

Best Practices of Private Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program

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Abstract

This study crafted a Strategic Management Model to effectively govern schools with varsity sports program. The internal and external factors were studied to identify the best practices of secondary private schools with Champion Varsity Sports program. The level of agreement of the stakeholders such as the coaches, student athletes, parents, sponsors, and educational administrators was also revealed to strengthen its best practices. The study utilized exploratory research design using qualitative and quantitative research methods and in-depth interview as the primary data gathering instrument. Respondents of the study were the sport director and coaches from champion varsity sports program and its stakeholders. More so, a purposive sampling design was utilized in the selection of sample and sample size. Results disclose that the internal factors directly affect the performance of the Varsity Sports program while on the other hand, the external factors may or may not affect it. Strategic Management model was crafted and patterned after Systems Theory where the internal and external factors served as the key components of the Varsity Sports Management model. Thus, it was recommended to create Varsity Sports program about camaraderie and teamwork, conduct further studies on the organizational structure and the role of the sponsors, and to consider other stakeholders for a much broader perspective of the program.

Keywords: Sports Management, Strategic Management Model, Varsity Sports Program, School Sports

Introduction

The success of a school varsity sports program depends much on good strategic decisions rather than the performance of the athletes, notwithstanding the proper supply chain management and selection of quality administrators, key personnel, and staff. Strategic management is a three-stage process, including strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation (Wahlstrom 2018). This is evident in many schools as their vision and mission statements clearly provide direction and support for the sports program. One good way to test the sports management of secondary private schools with varsity sports programs is through their active membership with prestigious leagues in the Philippines, the top two (2) athletic leagues are the University Athletic Association of the Philippines competition (UAAP) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Participation in athletic competitions allows the schools to showcase their ability to manage a sporting team in a school setup.

The University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) which was established in 1938, is composed of eight member schools. Part of it is the school of Olympus (for purposes of confidentiality, the name of the school has been concealed under such). While the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is an athletics association of ten colleges and universities in the Philippines. One of its members is the school of Atlantis (also concealed for confidentiality). It was established in 1924 and was said to be the oldest athletic association in the Philippines. Varsity teams from these universities compete annually, which allows them to showcase their capability to manage and organize sporting teams. This has become

the most prestigious league for secondary student-athletes. Undeniably, there are schools that dominate the aforementioned leagues; hence, this research aims to determine their management and leadership styles which can eventually be utilized by other participating schools to improve their performances.

The following are the top performing schools of NCAA and UAAP as they have been consistently part of the top three rankings:

School of Atlantis

Atlantis gained the overall championship status from 2015-2018 and holds the greatest number of general championships fifteen (15) times in the junior division. One of the sports that contributed a lot in this enormous feat is the table tennis team. The team achieved twenty (20) championships from season 84 to 95 and had seven (7) championships for their junior division, five (5) for their men's division, and seven (7) for the women's division. Achieving such accomplishments cannot be done without the supervision of its athletics department. The school has the sole authority for every program, recruitment of key personnel, and sports management.

School of Olympus

The Sports Management program Olympus clearly exemplifies the quality of their system as they have gained the general overall championship status in 2014 and ranked second in 2015, 2016, 2019, respectively. Their junior athletics team has consistently won the championship for the past five (5) consecutive years while the fencing team dominated all divisions from 2013 to 2020 except the women's division in season 81 (2018-2019). Benefits such as athletic grants (scholarships), meal allowances, uniforms and supplies, and medical support play a pivotal role in maintaining its high-performance status.

Developing a good management team is a critical component of running a successful organization. Managers not only supervise employees but must make important decisions that directly affect the organization. Employers desiring to hire managers must understand the qualities that make up good management. Understanding these characteristics allows an organization to make good hiring decisions and helps managers understand what is required of them (Johnson 2019). There are several factors that need to be considered in understanding the sports management system of the Atlantis and Olympus secondary schools.

