



School Administrator's Leadership and Strategic Management Skills and Sports Performance

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INTRODUCTION

Sports performance is a key metric in assessing an athlete's success, often serving as the primary benchmark for their achievements in both local and international competitions. The level of an athlete's sports performance measured by their victories and the number of medals won reflect not only their individual abilities but also their country's standing in the global sports arena. Emara et al. (2020) highlighted that international sports performance is increasingly seen as a symbol of national pride, with the number of medals earned often serves as a key indicator of success. In this context, an athlete's success in competition becomes an extension of their nation's reputation on the world stage.

In the Philippine context, the government has recognized the importance of fostering athletic talent through its education system. Republic Act No. 5708 (1969) mandates the inclusion of physical education and sports development programs in schools across the country. The law stipulates that a well-rounded physical education program should not only support the physical growth of students but also promote social training and personal discipline. For those learners with athletic potential, the implementing sports program aims to enhance their skills and prepare them for different level of competitive sports. Furthermore, the success of these programs relies on the availability of resources, including adequate training facilities, specialized trainers, and structured training plans.

The performance outcomes of these competitions, such as the number of medals won, serve as key indicators of the effectiveness of school sports programs. These results offer a measurable way to assess how well the training programs are shaping young athletes. However, the success of such programs depends significantly on the leadership and management skills of school sports administrators. Effective administrators must be able to identify talented individuals, assign appropriate tasks to coaches and sports leaders, and ensure that resources are used efficiently to support the athletic development of students.

Looking specifically at the public school system in Batangas, there has been a noticeable decline in the sports performance of student-athletes over the years. This decline can be attributed to several factors that may affect the leadership and management skills of the school sports administrator to effectively implement the sports program. These common factors include resource limitations and insufficient infrastructure.

These ongoing challenges on the leadership and strategic management skills of the school sports administrator relevant to managing lack of resources and specialized trainers might have a direct impact on the performance of student-athletes in Batangas. This study seeks to determine the challenges faced by teacher-coaches in Batangas in their efforts to enhance sports performance in implementing sports programs.

The findings of this study will serve as a foundation for creating a sports leadership and management plan to enhance the sports programs across Batangas Province, Batangas City, and Lipa City.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized mixed method that involves collecting, analyzing and incorporating qualitative (e.g., focus group discussions or FGD, direct interviews) and quantitative (e.g., surveys) research, and conducts integration for a better understanding of the research problem than either of each alone. It employed exploratory sequential design of mixed methods which involved two phases: the qualitative phase that involved the gathering and transcribing qualitative information followed by the quantitative phase that involved the collection and analysis of quantitative data from the respondents. The study prioritized the qualitative data as the primary information used to determine the experiences of the participants relevant to the leadership and strategic management skills of the sports administrators in implementing sports program. The findings were followed up during the interpretation phase in the quantitative data of the study. The quantitative data derived from the initial qualitative results identified the factors affecting the leadership and management skills of the school sports administrator. In Phase I, the researcher began with the gathering of significant information, analyzing and transcribing of the qualitative data. He emphasized the qualitative method particularly employed direct interviews with the teacher-coaches across three

divisions of Batangas. In Phase II, the researcher subsequently collected and interpret the quantitative data acquired using surveys with the teacher-coaches to follow up or connect the results of the qualitative phase.

The study conducted across the three Schools Divisions of Batangas such as Batangas Province, Batangas City, and Lipa City. In Phase I, the researcher interviewed four (4) teacher-coaches per schools division to explore their experiences relevant to leadership and strategic management skills of the school sports administrator. In Phase II, the researcher conducted surveys in two hundred and fifteen (215) respondents to identify the affecting factors in relation to the leadership and management skills of School Sports Administrator in implementing Sports Program to enhance Sports Performance in Batangas.

RESULTS

The findings of the study were identified. In Phase I, the participants of the study described the leadership and management skills of the school sports administrator. Also, they identified how leadership and management skills affect the school sports performance. Based on the collected data from the participants, the researcher devised a comprehensive survey questionnaire using Factorial Analysis that discovered various factors that had been grouped into three categories: Optimal Performance Tactics, Sports Program Implementation, and Sports Training and Academic Responsibilities.

The result of the study in terms of Optimal Performance Tactics revealed that the respondents strongly agreed on the statement that the sports administrator advises his or her teacher-coaches to select players who are willing to participate in athletic training and it is highly evident that this scenario is presently happening to their respective institution as part of the implementation of school sports program to enhance the level of school sports performance with a mean of 3.493 (SD=0.594). On the other hand, it is moderately evident that respondents only agreed on the statement that the teacher-coaches establish a sinking fund to help athletes save money on sports equipment for training having a mean of 3.111 (SD=0.803).

