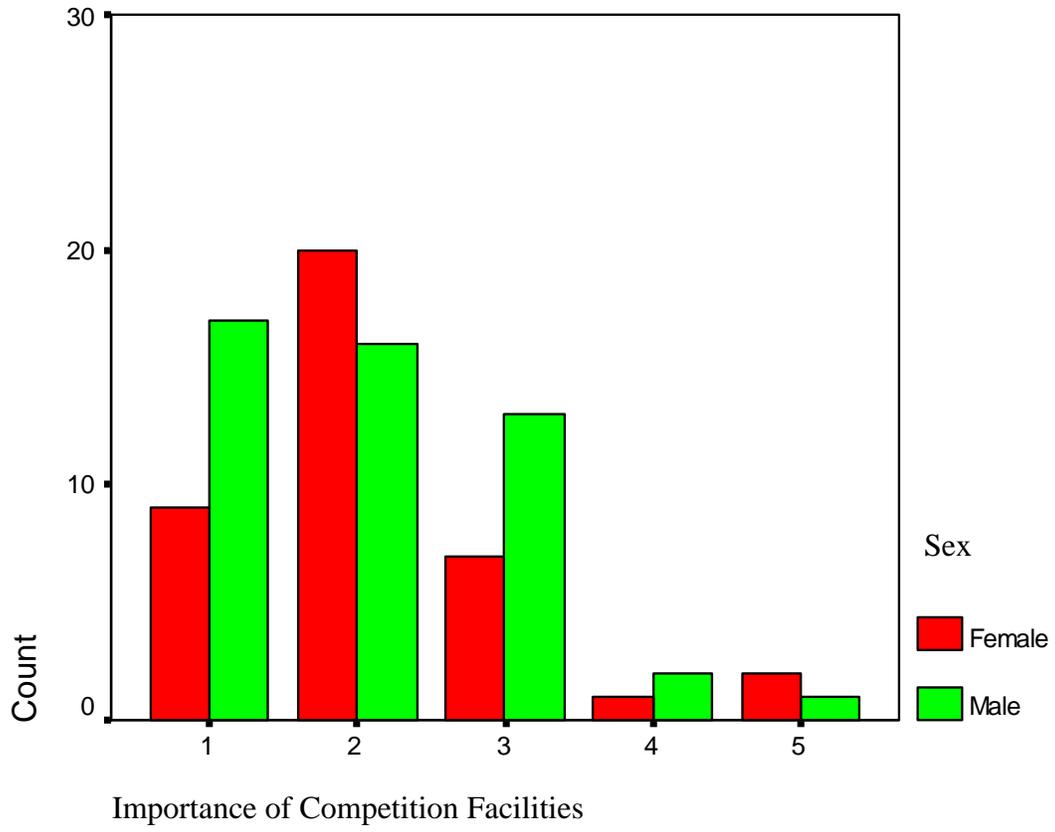


Chart 9

Question 21

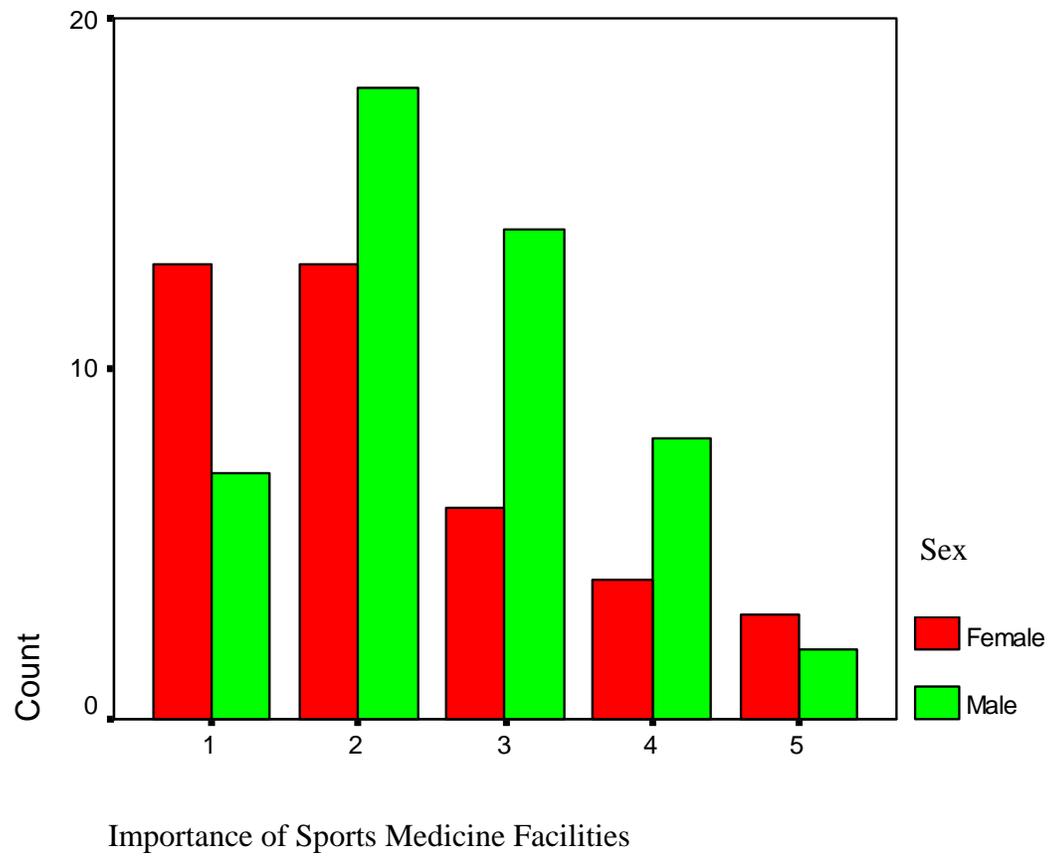


Chart 10

Question 22

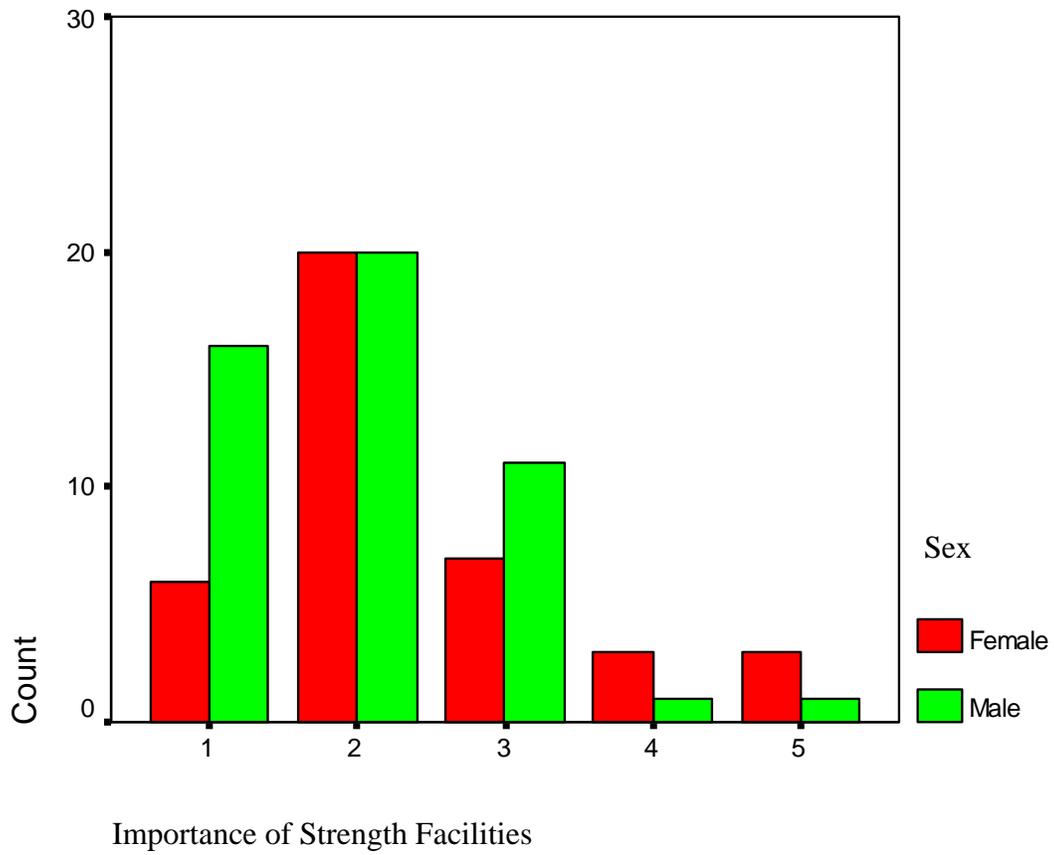


Chart 11

Question 25

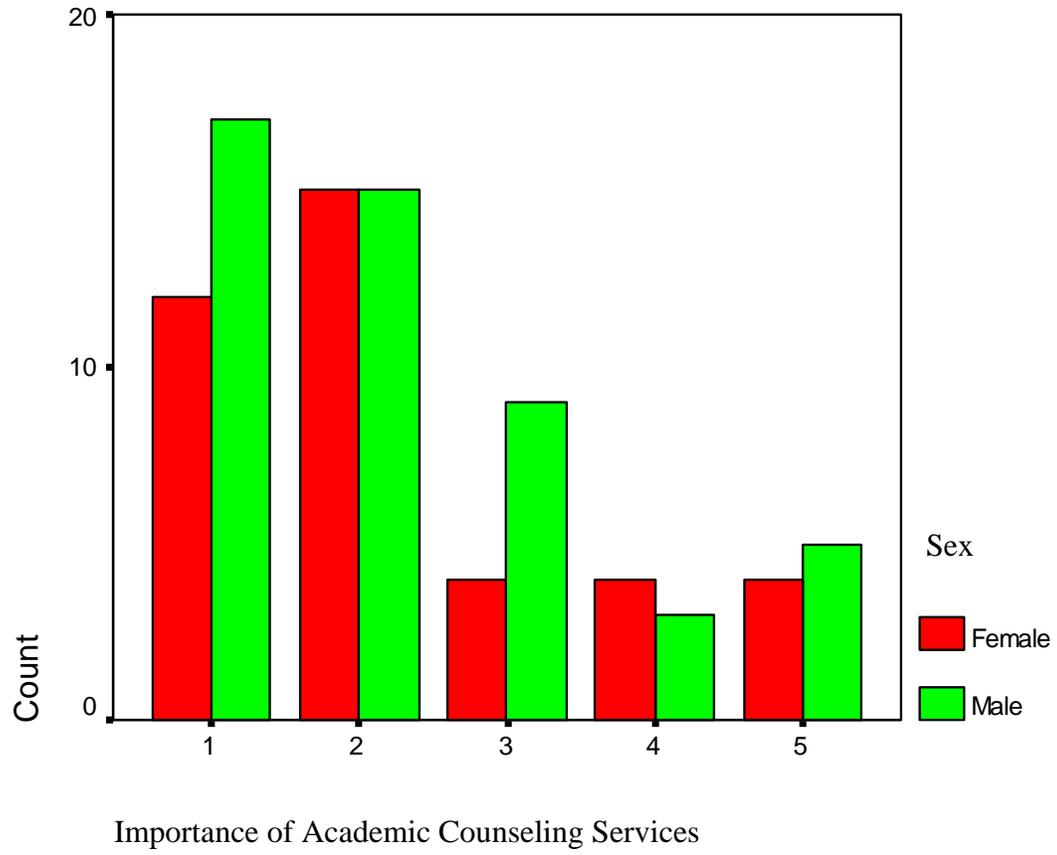