These schools perform at their best for a reason. It is the sports management system that allows them to have an edge over the other schools. The underlying internal factors in the sports management system are the organizational structure, which defines where staff and volunteers 'fit in' with each other in terms of work tasks, decision-making procedures, the need for collaboration, levels of responsibility, and reporting mechanisms (Hoye et al. 2018) and the kind of leadership style and culture they impart to their people. It also includes the financial aspect, where they strategically allocate important resources. Lastly, the contribution of the coaches is an integral part of the total development of the student-athlete and the sports organization itself.

On the other hand, external factors of sports management also play a role in its success such as sports marketing and media, which means the marketing of sports, as well as the use of sports as a tool to market other products and services (Hoye et al. 2018). People who sponsor a varsity team, and parents of the student-athletes, according to the article by Bowley (2016) are included. Parents/guardians arguably have the most significant influence over their children and consequently play a crucial role in their child's development. Lastly, competition results contribute to the evaluation of the entire sports program.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to identify the best practices of secondary private schools with Champion Varsity Sports program and the level of agreement between stakeholders such as the coaches, student athletes, parents, sponsors, and educational administrators based on the above practices. Correspondingly, this study sought to fulfill the following specific objectives:

1. To determine the prevailing practices of secondary private schools with the Champion Varsity Sports Program.
2. To ascertain the level of agreement of the following stakeholders (student-athletes, parents, sponsors, and educational administrators) on the prevailing practices of secondary private schools with Champion Varsity Sports Programs.
3. To formulate a Strategic Management model based on the best practices of secondary schools with the Champion Varsity Sports Program.

Methodology

This study utilized the mixed method specifically exploratory sequential design. The content of the survey questionnaire was developed based on the results of the series of in-depth interviews with the sports directors and coaches of two (2) private schools with champion varsity sports programs.

The respondents for this study are the following: for the qualitative phase, an in-depth interview with the Physical Education Director for the Olympus and the Athletic Moderator and the assistant athletic moderator of Atlantis University, and the coaches of the secondary Olympus athletics team, Olympus fencing team and Atlantis table tennis team. On the other hand, for quantitative phase, eighty-one (81) swimming, athletics, fencing, and/or table tennis student-athletes from the secondary division of Atlantis and Olympus, twenty (20) parents, thirty (30) sponsors, and twenty-five (25) educational administrators of the same sports and team.

An in-depth interview was used as a tool to determine the best practices of secondary private schools with champion varsity sports programs. There are two sets of the interview questionnaires. The first questionnaire is intended for the Director of the varsity sports program while the second one is for the champion coaches of each team. All the contents of the interview questionnaire were supported by the related literatures and studies. The objective, functions and implementations of their programs, extensive literature reading, and existing data were studied.

Further, the second instrument is the survey questionnaire. It was formulated after an analysis of the results of the in-depth interview. The survey questionnaire has a 6-point Likert scale and has four (4) sets with ten (10) items each. Each set is for the different stakeholders - student athletes, parents, sponsors, and educational administrators. The instrument determines the level of agreement of the stakeholders to the schools with champion varsity sports program. The survey questionnaire underwent content validation from the Directors of the varsity sports program of Olympus and Atlantis. The Directors made necessary corrections before signing the approved survey questionnaire. It also underwent reliability test prior to its administration.

Results and Discussion

1. Best Practice of Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Programs

The schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program have different factors that enables them to be the best at what they do. The best practices of sports program were categorized into two: internal and external factors. The internal factors primarily define the success of the varsity sports program. It has multiple sectors that need to consider for it to be effective. This is why there has to be a Director who must

lead and take the responsibility into crucial decision making. The role of the Director is vital to the varsity sports program as it generally see what is happening within. This includes the following: 1) Organizational structure, where selection of qualified personnel should be considered for a specific task. 2) Organizational culture, where the embodiment of idealism is pivotal to the personnel and stakeholders. 3) Financial aspect, where funds and resources need to be well allocated. 4) Lastly, coach’s contribution, which plays an enormous role not only to the student-athletes but on the efficiency and effectiveness of the sports varsity program itself.

