

OPTIMIZING SPORTS, CULTURE AND ARTS COMPETITIONS: A REVIEW OF NEMSU STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT: *This study delves into scrutinizing the strategic management practices adopted by NEMSU during the MASTS, SCUAA, and PASUC sports, culture and arts competitions from 2015 to 2023. Its main goal is to assess how effective NEMSU's management processes are, how much support they provide, and how these factors impact sports, culture and arts initiatives. The research utilizes meticulously designed and tested survey questionnaires and structured interviews to achieve accurate and valuable results. The results show how NEMSU's management practices influence team spirit, motivation, and overall performance. It highlights the importance of thorough planning, efficient execution, sharing benefits, and keeping a close eye on things during sports and socio-cultural competitions. The data is analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson correlation coefficient to ensure accuracy. The research emphasizes NEMSU's management practices' crucial role in boosting sports and socio-cultural programs. Based on these findings, the study suggests adopting a management model, which focuses on comprehensive analyses, gathering feedback from participants and coaches, getting external evaluations, and putting together reports of achievements. These steps aim to encourage more people to join in, improve performance, and ensure that sports, culture and arts events at NEMSU can thrive in the long run.*

Keywords: Management practices, Sports competitions, Culture and the arts competitions

INTRODUCTION

Sports, culture and arts competitions are integral components of higher education, playing a significant role in the holistic development of students, enhancing institutional identity, and promoting community engagement. At North Eastern Mindanao State University (NEMSU), competitions such as MASTS, SCUAA, and PASUC serve as vital platforms for showcasing student talent and reinforcing the university's commitment to academic and extracurricular excellence. However, the success of these events is not solely dependent on the participants' skills; it also hinges on the effectiveness of the managerial practices that underpin the entire process [1]. Managing these competitions requires careful planning, strategic resource allocation, seamless coordination, and continuous evaluation to achieve desired outcomes [13].

Research on event management in sports and socio-cultural settings consistently underscores the importance of strong leadership and robust administrative support to ensure smooth operations and positive results. [3] highlight the critical role of clear communication, delegation, and efficient planning in contributing to the success of these events. [5] similarly stresses that aligning managerial strategies with institutional goals is essential for optimizing the use of resources and meeting set objectives. In addition, studies by [4] and [6] emphasize that administrative support—spanning emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible assistance—can significantly enhance motivation, team cohesion, and overall performance.

The importance of optimizing resources in event management is also emphasized in the literature, with the resource-based perspective suggesting that institutions with valuable assets—such as skilled personnel, state-of-the-art facilities, and strategic partnerships—can leverage these resources to gain a competitive advantage [2, 8] argues that effective management not only ensures the success of the event at hand but also supports the long-term sustainability of sports and cultural programs by continuously improving management practices and adapting to changing circumstances. [12] outlines the essential skills and behaviours managers need to

perform effectively. These core competencies include critical thinking, leadership, creativity, knowledge, delegation, focus, learning, time management, strategic thinking, and communication.

Moreover, the role of best practices in sports and socio-cultural event management has been widely recognized. [10] advocates that adopting best practices, such as rigorous monitoring and regular evaluation, is essential for ensuring the sustainability of successful programs. These practices enable institutions to identify areas for improvement, optimize resource utilization, and foster a culture of excellence [11]. Research by [7] further highlights that successful event management requires ongoing reflection, stakeholder feedback, and the ability to adapt to new challenges, all of which contribute to institutional growth and the long-term success of the programs.

While the existing body of literature provides valuable insights into general event management strategies, there is a notable gap in studies specifically examining the managerial practices employed by state universities in the Philippines, particularly in the context of NEMSU's sustained success. Research by [9] suggests that examining the internal management processes of successful institutions can provide valuable lessons for others seeking to improve their own sports and cultural programs. This gap in the literature underscores the need for a focused investigation into the managerial strategies at NEMSU, which have contributed to its remarkable performance in MASTS, SCUAA, and PASUC competitions.