Chart 12

Question 27

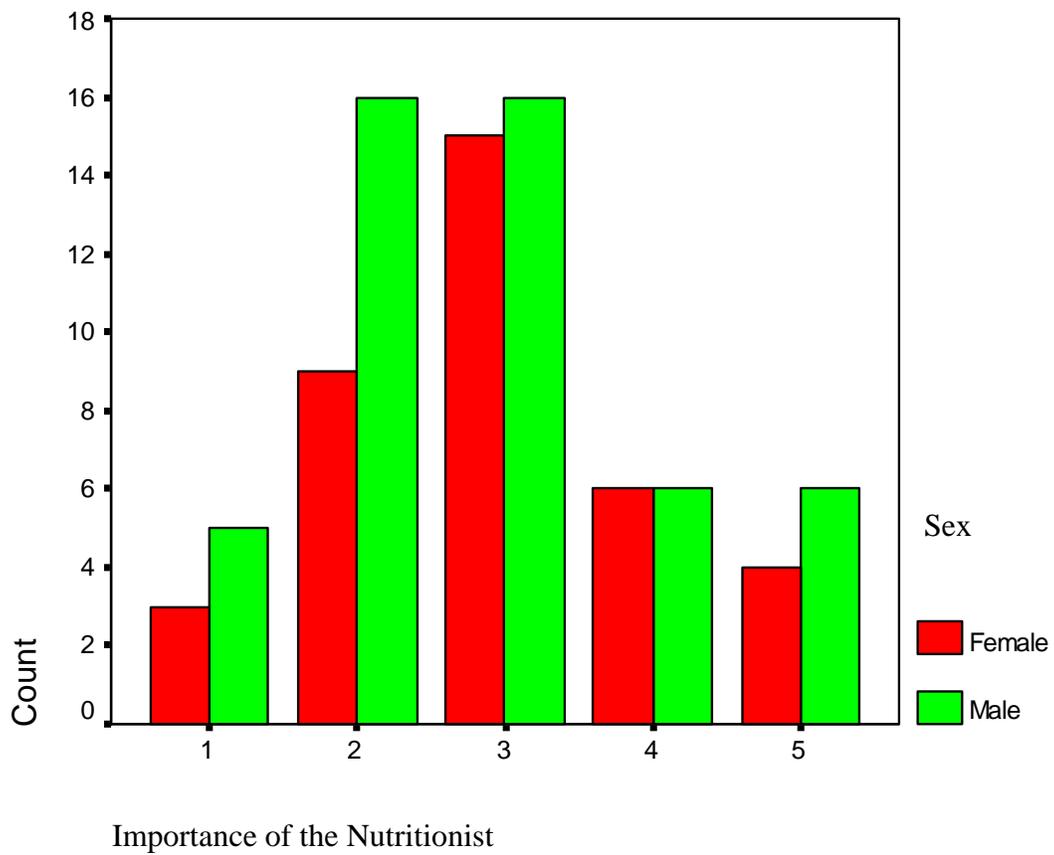


Chart 13
Question 28

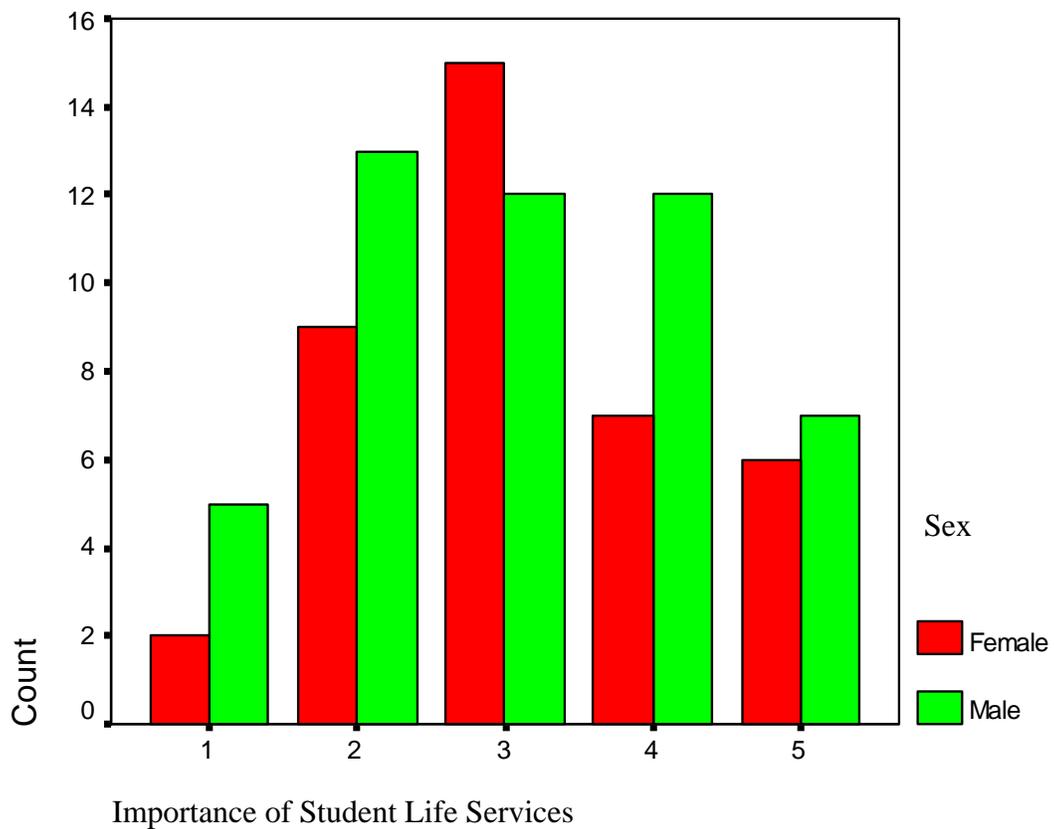


Chart 14

Question 32

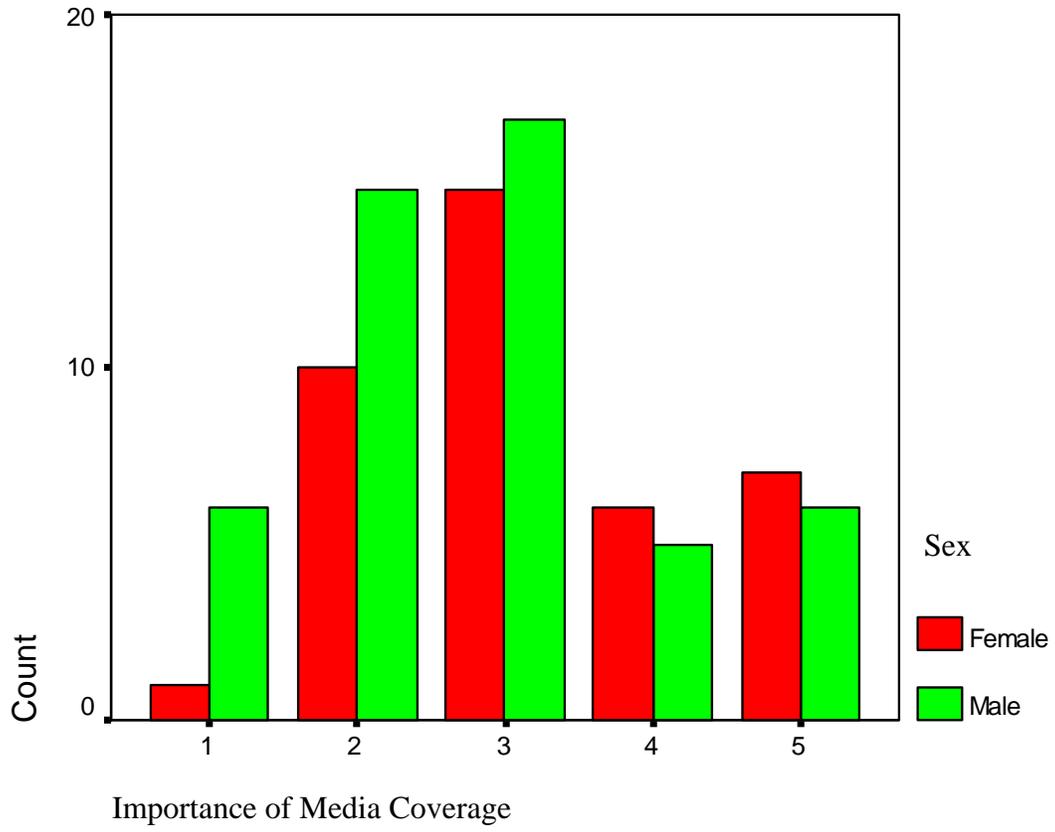


Chart 15

Question 33