However, the external factor are elements that influence the sports program beyond the control of the management which means that it may or may not affect its performance of it. These factors are the following: Sports and marketing media, where the influence of being televised or promotion of events takes place. Sponsorship, which tackles support from a people or company needed by the university. Parent’s role, which explains the intervention of their role to the program. Lastly, competition results, play a significant role in assessing not only the student-athletes as well as the varsity sports program itself.

The identified best practices of schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program emerged from the qualitative part of the study. In order for the researcher to augment the data gathered, the researcher thematically crafted a survey questionnaire that is intended for other stakeholders. This is to identify their level of agreement on the said prevailing best practices.

2. Student-Athlete’s Level of Agreement to the Best Practices of Secondary Private Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program

Table 1

Item no.	Survey Question	School of Olympus		School of Atlantis		Overall Weighted Mean	
		WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI
1	Student-athletes train hard in order to give pride and honor to their school	5.69	SA	5.52	SA	5.60	SA
2	Student-athletes believe in the idealism of “student-athlete” which means that I am a student first before an athlete.	5.85	SA	5.65	SA	5.75	SA
3	Student-athletes believe that they must get international exposure to gain new techniques in our training/playing style	5.31	SA	5.54	SA	5.43	SA
4	Student-athletes believe that a coach/athletic director should be strict but at the same time have compassion	5.49	SA	5.65	SA	5.57	SA
5	Student-athletes use their failures and rejection as a motivation to do better	5.45	SA	5.87	SA	5.66	SA
6	Student-athletes are motivated to support the school sports program when they have allowance benefits.	5.51	SA	5.46	SA	5.49	SA
7	Student-athletes are motivated to support the school sports program when they have a scholarship benefit.	5.63	SA	5.81	SA	5.72	SA
8	Any sports team should be provided with quality equipment.	5.59	SA	5.74	SA	5.66	SA
9	Student-athletes trust the training program of their coach because it leads them to championship	5.90	SA	5.89	SA	5.90	SA
10	Student-athletes adapt to the current sports science technology and latest training provided by their coach.	5.45	SA	5.67	SA	5.56	SA
Overall Weighted Mean		5.59	SA	5.68	SA	5.63	SA

The Level of Agreement of the Student-Athletes to the Best Practices of Secondary Private Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program

Table 1 exhibits the level of agreement of the student-athletes on the best practices of secondary private schools with champion varsity sports programs. The findings reveal that item no.9 received the highest overall weighted mean of 5.90 which means that student-athletes *strongly agree* that trusting the training program of their coach which led them to the championship is the best practice of secondary private schools

with champion varsity sports programs. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 5.43 is item no. 3 which means that they still *strongly agree* that international exposure is valuable in terms of learning techniques in training as well as playing style.

Overall, the grand mean of 5.63 shows that student-athletes have *strongly agreed* that all the items are indeed the best practices of secondary private schools with the Champion Varsity Sports Program.

3. Parent’s Level of Agreement to the Best Practices of Secondary Private Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program

Table 2
The Level of Agreement of the Parents to the Best Practices of Secondary Private Schools with Chamnion Varsity Sports Program

Item no.	Survey Question	School of Olympus		School of Atlantis		Overall Weighted Mean	
		WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI
1	Parents allow the coach to discipline their child during training hours	5.80	SA	5.80	SA	5.80	SA
2	Parents allow the coach to discipline their child even outside training hours	5.50	SA	5.50	SA	5.50	SA
3	Parents see to it that they are not interfering with the training program of the coach.	5.20	SA	5.70	SA	5.45	SA
4	Parents completely trust the coach in terms of motivation process of their child.	5.70	SA	5.70	SA	5.70	SA
5	Parents completely trust the coach in terms of value formation of their child.	5.70	SA	5.80	SA	5.75	SA
6	The coach and parent must have an agreement in the way coach handles the athlete.	5.55	SA	5.40	SA	5.48	SA
7	Parents trust the varsity sports program in terms of handling personal documents of their child.	5.75	SA	5.40	SA	5.58	SA
8	Parents trust the varsity sports program in terms of their child’s athletic improvement.	5.70	SA	5.30	SA	5.50	SA
9	Parents see to it that the benefits like the allowance, scholarship and supplies given by the school is being used properly by their child.	5.80	SA	5.70	SA	5.75	SA
10	Parents see to it that they/someone will accompany their child before and after training.	5.55	SA	5.60	SA	5.58	SA
Overall Weighted Mean		5.63	SA	5.59	SA	5.61	SA

