

Sports Program Management Of Eastern Samar State University System: Issues And Expressed Solutions

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Abstract

SPORTS PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OF EASTERN SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM: ISSUES AND EXPRESSED SOLUTIONS describes the perceived issues of the sports program management of Eastern Samar State University, in Eastern Samar, Philippines. This in order to attain consensually expressed solutions coming from athletes and coaches.

It covers, in general, the sporting events conducted within its 5 campuses, and its participated regional and national sports competitions system in the regional and national levels with its performance ratings and outcomes, reflective of the current sports program management.

It also specifically covers the current financial and support services on sport facilities, sport equipment, sport trainings and sport competitions – all affecting the sports program management of the institution.

Challenges and opportunities encountered are also presented – as voiced by coaches and athletes - noting that there is a significant comparative drop in the number of delegations and wins at the National State Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (SCUAA) Games vis-a-vis the inter-campus Quintuple Games.

Sports program management is consequently considered a key element in making sporting events better.

The cumulative data of this descriptive study - employing both qualitative and quantitative techniques - recommend that the sporting events – starting at the inter-campus Quintuple Games - be representative of equitable participation, a key factor in winning games.

This can be done by expanding and professionalizing the support services for athletes such as a) sport facilities, b) sport equipment, c) sport trainings, and d) sport competitions – all affecting the sports program management of the institution.

Deserving urgent attention, these concerns are data needing immediate action by way of sports reformation for the whole ESSU system. Its concrete expression is an institutionalized sports program management of the Eastern Samar State University system.

Keywords: sports program management, sports program, sporting events

Introduction

Background

The Quintuple Games

Cumulatively, the Eastern Samar State University (ESSU) system conducts every August the inter-campus Quintuple Games with twenty-four (**24**) sports events, namely: **12** for men (basketball, volleyball, football, baseball, athletics, sepak takraw, badminton, table tennis, lawn tennis, chess, taekwondo, and swimming) and **10** for women (basketball, volleyball, softball, athletics, badminton, table tennis, lawn tennis, chess, taekwondo and swimming). Two (**2**) were paired dance sports events: Latin American and Modern Standard.

Across the 5 campuses of ESSU, most sports conducted are Men's Basketball (MB), Men's Volleyball (MV), and Athletics – Men & Women (MWV).

About 700 athletes participate, where Borongan, the main campus heads always the medal tally.

After the Covid disruption of 2021, sporting events are slowly returning to full scale by 2024.

The Regional SCUAA Games

All in all, there is a sharp decline of the number of qualified athletes participating in the Regional and National State Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (SCUAA) Games compared to inter-campus Quintuple Games.

Likewise, a fluctuating over-all performance clincher rating per medal count is evident (max=33.3%, min=16.7%).

Because of this, a more systematic Sports Management calls for better results based on expressed issues of athletes and coaches alike.

Objectives and Scope

With the above concerns, this is a descriptive study on the sports program management of a tertiary education system covering 5 campuses in the eastern region of the Philippines. This study covers the conditions and needs of the following items – as expressed by athletes and coaches - for better sports performance:

- 1) Sport facilities;
- 2) Sport equipment;
- 3) Sport trainings; and
- 4) Sport competitions – all affecting the sports program management of the institution.

With athletes' and coaches' expressed concerns and solutions, a better sports program management can be achieved.

Participants of the Study

Classification of Respondents and its Corresponding Sample Size

RESPONDENTS	SAMPLE SIZE					
	Male	%	Female	%	TOTAL	%
1. ATHLETES	150	49.18	103	33.77	253	82.95

2. SPORTS MANAGERS						
a. COACHES	37	12.13	10	3.28	47	15.41
b. SPORTS COORDINATORS	4	1.31	0	0	4	1.31
c. SPORTS DIRECTOR	1	.33	0	0	1	.33
Total	42	13.77	10	3.28	52	17.05
Grand Total	192	62.95	113	37.05	305	100

This study consisted of two groups of respondents. The first group: **52 sports managers** (1 sports director, 4 sports coordinators and 37 male and 10 female coaches) as respondents.