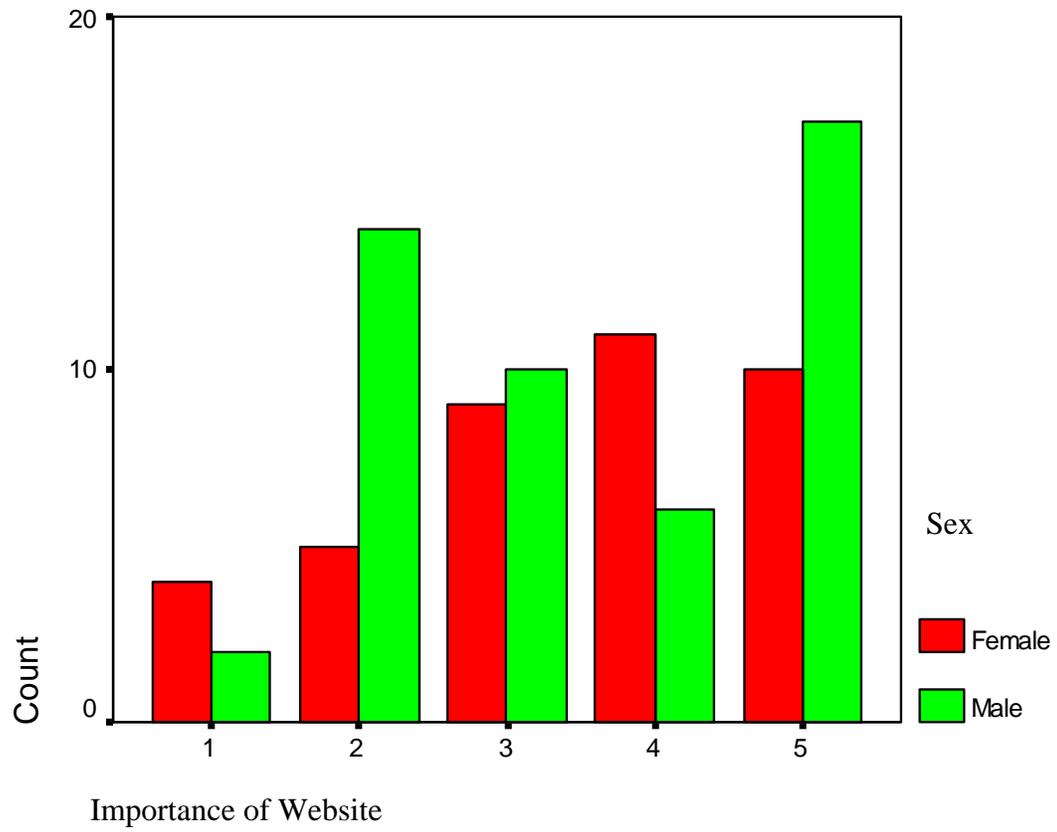


Chart 16

Question 36

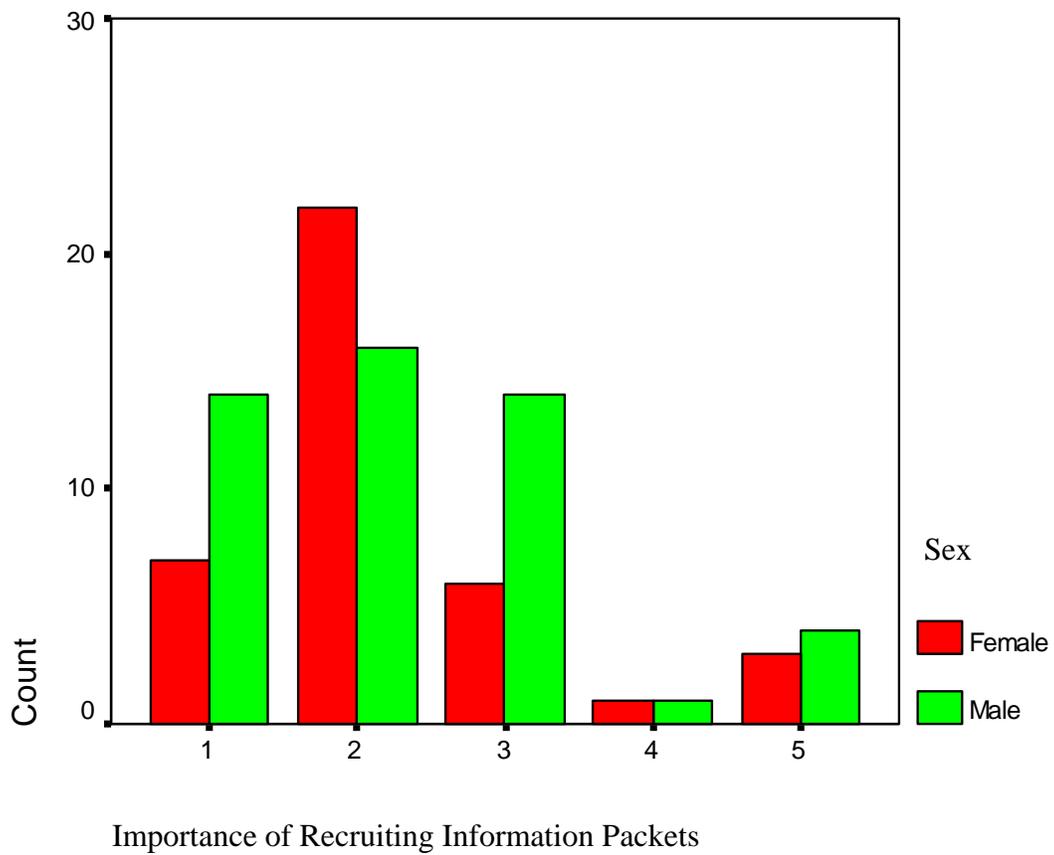


Chart 17

Question 38

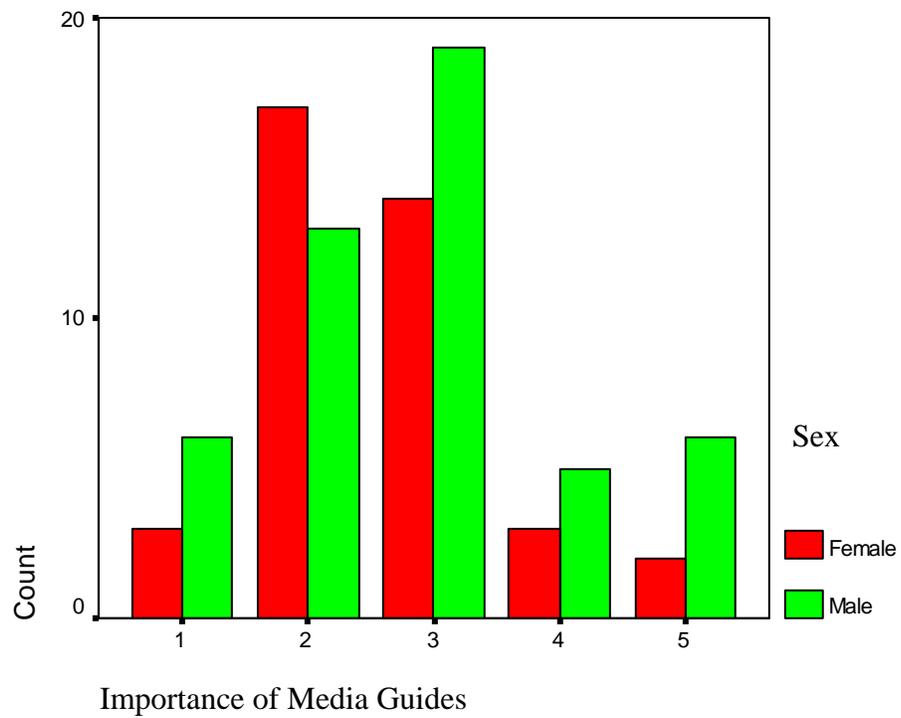


Chart 18
Question 11

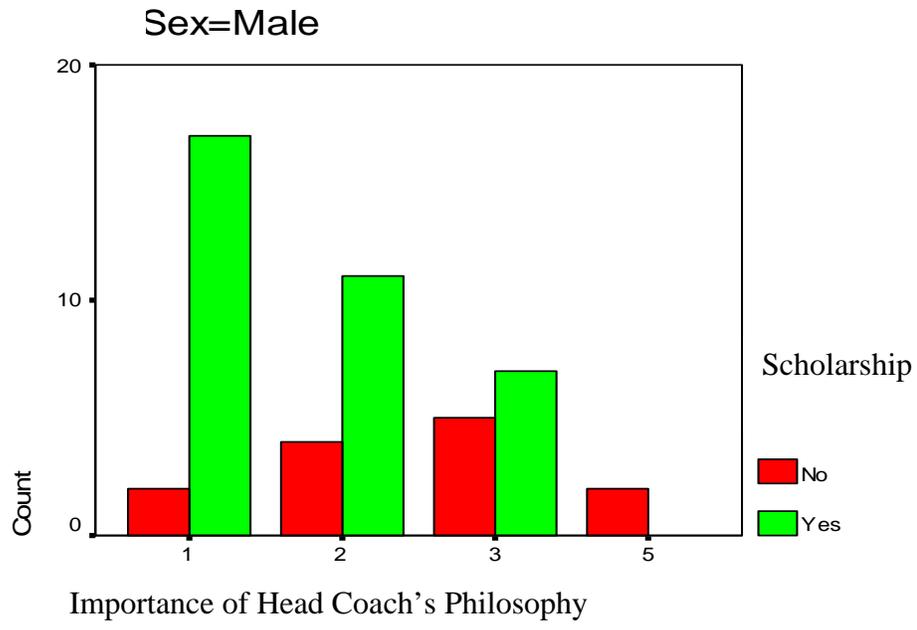