Table 2 illustrates the level of agreement of the parents on the best practices of secondary private schools with champion varsity sports programs. The highest weighted mean of 5.80 is item no.1 which parents *strongly agree* that the best practice of secondary private schools with champion varsity sports programs is to allow the coach to discipline their child during training hours. On the other hand, item no. 3 has the lowest weighted mean of 5.45. It denotes that parents still *strongly agree* to the best practices of secondary private schools with the Champion Varsity Sports Program by not interfering with the training program of the coach.

Overall, the grand mean of 5.61 presents that parents have *strongly agreed* that all the items are indeed the best practices of secondary private schools with the Champion Varsity Sports Program.

4. Sponsors’ Level of Agreement to the Best Practices of Secondary Private Schools with Champ Varsity Sports Program

Table 3 shows the level of agreement of the sponsors on the best practices of secondary private schools with champion varsity sports programs. The highest weighted mean of 5.78 is item no. 7 which sponsors *strongly agree* that the reason they sponsor is because they believe in the coach of the varsity team.

Table 3
 The Level of Agreement of the Sponsors to the to the Best Practices of Secondary Private Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program

Item No.	Survey Question	School of Olympus		School of Atlantis		Overall Weighted Mean	
		WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI
1	Sponsors give monetary supply to the varsity team.	5.40	SA	5.45	SA	5.43	SA
2	Sponsors give food supplies to the varsity team.	5.90	SA	5.45	SA	5.68	SA
3	Sponsors give equipment supplies to the varsity team.	5.80	SA	4.95	A	5.38	SA
4	Sponsors give transportation or transportation allowance to the varsity team during training or competition	5.50	SA	5.40	SA	5.45	SA
5	Sponsors believe in the sports program of the university that is why they are supporting it.	5.70	SA	5.50	SA	5.60	SA
6	Sponsors believe in the Director of the university that is why that are supporting it.	5.80	SA	5.55	SA	5.68	SA
7	Sponsors believe in the coach of the varsity team that is why that are supporting it.	5.90	SA	5.65	SA	5.78	SA
8	Sponsors provide a special request of the varsity team as long as it is within the budget.	5.60	SA	5.55	SA	5.58	SA
9	Sponsors need to justify the need of the varsity team before giving it.	5.60	SA	5.65	SA	5.63	SA
10	Sponsors will continue to support the team even though the sporting event is not exposed to media or televised.	5.80	SA	5.50	SA	5.65	SA
Overall Weighted Mean		5.70	SA	5.47	SA	5.58	SA

On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 5.38 is items no. 3 which states that they still *strongly agree* that they give equipment supply to the varsity team to show their level of agreement to the best practices of secondary private schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program.

Overall, the grand mean of 5.58 indicates that sponsors have *strongly agreed* that all the items are indeed the best practices of secondary private schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program.

5. Educational Administrators’ Level of Agreement to the Best Practices of Secondary Private Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program

Table 4 represents the level of agreement of the educational administrators on the best practices of secondary private schools with champion varsity sports program. The highest mean of 5.77 is item no. 2 and 6 which they *strongly agree* that by reminding student-athletes on their missed academic requirements and giving special quiz whenever they have competition is one of the best practices of the program, On the other hand, the lowest mean of 5.39 is item no. 5. Apparently, they still *strongly agree* that being aware of the training time of the student-athlete is also one of the best practices of secondary private schools with champion varsity sports program.