The second group were **253 athletes (150 male and 103 females)** representing five campuses of Eastern Samar State University – namely, Can-avid, Maydolong, Salcedo and Guiuan (satellite campuses) and Borongan, the main campus.

As purposive sampling was used, lists of athletes and sports managers participating in Regional SCUAA Games were first provided by the sports director in the main campus and by the sports coordinators in the four other campuses.

Of the 404 athletes listed, only 253 of them answered the key questionnaire as a lot of them have graduated, some dropped, and a few were on job trainings when the data gathering was conducted. At the period of the study, the sample then represented 62%.

While of the 62 listed sports managers in the five campuses of ESSU, only 10 were unable to answer due to their unavailability during the entire period of interview. Thus, an 83% representation was culled for this study.

Particular to note here were three (3) males and five (5) female athletes, six (6) males and two (2) female coaches who were multi-event participants. The sports coordinators, too, were coaches of their own specializations. Their responses were maximized as to their participations; however, they were counted as individuals with regards to their current representation as respondents.

Thus, the **305** key respondents. Out of these, **50** participated in series of the Focus-Group Discussions for athletes, coaches and sports managers.

Basic Issues

- 1) Athletes from campuses other than the main regularly performs less in terms of participated sports events, and come behind in terms of medal counts.

Table 1. Performance in the Quintuple Games in the Last Three Years (2014-2016

QUINTUPLE GAMES	NUMBER OF ATHLETES					PERFORMANCE				
	Can-avid	Borongon	Maydolong	Salcedo	Guiaun	Can-avid	Borongon	Maydolong	Salcedo	Guiaun
Quintuple Games 2014	134	188	136	150	92	1G, 7S, 3B	17,G, 4S,2B	1G, 7S, 3B	1G, 3S, 12B	4G,3S,3B
Total	700					160= 4.5	505= 1	160=4.5	190= 2	175= 3
Quintuple Games 2015	110	192	133	92	103	0G, 2S, 7B	16G, 5S,2B	2G,6S,1B	2G, 5S,7B	4G,6S,5B
Total	630					100= 5	495= 1	150= 4	195= 3	240= 2
Quintuple Games 2016	108	206	134	127	119	1G,6S,3B	16G, 6S,1B	2G,7S,2B	2G,2S,14B	3G,2S,3B
Total	694					145= 4	500= 1	175= 3	210= 2	105= 5

The Quintuplet Games in the five campuses of the Eastern Samar State University (ESSU) centers in 24 sports events held at the inter-campus Quintuple Games. Quintuple Games refer to the participating 5 campuses of the tertiary education system. Borongan (the main campus) always gets the highest number of athletes' delegation and number of wins. The other 4 campuses follow in varying degrees.

This table of performance summarizes the result of sports program management of the whole ESSU system.

2) Significant drop in number of game participation and medals in the bigger regional and national sports events.

There is a significant drop in the number of delegations and wins at the National SCUAA Games compared to the inter-campus Quintuple Games. This disparity, the study indicates, is a largely a matter of sports management, whose challenge is to make the sporting events of ESSU more encompassing in terms of preparation and participation.

Table 2. Performance in the Regional Games in the Last Three Years (2014-2016)

REGIONAL Games	NUMBER OF ATHLETES					PERFORMANCE				
	Can-avid	Borong an	Maydolon g	Salced o	Guiua n	Can-avid	Borongan	Maydolong	Salcedo	Guiuan
Regional Games 2014	21	92	11	21	27	(23 Entries, 1 NE) 0G, 1 S, 3B = 4 , 19 NW				
Total	172					16.7%				
Regional Games 2015	11	102	15	27	34	(24 Entries) 4G, 2 S, 2B = 8 , 16 NW				
Total	189					33.3%				
Regional Games 2016	19	118	23	21	28	(24 Entries) 1G, 1 S, 3B = 5 , 18 NW				
Total	209					20.9%				
G- Gold S- Silver B- Bronze NW- Non Winner NE- No Entry										

Despite an increased number of athletes delegation in 3 years (from 172 athletes to 209), to the regional off-campus sporting events, a fluctuating over-all clincher performance in terms of medal count is evident (max=33.3%, min=16.7%).