Chart 19
Question 11

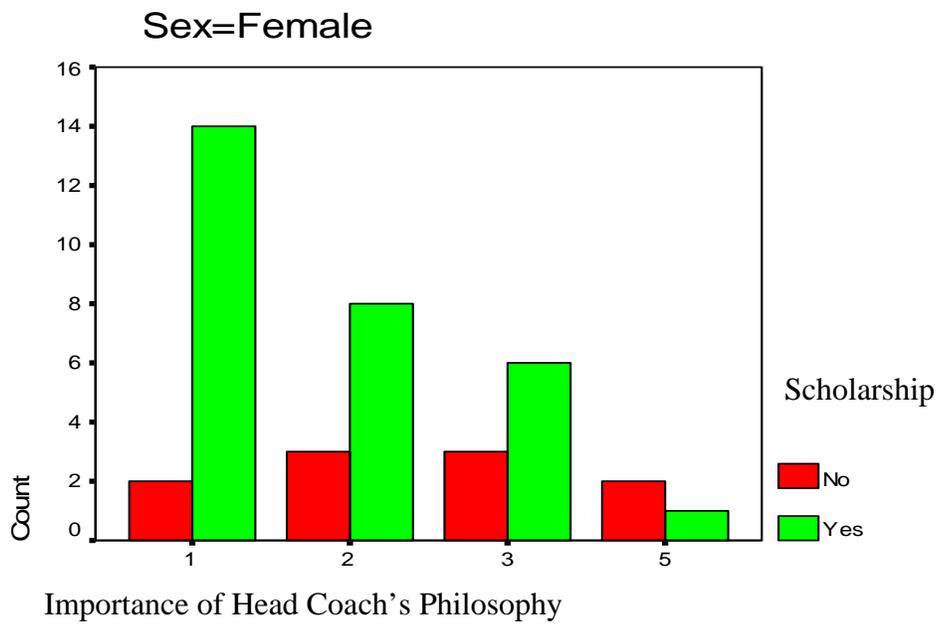


Chart 20

Question 12

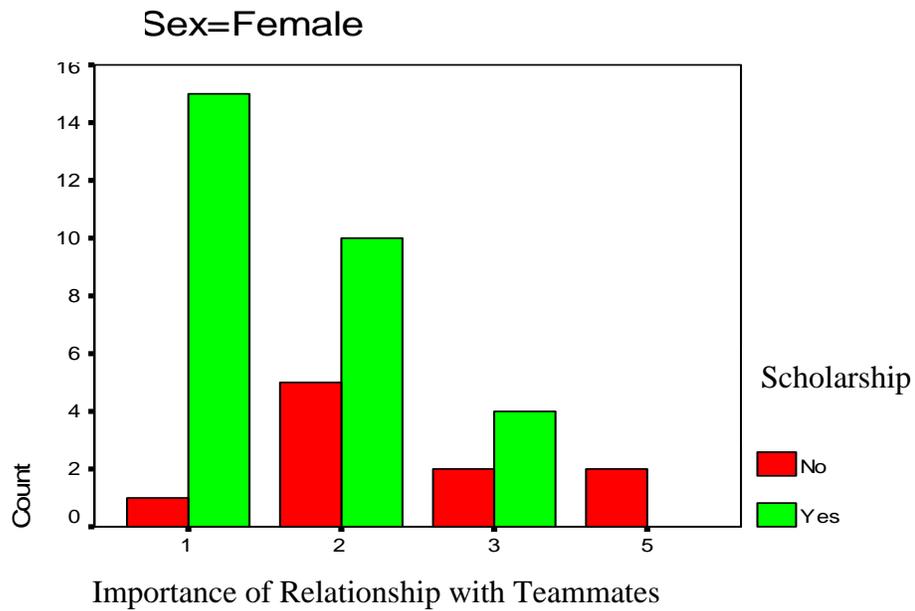


Chart 21

Question 12

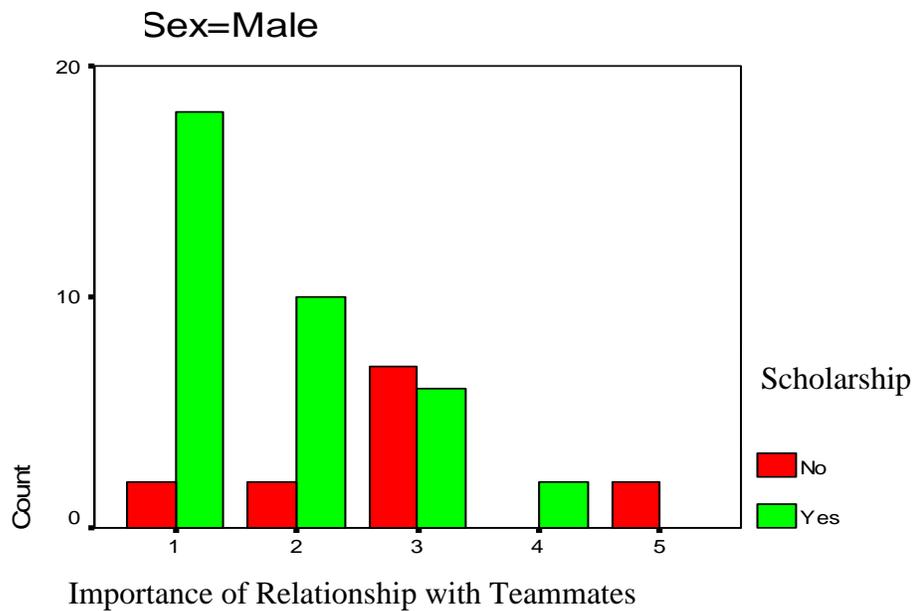


Chart 22