Overall, the grand mean of 5.67 demonstrates that the educational administrators have *strongly agreed* that all the items are indeed the best practices of secondary private schools with champion varsity sports programs.

Table 4

The Level of Agreement of the Educational Administrators to the to the Best Practices of Secondary Private Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program

Item no.	Survey Question	School of Olympus	
		WM	VI
1	Educational administrators watch the game of the student-athletes if they have free time to show support	5.53	SA
2	Educational administrators always remind student-athletes about their academic requirements whenever they missed it.	5.77	SA
3	Educational administrators call the attention of the student-athlete if they have failing/low grades	5.73	SA
4	Educational administrators call the attention of the coach if the student-athlete has failing/low grades.	5.73	SA
5	Educational administrators are aware of the training hours of the student-athlete.	5.39	SA
6	Educational administrators will give special test/quiz if a student-athlete has a competition during that day	5.77	SA
7	Educational administrators emphasize the principle of “student-athlete” which means that they are students first before an athlete	5.75	SA
8	Educational administrators provide the academic intellect of the student-athlete.	5.57	SA
9	Educational administrators discipline student-athlete	5.69	SA
10	Educational administrators will help the sports program of our university as long as it is within their capabilities.	5.73	SA
Overall Weighted Mean		5.67	SA

6. Summary of the Level of Agreement of the Stakeholders to the Best Practices

Table 5

Summary of the Level of Agreement of the Stakeholders to the Best Practices of Schools with Champion Varsity Sports Program

Stakeholders	Overall Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Student-Athletes	5.79	Strongly Agree
Parents	5.80	Strongly Agree
Sponsors	5.78	Strongly Agree
Educational Administrators	5.77	Strongly Agree

Table 5 displays the summary of the level of agreement of the stakeholders to the best practices of private schools with champion varsity sports program. For the Student-Athletes; it has an overall weighted mean of 5.79; for the Parents, they have 5.80; for the Sponsors they have 5.78; and for educational administrators they have 5.77 which indicates that they all *strongly agree* on the best practices of private schools with champion varsity sports program.

7. Strategic Management Model

The researcher utilized the findings from the qualitative and quantitative data of the study to form the structure and flow of the model. The researcher carefully analyzed the results gathered in the interview to identify what theory and themes needed in the output. Hence, the model was patterned after systems theory where the internal and external factors are the key components of the varsity sports management model. The internal factor is made up of four components that are interrelated with one another, these are the organization structure, leadership style and culture, financial aspect, and the coach’s contribution. While

the external factor is also composed of four interrelated components which are, sports marketing and media, sponsorship, parent’s role, and competition results

With the strengthened findings coming from the quantitative data, the researcher was able to come up with the flow of the output. Therefore, the model instigates that all components provide input that would aggregate to an effective varsity sport management and will send feedback to the two factors for a continuous sustainability program.

Finally, with the merging of the results coming from the two research designs, the researcher has developed a Strategic Management Model for Schools with Varsity Sports Program and considers this as the output of the paper. The researcher presents this model as his contribution to the field of sports and management. It is his wish that this model will be of use to the schools with sports varsity programs in managing and sustaining it.

This is a research-validated model, based on the findings of the study. Specifically, it is a paper within a paper.