In the wider extra-mural sports activities, such performance merits a second look at the current Sport Program Management of ESSU system.

3) The Office of the Sports Director is aware of this sports performance issues - and so is the whole sports community.

A basic data from the Office of Sports Director, ESSU main campus showed that in 2017, for example, out of 694 players who competed in the twenty-four sports (24) events conducted in the 2016 Quintuple Games, 209 athletes (30%) were trained for the Regional SCUAA Games but only 13 (1.87%) made it to the National SCUAA Games 2017 (see Table 3).

Table 3. The National SCUAA Games (2015 and 2017)

NATIONAL GAMES	NUMBER OF ATHLETES					PERFORMANCE				
	Can-avid	Borong an	Maydo long	Salce do	Guiuan	Can-avid	Borong a n	Maydolo ng	Salcedo	Guiuan
National Games 2015	0	6	3	1	0	(6 Entries , 18 NE) 0G, 2S, 0B= 2, 4 NW				
Total	10					8.3%				
National Games 2017	4	3	4	2	0	(8 Entries , 16 NE) 0G, 0S, 0B= 0, 8 NW				
Total	13					0%				

The table above shows very low level of performance at the National SCUAA Games compared over the large initial participation in the Quintuple and Regional Games.

The challenge, therefore, is to make the sporting events of the Eastern Samar State University (ESSU) more encompassing and more competitive enabling ace athletes be reared who can represent equitably the five campuses of the university based on their niche games perfected through a well-supported sports management program.

4) This awareness on sports performance is likewise expressed by coaches and athletes in this study – in specific manner.

Various focus group discussions among athletes and coaches expressed a series of practical issues like lack of financial support, perceived inadequacy and inappropriateness of training for both athletes and coaches themselves.

In terms of financial support, a focus-group discussion in Can-avid campus, which athletes describes their facilities as mapurot, in the local dialect, this means ugly. Among the many reasons is the lack of financial support for facilities:

“Is there a budget in ESSU for all sports facilities?”

“Yes, there is but is insufficient.”

“What could be the reason?”

“Budget available is only for [seasonal] maintenance.”

“How is your playing area? Any improvement?”

“Mapurot.” [It is ugly.]

“How about your volleyball court?”

“It is mossy...ugly... though they clean it anyhow.”

Pertaining to sports materials, some key instruments are missing:

“There is no maintenance of materials like [highly-needed] chess clocks.”

There is also no clear designated place between indoor and outdoor games confusing sports drills and minimizing outputs:

“There are three ball rehearsals occupying the same narrow field. We cannot execute properly as we are afraid to be hit by the ball.”

Statement of the Problem

As Sports Program Management involves so many factors, this study decided – as items of inquiry - to shed light on the following:

- 1) Sport facilities;
- 2) Sport equipment;
- 3) Sport trainings; and
- 4) Sport competitions – all affecting the sports program management of the institution.

This is to map issues that would come to light and propose recommendations.

Data Gathered and Interpreted

The best data were gleaned no less from the coaches and athletes themselves via focus-group discussions, to better elucidate the issues in their most fundamental level.

1) Facilities

For the Sports Director (SD) of Borongan campus, there are the much-needed sport facilities, just incomplete: there is no swimming pool.

To compensate, swimming trainers utilize “natural resources” – the wide eastern sea fronting the Pacific Ocean, and rivers flowing into it.

But SD warns of the dangers in such a venue for lack of lifeguards:

“It is not enough that we simply go there. There should be life guards waiting, to pre-empt accidents.”

The lack of trained life-savers is by itself a compounding issue.

Likewise, there is no gym. But for the SD, he is long pursuing it with occasional meetings with local politicians. This means a long, patient lobbying with people continuously changing seats, who by themselves are external to the institution: to put in their government funds to it.

This will surely take a long time.

2) Sports Equipment

The unified voices of athletes and coaches speak clearly about the difficulty of obtaining equipment. Some athletes in chess and other table sports said:

“In the beginning, we could ask from the supply office. But now, we bring our own chess mat, chess clock.”