Question 21

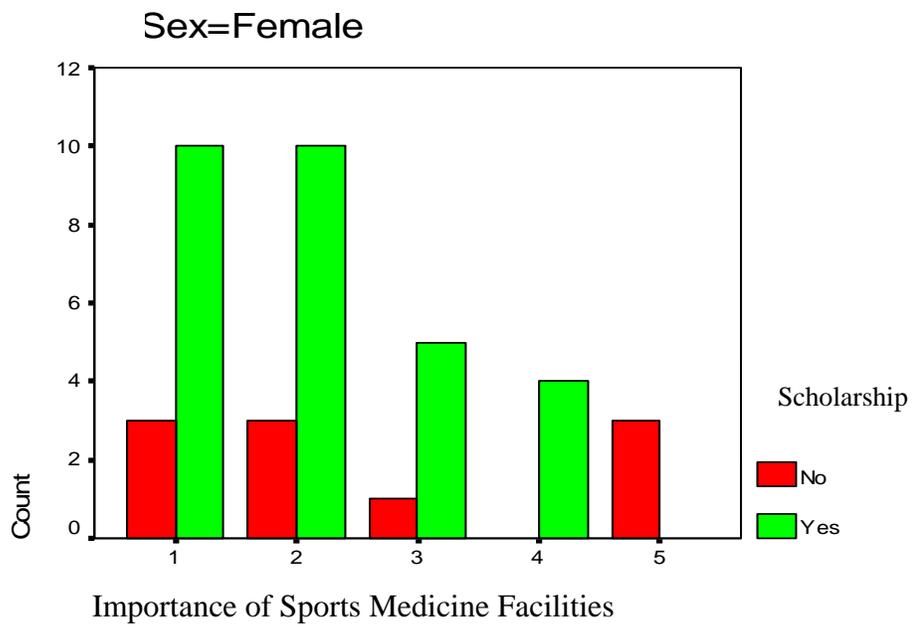


Chart 23

Question 21

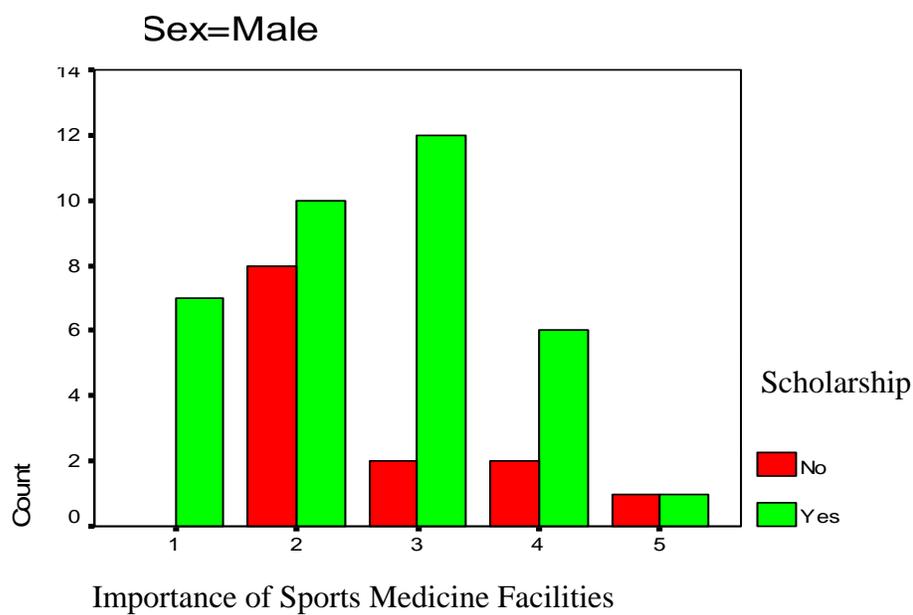


Chart 24

Question 9

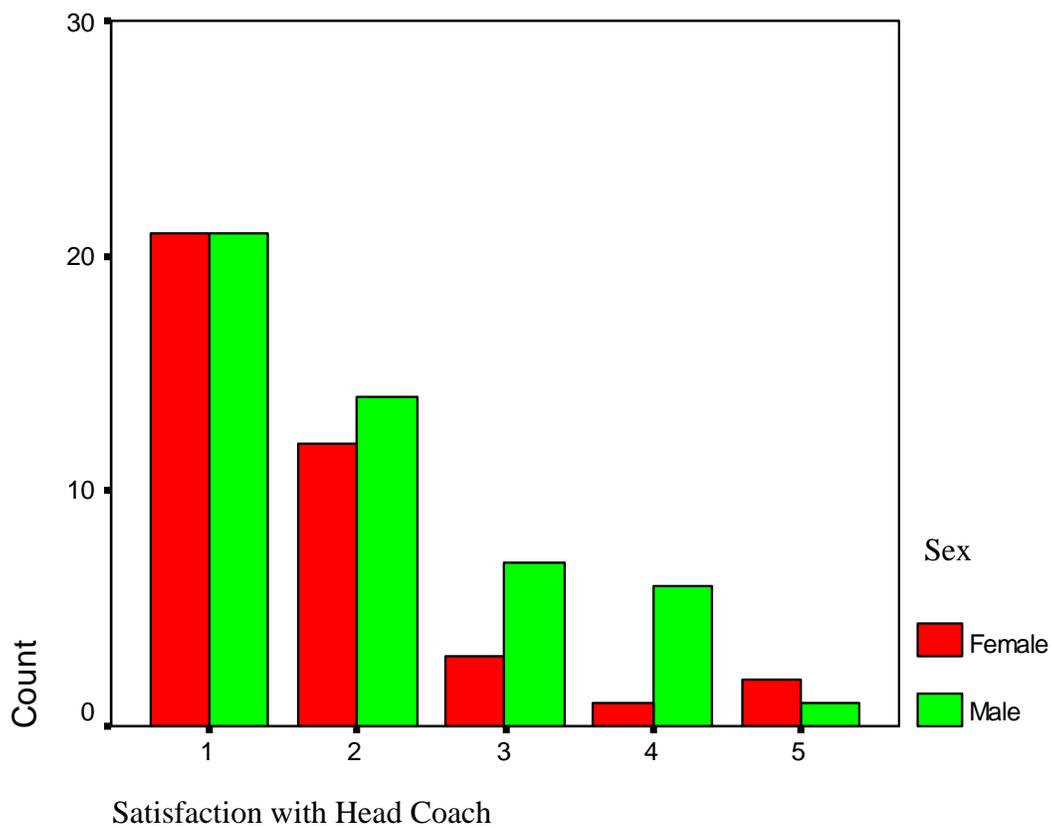
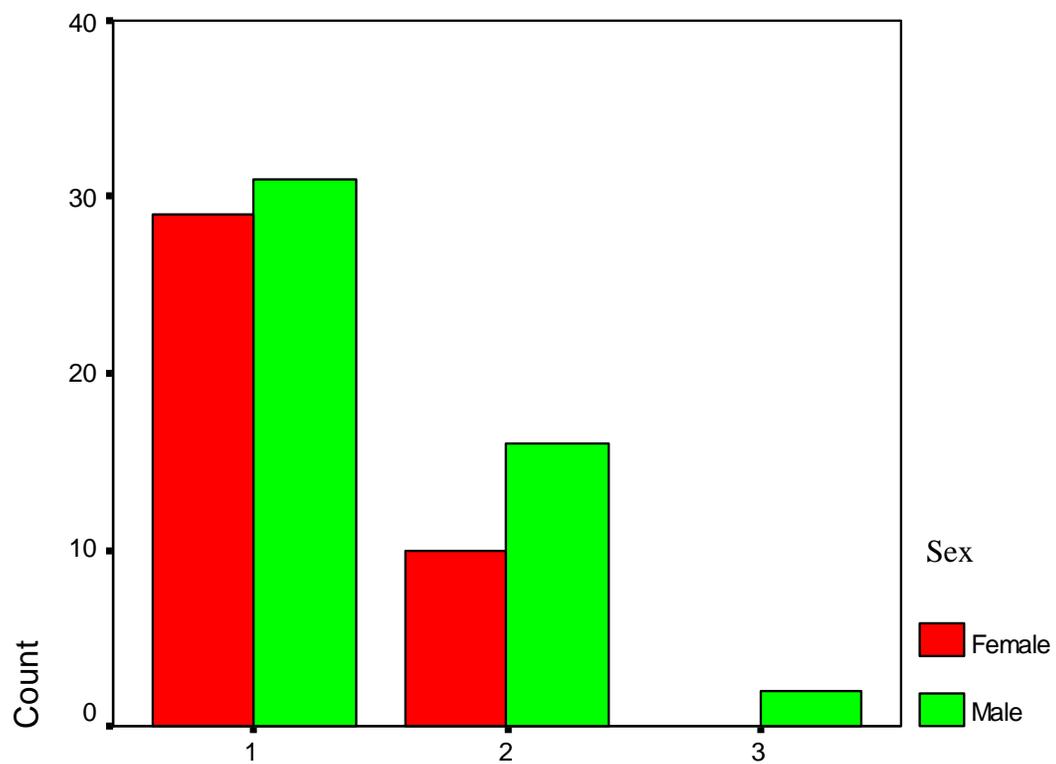