Meanwhile, in terms of Sports Program Implementation, the study presented that most of the respondents agreed that teacher-coaches double their efforts to perform the assigned tasks simultaneously to complete their sports-officiating duties due to the scarcity of well-trained officials and it is moderately evident in their respective institution during the implementation of school sports program. On the other hand, the respondents also agreed that during the implementation of the sport program it is moderately evident that the teacher-coaches misread sports administrators' directions due to a communication barrier having a mean of 2.650 (SD=0.870).

Also, in terms of Sports Training and Academic Responsibility, the study showed that most of the respondents strongly agreed and highly evident that teacher-coaches constantly change their drills and workouts to make the most of obsolete sports equipment and materials due to limited financial capability to procure new high-quality sports materials having a mean of 3.387 (SD=0.685). Meanwhile, most them agreed on the statement that during the implementation of school sports program, it is moderately evident that Teacher-coaches lose motivation to improve their sports as a result of the sports administrator's failure to prioritize the low-performing sports event having a mean of 2.903 (SD=0.830).

DISCUSSIONS

The results from the conducted survey regarding to Optimal Performance Tactics revealed that the critical role of sports administrators in promoting effective athletic programs within schools. Respondents strongly agreed that administrators actively encourage teacher-coaches to select players willing to undergo athletic training, as evidenced by the high mean score of 3.493. This aligns with findings from international literature emphasizing the importance of motivation and commitment in athletic success. According to Bergeron et al. (2020), the willingness of student-athletes to engage in training significantly enhances their physical performance and mental resilience. Furthermore, active guidance from sports administrators ensures that teacher-coaches focus on developing the most committed athletes, fostering a culture of excellence in school sports programs. Conversely, the moderate agreement regarding the establishment of sinking funds to assist athletes in acquiring sports equipment highlights a gap in resource management, with a mean of 3.111. Financial constraints are a common challenge in school sports programs worldwide. Studies by Jowett and Shanmugam (2019) show that inadequate funding often limits athletes' access to quality equipment, potentially hindering their development. This finding underscores the need for innovative solutions, such as partnerships with local businesses or community fundraising, to address financial barriers. By implementing sustainable financial strategies, schools can support their athletes' development and ensure equitable access to resources, thereby improving the overall effectiveness of their sports programs.

Meanwhile, the findings in terms of Sports Program Implementation showed that significant challenges and adaptive strategies among teacher-coaches in implementing school sports programs. The respondents agree that teacher-coaches often take on dual roles, handling both teaching and sports-officiating duties, which is attributed to a lack of well-trained officials. This aligns with research indicating that teacher-coaches frequently face an increased workload due to the scarcity of specialized personnel in schools, especially in high-need or under-resourced areas. Effective professional development, such as instructional coaching, has been proposed as a solution to improve both teaching and sports-coaching outcomes. By integrating task-specific support and structured feedback, instructional coaching models have been found to address diverse needs in educational environments, including sports programs, by fostering skills and reducing role strain (Quintero, 2019; U.S. Department of Education, 2023). Moreover, the moderate agreement on communication barriers during program implementation, as indicated by a mean of 2.650, highlights an important area for improvement. Communication breakdowns between sports administrators and teacher-coaches can hinder the effective execution of sports initiatives. Research underscores that clear, consistent, and structured communication strategies are essential to bridging gaps in understanding and aligning goals among stakeholders in educational programs. Studies suggest that empowering teacher-coaches through regular, tailored professional development and fostering

collaborative environments can mitigate such barriers, ultimately enhancing program success and student engagement in sports (Brookings Institution, 2019; U.S. Department of Education, 2023). Addressing these issues through targeted interventions is crucial to improving sports program effectiveness and reducing stress among teacher-coaches.

In addition, the findings highlighted in terms of Sports Training and Academic Responsibilities was critical aspects of resource management and motivational challenges faced by teacher-coaches in school sports programs. The high agreement that teacher-coaches innovate by altering drills to adapt to outdated sports equipment reflects a resourceful response to limited budgets, a prevalent issue in many educational institutions globally. Studies indicate that financial constraints often push coaches to prioritize creativity over procurement, as maintaining engagement and performance becomes essential despite inadequate resources (Güllich et al., 2021). For instance, a study on coaching environments suggests that structuring training to maximize available tools can significantly enhance technical and tactical skill development (Cushion et al., 2010). These findings underline how adaptive strategies can mitigate financial barriers, ensuring effective training even with limited resources. On the other hand, the moderate agreement on teacher-coaches losing motivation due to the lack of administrative prioritization of low-performing sports events is consistent with broader concerns about systemic support in sports programs. Reduced funding and insufficient focus on diverse sports have been linked to declining morale among coaches and athletes, particularly in underperforming disciplines (Coach & Athletic Director, 2024). This issue aligns with calls for a more equitable allocation of resources and recognition across all sports to sustain long-term motivation and development (Bertram et al., 2021). Addressing such disparities requires proactive administrative strategies, including better communication and the integration of inclusive sports policies. Ultimately, these findings underscore the need for both adaptive practices by teacher-coaches and structural reforms within school sports programs to optimize performance and maintain engagement.

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