Others resort to “begging” to obtain their sports materials:

“In softball, we practically beg before we are given [our equipment].”

Other coaches spend their own money for their athletes’ gears:

“In dance sports, the school spends only for shoes. I spend for the upper vests.”

Among the sporting world of the campus, a subtle argument is exchanged among athletes, coaches and the Sports Director.

The Sports Director opined that the passion of the coach is needed foremost:

“I think, it is cardinal for a coach to have innate passion. Without passion knowledge and skills are nothing.”

Other coaches beg to disagree – even if one is filled with passion without the proper facilities, nothing can happen:

“I might be full of passion, but without the venue to dance on, it is worthless.”

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To which some athletes opined, both material support and psychological factors must be factored in:

“You can’t simply be contented with your equipment. It is not an assurance. The two: passion and provision of facility and equipment must factor in.”

The athletes best know, especially those studying outside of main campus. Their equipment is way below their expectations:

“There’s none” [in reference to basic sports equipment].

Those in the athletics event expressed that:

“Even the running shoes issued to us is not recommended for sports”

Surely, this affects performance - draining passion - as supplies, like shoes are uncomfortable to athletes:

“These adversely affect performance.”

A coach explains on the matter:

“There are in fact issued running shoes. But athletes are not comfortable because of low quality, despite there is specific budget for it.”

Even volleyball used in games was substandard, reflecting a problem in procurement system:

“Last year our volleyball looked weird compared to the rest”

And so is Taekwondo:

“It is only now that a taekwondo mat is supplied.”

Another coach pointed out that:

“There is a problem in our procurement system.”

Whether this is a systems problem, or involving transparency, there is a lack of participative decision-making between the sports manager and the purchasing office because:

“Only the budget officer is left on his own to do the purchasing”

3) Trainings

Both athletes and coaches agree they receive sports-related trainings.

Athletes are vocal that when they go on training, they are given material incentives like health supplements and energy drinks:

“When we practice, we get vitamins. That is our motivation. We have Gatorade too if we train for the SCUAA (the regional and national sports events).

However, some academic teachers are not supportive of their sports training, exempting them not from certain classes:

“Despite of a memo for our training, but we are not excused from our class attendance. That is why, as long as we still have classes, we do not go out for the training as our teacher do not exempt us from classes.”

Athletes feel the need to class exemption during trainings as these occur only when the competitions are tightly near:

“Our training is not even year-round. We do it only when the event is fast approaching.”

Coaches, similarly need training for coaches, as this will synergize sports development across the five campuses, that would result to a comprehensive sports program:

“After athlete selection, what happens next? Is there still a budget after selection? None! As each campus go on their own.”

Hence, every coach realizes campus should synergize trainings for coaches so that a more unified and cohesive sports management can be achieved, and this needs money:

“Our sports budget is way less sufficient. It is not enough even for fare.”

Because of this, a unified lobby for sport management budget must be done.

4) Competitions

In the previous tables (1, 2 and 3) some things are obvious:

1. Within the inter-campus sports competition (Quintuples), it is mostly the main campus who top it. The obvious reason is: most of the sports equipment are stored in their campus.
2. Participation is smaller, and winning chance gets slimmer in the regional and national sport meets. According to coaches and athletes, it is because of lack equipment, uncoordinated trainings and less participation of every teaching personnel in the sporting event efforts.

Moreover, other preparatory works like paper processing relative to the different sports competition – especially insurance coverage and basic allowances - need utmost attention which could derail the safety of the athletes and coaches, and jeopardize their support for basic consumables.

Some coaches observed that depression is palpable among athletes:

“They get depressed when they lose [in the competitions]. They could not perform well academically.”

Worse, with this situation, there is no immediate briefing, bringing this attention to the Sports Director. This consistently persists, game after game:

“Don’t you have meeting with the Sports Director regarding this?

“None.”

“But do you earnestly believe if you have it [briefing on depression and other related matters], will it improve performance?]

“Yes.”

This indicates a deep relationship between sports and student psychology that must be addressed to as part of sports management.