Chart 25

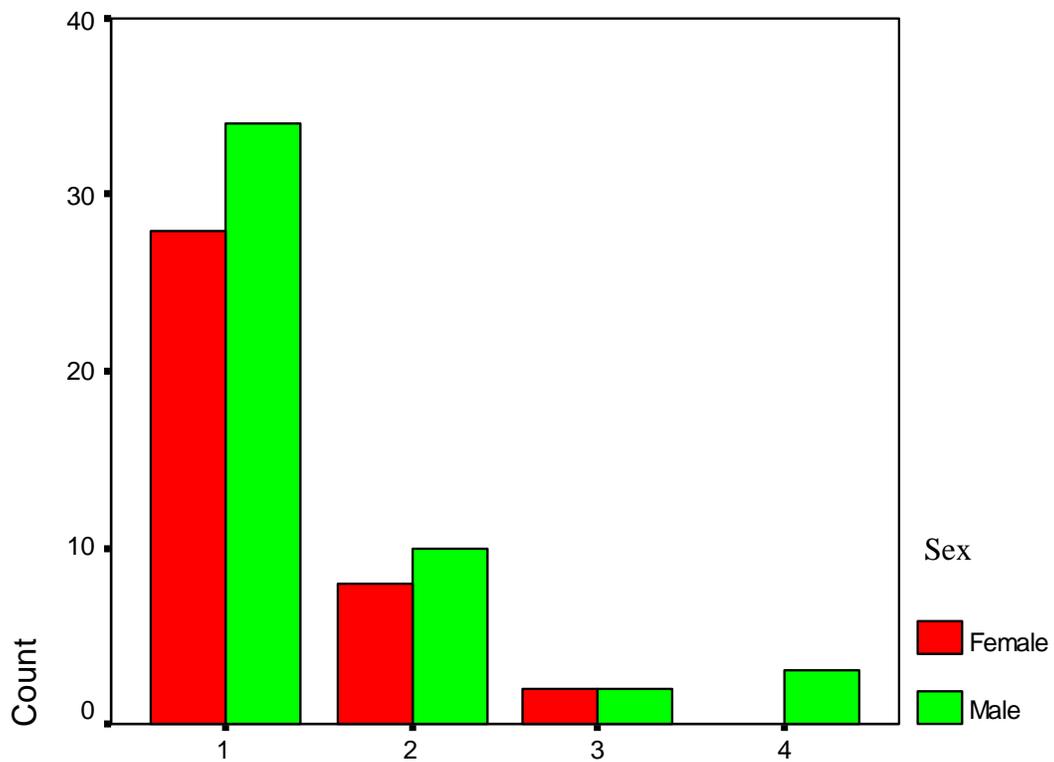
Question 13



Satisfaction with One's Relationship with Teammates

Chart 26

Question 15



Satisfaction with Decision to Participate at this University

Chart 27

Question 16

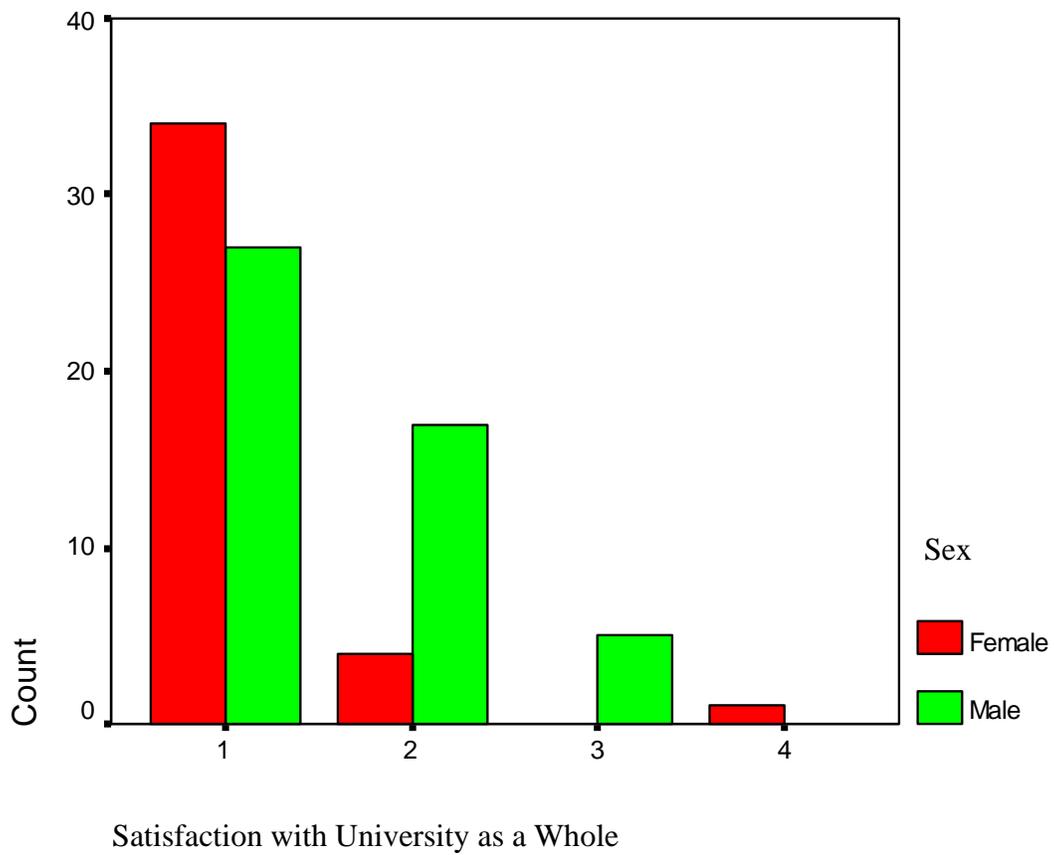