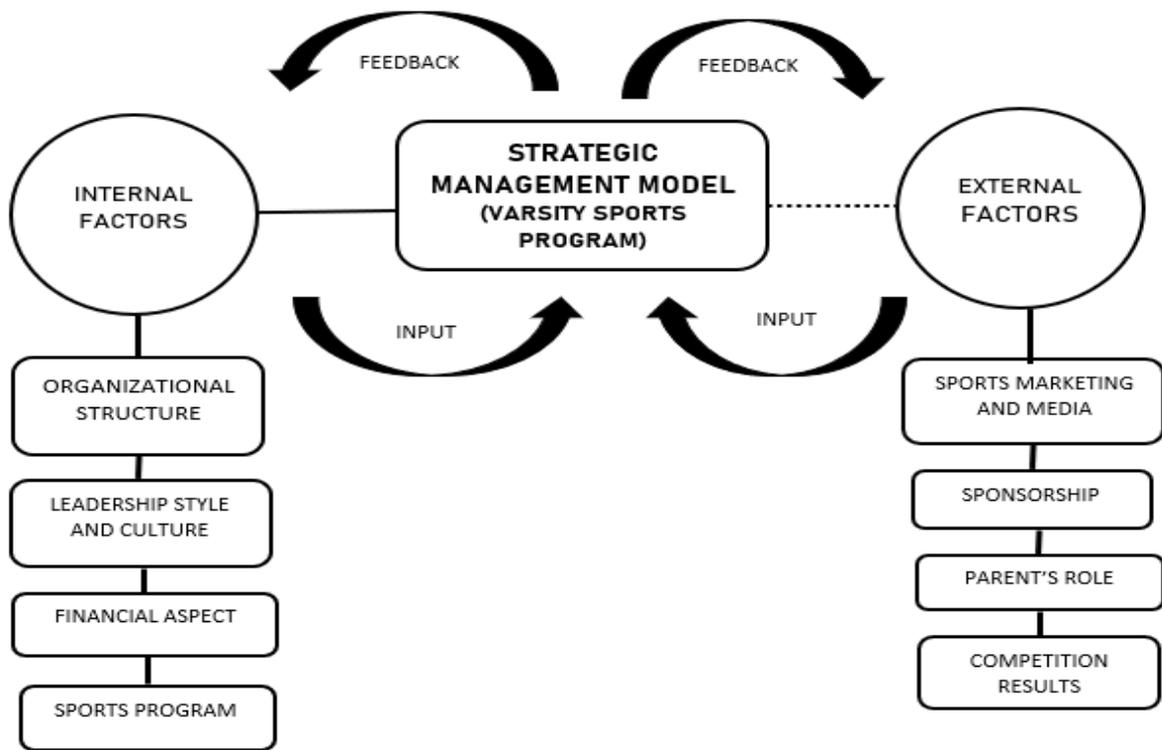


Figure 1. The Developed Strategic Management Model for Schools with Varsity Sports Program

Conclusions

From the foregoing findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Varsity sports program has a wide array of areas identified on internal and external factors. Sports directors handle these areas and see to it that it runs successfully.

2. The internal factors in Varsity Sports Program primarily define its success. These are the organizational structure, leadership style and culture, financial aspect, and the coach's contribution to the varsity sports program. These areas are important as they are interrelated with one another. It may affect other areas if one did not perform well.
3. The external factors in a Varsity Sports Program prove that it may or may not define success. These are the sports marketing and media, sponsors, parents, and the competition results. Some of these areas can be of use, hence sports directors need to grab it. On the other hand, there are also areas that need not have necessary importance and sports directors may neglect it.
4. The developed Strategic Management model for schools with Varsity Sports Program primarily offers a clear understanding on how a varsity sports program works. It shows a blueprint on how to deal things within and outside the organization. It shows a continuous process which can identify the problem and be dealt accordingly.

Recommendations

From the preceding findings, and conclusions of the study, the following are recommendations for the improvement of varsity sports program in other schools:

1. In view of the fact that sports directors generally manage the varsity program of a school, the researcher recommends creating a program or a simple activity such as improvement of line management, clarifying team goals, and encourage socialization. This program will strengthen the communication, camaraderie and teamwork of people working within the Varsity Sports Program.
2. Inasmuch as the internal factors define the success of the varsity sports program, the researcher recommends further studies on the organizational structure pertaining to the management style and leadership of the director. Different but appropriate managerial theories such as scientific management theory, total quality management and X-Y theory can be used to extract different perspectives.
3. The role of the sponsors in the success of every varsity sports program is an area of research worth pursuing. This is to get a wider picture of the pivotal part that sports play as it reveals that a sports varsity program can be successful with or without it. A wider sample of Varsity Sports Program must be considered for future studies.
4. The strategic management model is highly recommended among Junior Varsity Sports.

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