CONCLUSIONS

The above discussions give the following conclusions:

- 1) Much improvement is needed in the competitive sports events. This must start within the individual five campuses of the Eastern Samar State University system as tabulated number and expressed needs of athletes and coaches show. This improvement should mean a higher number of participation and wins in extra-mural sports activities.
- 2) There are no adequate sport facilities – especially for ball games - that drills are conducted within cramped spaces, putting athletes at risk.

A much-needed swimming pool is likewise absent.

- 3) Basic sport equipment, such as time clocks for chess, mats for martial arts, balls for ball games is lacking that coaches, athletes and their supporters pitch in money themselves. There is psycho-emotional connection to this as some athletes feel themselves on the begging end just to have their much- needed equipment.
- 4) Sport trainings are described by coaches as unsystematic, uncoordinated, if there is any. A sports program management is needed to unify sporting efforts.

Regular, more frequent, small-scope sports activity are needed so that every one is always geared to sporting events.

Emotional correlates are observed by coaches, affecting academic performance of athletes. This, according to coaches do not reach the office of the Sports Director. An specific approach to manage this is needed.

- 5) Sport competitions are won almost all by the main campus Borongan because, for one, sports equipment are in their campus, while the other satellite campuses do not have enough, if any they have. Because sport competition outcomes affect academic results, an integral balance on sport-academic life is needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Among themselves, coaches and athletes alike recommend that:

- 1) The much-needed improvement in the competitive sports events starts in realizing that much voices of coaches and athletes must be incorporated to the sports management program itself. This is because their experiences in the field competing with other athletes and coaches of different schools show that much has to be improved within ESSU system itself. After all, competition and teamwork create possibility of higher returns and higher returns, find novel solutions, and therefore improve performance (Edmondson and Harvey, 2018; O'Neill and Salas, 2018).
- 2) Start considering direct sponsorship from private individuals and local businesses to boost funds for sports development, while at same time promoting local businesses and enterprises. This is to make sure that basic sport equipment, such as time clocks for chess, mats for martial arts, balls for ball games be directly answered at the lowest level so that the psycho-emotional connection of athletes to their own locality be deepened. (Nobles:2017)

- 3) If a much-needed swimming pool is absent, and the sea and rivers are open for everyone for swimming, then train every coach and swimmer in safe swimming at these types of environment as part of their training package. After all, a direct communion with environment have lasting positive effects in sports performance. (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989).
- 4) Because sport trainings are unsystematic, uncoordinated, create a Sports Council that would coordinate every sports-related project and tie every activity and program to relevant academic – related goals of the university system. Such could happen if the ESSU system is open to direct mentoring from other local universities who are consistently doing sports-related partnerships. The benefits of this are many, with both participating schools benefiting from it. (Sawiuk, 2019)
- 1) Since regular, more frequent, small-scope sports activity are recommended, feature sporting events in every school-wide activities like Nutrition Month, Language Month, etc. aimed mainly to showcase local sports talents so that everyone is aware of the sporting activities of the school.

This will also open to “decentralize” competitive gains on the main campus alone as these small-scope sports activity become more enjoyable when shared with athletes coming from various campuses of the school system.

Also, academic and sport priorities better balances as both are considered equal in the development of the whole learning system.

Further, since these activities generally are open to the local community, these can be used as venue in seeking outsiders who could be potential sports scholars of the institutions, as one coach would say:

“ These outsiders will become our players.”

Likewise emphasize showcasing talks on sports and related research endeavors during these time to students and

faculty alike, so that exchange of information in analyzing sports endeavors become a habit regularly.

Further, because students and faculty alike desires to know useful issues regarding various topics, use the same celebrations in showcasing individual and collective experiences in the sporting activities of the campus to highlight human values at work in dealing with various challenges in sports. This is to “humanize” sports, enabling personal connection at its fundamental level. (see Orhan:2020)

- 2) Put emphasis on training coaches and sports managers on handling emotional resiliency of athletes regularly because the emotional connection in sports is a fundamental. (Gould, Collins, Lauer, & Chung, 2007), (Gould, D., & Carson, S., 2010)

Right now, there are free online courses from reputed institutions that can answer these needs. They must be tapped.

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