Chart 28

Question 17

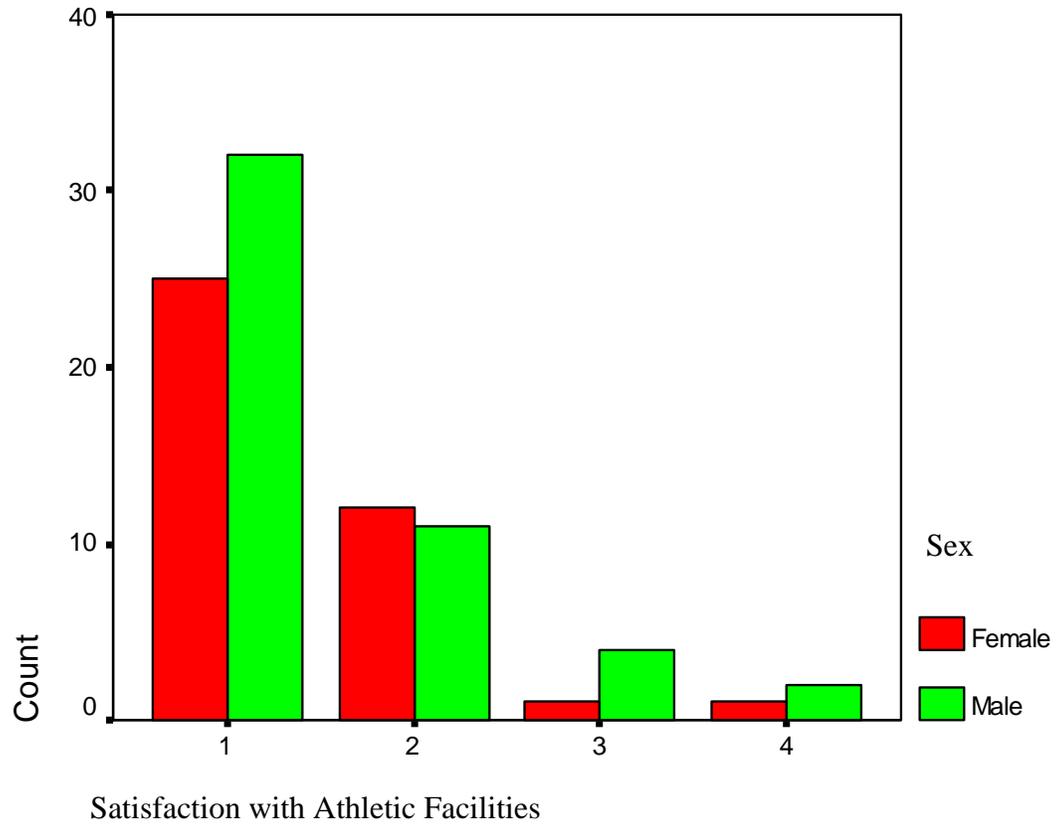


Chart 29

Question 24

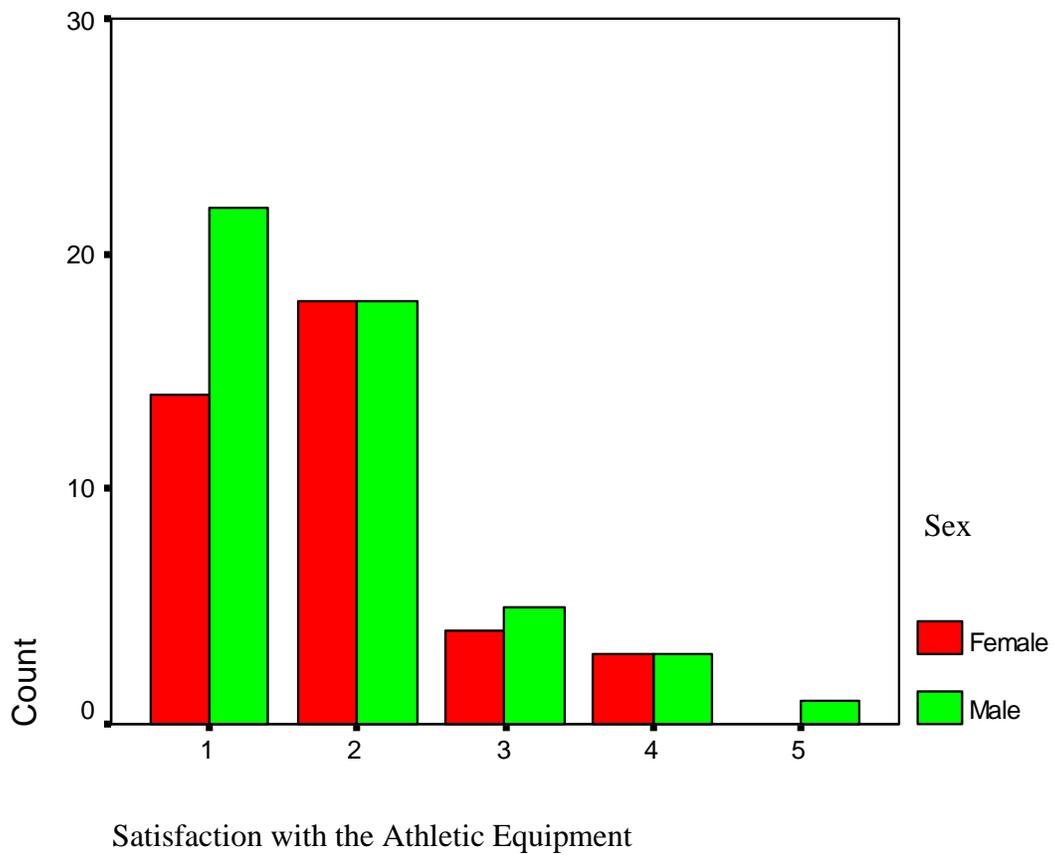


Chart 30

Question 26

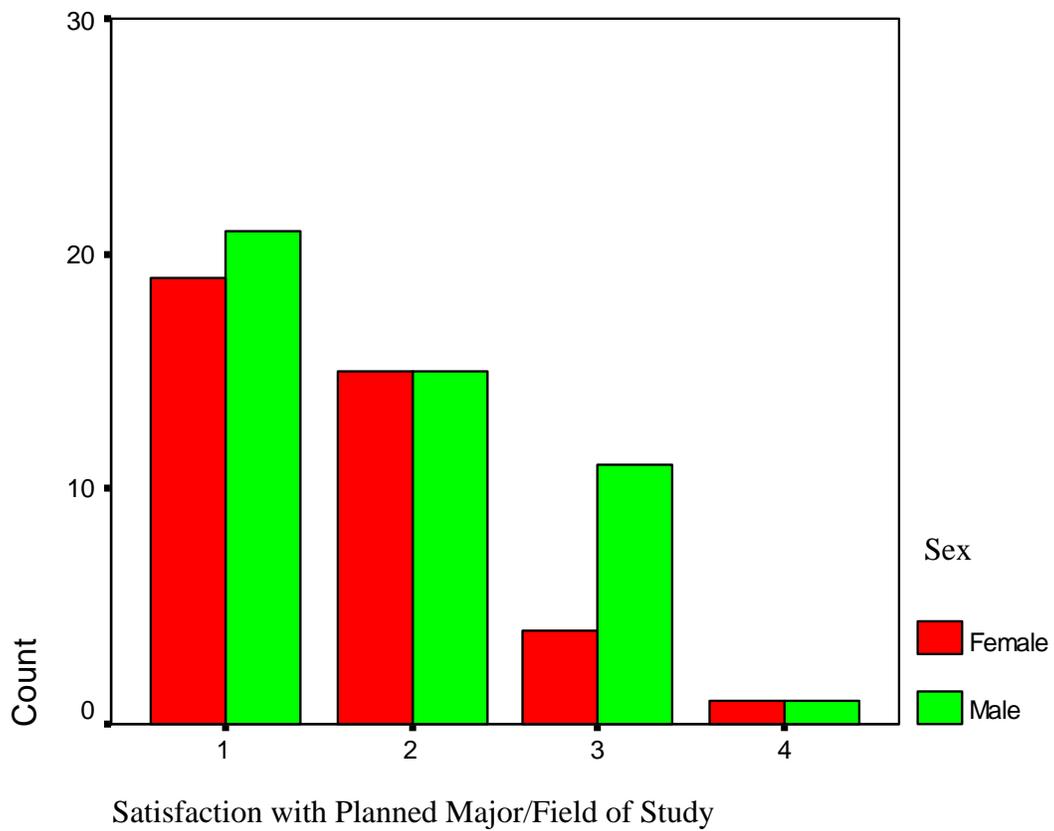
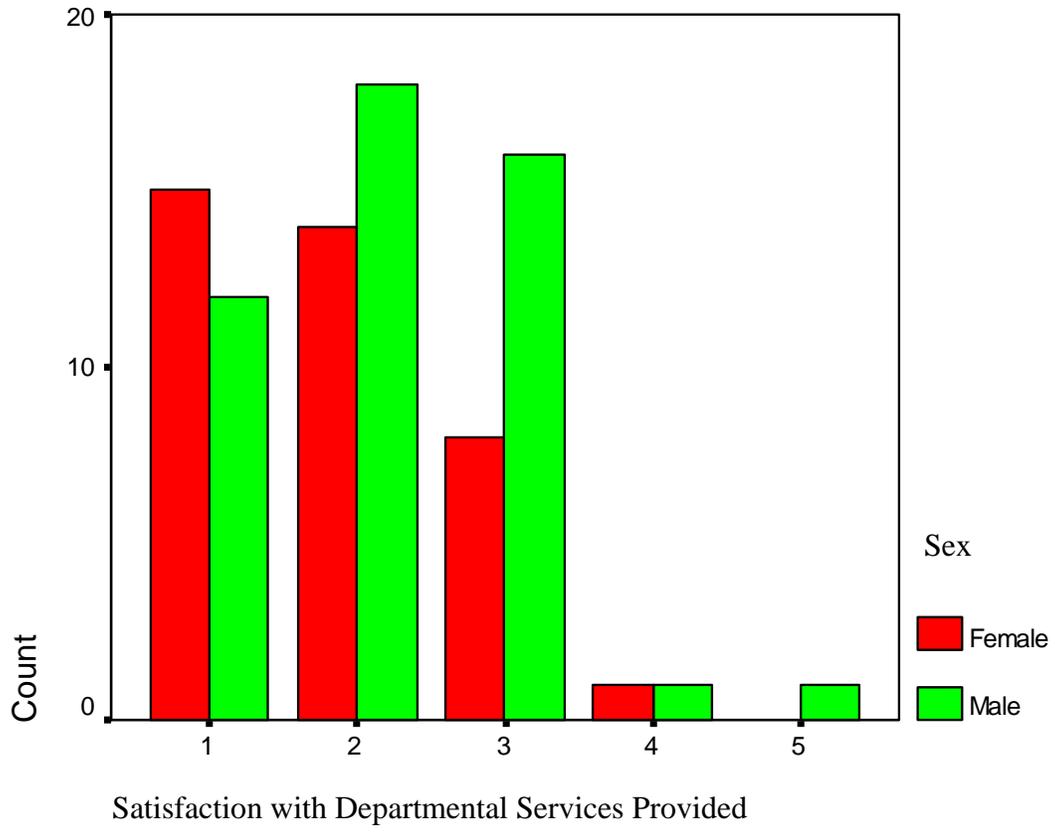


Chart 31
Question 29



APPENDIX C

Freshmen Student-Athlete Questionnaire

Directions

This questionnaire contains two types of questions: multiple choice and short answer. The multiple choice questions will allow you to circle one answer. Most of the multiple choice questions provide a scale from 1 to 5 (one being the most), circle one number that best corresponds with your answer. Questions that provide an answer line require a short answer that is written clearly and neatly. As a reminder, no personal identifying information will be provided on this questionnaire.

1. Sport _____
2. Sex Circle one: Male Female
3. Are you currently receiving a scholarship from the athletic department? Circle one: Yes No
4. Which schools did you participate in an official or unofficial visits? _____

5. Were you offered an athletic scholarship to attend another university? Circle one: Yes No
6. If you answered "Yes" to question number 5, please specify the amount.
Circle one: Full Scholarship Partial Scholarship
7. Please list any summer athletic camps or clinics that you may have attended. (Please include any Virginia Tech athletic camp in your answer) _____

8. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was your relationship with the Head Coach in the decision-making process?

	Very Important		Neutral		Not Important
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5
9. What is your level of satisfaction in regards to your relationship with the Head Coach?

	Very Satisfied		Neutral		Not Satisfied
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5
10. What impressed you most about this coach/coaching staff as opposed to other schools you have visited? _____

11. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the coach's philosophy in your decision-making process?

Very Important Neutral Not Important
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

12. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important were the relationships of the teammates in your decision-making process?

Very Important Neutral Not Important
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

13. What is your level of satisfaction in regards to your relationships with your teammates?

Very Satisfied Neutral Not Satisfied
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

14. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the athletic conference in your decision-making process?

Very Important Neutral Not Important
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

15. What is your level of satisfaction in regards to your decision to participate in athletics at Virginia Tech?

Very Satisfied Neutral Not Satisfied
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

16. What is your overall level of satisfaction in regards to the university as a whole?

Very Satisfied Neutral Not Satisfied
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

17. What is your level of satisfaction in regards to the athletic facilities at Virginia Tech?

Very Satisfied Neutral Not Satisfied
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

18. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important were the practice facilities in your decision-making process?

Very Important Neutral Not Important
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

19. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important were the competition facilities in your decision-making process?

Very Important Neutral Not Important
 Circle: 1 2 3 4 5

20. What would you like to see done to Virginia Tech's facilities that you have seen at another school? Please list the school with the facility. _____

21. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important were the sports medicine facilities in your decision-making process?

	Very Important		Neutral		Not Important
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5

22. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important were the strength and conditioning facilities in your decision-making process?

	Very Important		Neutral		Not Important
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5

23. Do you have a particular brand of equipment that you would be partial to as a new recruit coming to Virginia Tech? (ie — Nike, Reebok, Wilson, TPX, Ping, Asics, etc).

24. What is your level of satisfaction in regards to the athletic equipment provided by Virginia Tech? Very Satisfied Neutral Not Satisfied

Circle:	1	2	3	4	5
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25. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the athletic department's academic counseling services in your decision-making process?

	Very Important		Neutral		Not Important
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5

26. What is your level of satisfaction in regards to Virginia Tech academics in your planned major/field of study?

	Very Satisfied		Neutral		Not Satisfied
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5

27. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the athletic departments' nutritionist services in your decision-making process?

	Very Important		Neutral		Not Important
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5

28. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the athletic departments' student life services in your decision-making process?

	Very Important		Neutral		Not Important
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5

29. What is your level of satisfaction in regards to the services questioned above?

	Very Satisfied		Neutral		Not Satisfied
Circle:	1	2	3	4	5

30. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the success of your sport at Virginia Tech in your decision-making process?
- | | | | | | |
|---------|----------------|---|---------|---|---------------|
| | Very Important | | Neutral | | Not Important |
| Circle: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
31. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the success of other Virginia Tech sports in your decision-making process?
- | | | | | | |
|---------|----------------|---|---------|---|---------------|
| | Very Important | | Neutral | | Not Important |
| Circle: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
32. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the media coverage of Virginia Tech sports in your decision-making process?
- | | | | | | |
|---------|----------------|---|---------|---|---------------|
| | Very Important | | Neutral | | Not Important |
| Circle: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
33. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how important was the Virginia Tech website in your decision-making process?
- | | | | | | |
|---------|----------------|---|---------|---|---------------|
| | Very Important | | Neutral | | Not Important |
| Circle: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
34. How do you perceive your sport's coverage when it pertains to the athletic department website? Very Effective Neutral Not Effective
- | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Circle: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|
35. Are there any other school's websites that impressed you? If yes, what specifically about those sites impressed you? _____
-
36. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how effective were the recruiting information packets that you may have received in person or in the mail in your decision-making process?
- | | | | | | |
|---------|----------------|---|---------|---|---------------|
| | Very Effective | | Neutral | | Not Effective |
| Circle: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
37. What else would you like to see Virginia Tech include in our packet that may have been provided by another school? _____
-
38. Before making the final decision to come to Virginia Tech, how effective was the media guide in the decision-making process?
- | | | | | | |
|---------|----------------|---|---------|---|---------------|
| | Very Effective | | Neutral | | Not Effective |
| Circle: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

39. Please list the three most important factors and the two least important factors in your decision to come to Virginia Tech.

Most Important 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Least Important 1. _____

2. _____

40. What do you think needs to be improved on in your sport to aid in the recruiting process?

41. From the other schools you visited please list anything you would like to see available here at Virginia Tech? Be sure to include at which school you saw this needed addition.

Curriculum Vitae

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- Administrative Graduate Assistant for the Women’s Soccer
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(2001–2003)
- Graduate Assistant Certified Athletic Trainer for Athletics,**
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (1999-2001)
- EDUCATION:** **Doctor of Philosophy,** Curriculum and Instruction , Virginia
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Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2000
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 Gail Wheeler Davis (Mother)
 Melissa Gail Davis (Sister)
 Kristie Renee Davis (Sister)