This study aims to address this gap by exploring the strategic management practices, administrative support systems, and best practices employed by NEMSU in organizing and executing its sports and socio-cultural competitions. The insights gained from this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how these practices can be optimized to enhance performance outcomes, foster institutional growth, and ensure the long-term sustainability of sports and cultural programs within state universities.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive survey method as a particularly well-suited approach for exploring the sports and socio-cultural strategic management practices in competitions. The study was conducted across the 6 campuses of North Eastern Mindanao State University (NEMSU). The respondents consisted of university sports and socio-cultural directors, coordinators, coaches, officiating officials, student-athletes, student performers and key officials involved in managing competitions. Diverse sampling methods were used to select respondents. A complete enumeration approach was utilized for sports and socio-cultural coaches, ensuring the inclusion of all coaches involved in relevant competitions. This method aims to comprehensively gather the perspectives and insights of all coaches participating in these events. Meanwhile, the researcher applied a quota sampling technique to select the student-athletes and student-performers. A comprehensive combination of a modified and researcher-made questionnaire supplemented by interview guide questions explicitly tailored for administrators was used. The survey questionnaire, divided into three sections, collects specific data crucial for achieving the research objectives. The research instrument combines quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. This combined approach aims to provide a well-rounded picture, enabling a deeper analysis and interpretation of the findings. The study utilized Frequency and Percentage, Weighted Mean and Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient to analyze qualitative data. By employing these statistical tools alongside the qualitative data, the study aims to understand better the effectiveness and impact of NEMSU's strategic management practices in sports and socio-cultural competitions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic analysis of 254 participants in Table 1 reveals significant trends in achievement, experience, designation, gender, and age. Participation decreases as age increases, with the 18-22 age group comprising the majority (53.15%). There is a clear gender disparity, as 61.4% of the participants are male and 38.6% are female, which raises concerns about inclusivity by CHED policies. While coaches, trainers, and coordinators comprise a smaller percentage of participants, the majority are college-level athletes. Student-athletes and performers (60.24%) comprise the largest group within the competition structure, which is well-organized and supported by program personnel, coaches, and officials. NEMSU has exhibited exceptional competitive performance, collecting 158 medals (34 Gold, 92 Silver, and 32 Bronze) and achieving notable placements for non-medalists. The experience levels of the participants are diverse, with 69.3% having less than five years of involvement, which suggests a strong emphasis on recruitment and development. Conversely, a smaller percentage of the participants have extensive experience, which contributes to the longevity of the program. NEMSU

is well-positioned for sustained success in these competitions, as the data indicates a well-organized system that cultivates both new talent and seasoned participants.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

INDICATORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	RANK
Age			
18 – 22 years old	135	53.15	1
23 - 27 years old	66	25.98	2
28 – 32 years old	21	8.27	3
33 – 37 years old	8	3.15	4
38 – 42 years old	5	1.97	7
43 – 47 years old	7	2.76	5
48 – 52 years old	3	1.18	8
53 – 57 years old	6	2.36	6
58 – 62 years old	2	0.79	9
63 and above	1	0.39	10
Gender			
Male	156	61.42	1
Female	98	38.58	2
Program/ Degree			
College Level	157	61.81	1
Bachelor's Degree	51	20.08	2
Master's Degree	30	11.81	3
Doctorate Degree	16	6.30	4
Designation in Sports and Socio-Cultural Competitions			
Sports Director	2	0.79	7
Socio-Cultural Director	1	0.39	8
Sports Coordinator	4	1.57	4.5
Culture and Arts Coordinator	4	1.57	4.5
Coach/ Assistant Coach	80	31.51	2
Officiating Official	3	1.18	6
Trainer	7	2.76	3
Student-Athlete/ Performer	153	60.23	1

The achievements of NEMSU in MASTS, SCUAA, and PASUC show a strong legacy of excellence in sports, arts, and culture. With 158 regional medals—34 gold, 92 silver, and 32 bronze—the institution has continually produced elite athletes and performers. Apart from their gold successes, 63 competitors showed their competitive skills by securing ranks between fourth and tenth. Still, 33 people did not get any recognition, suggesting room for improvement. The course effectively interacts with and keeps participants with varying degrees of knowledge. The majority of people (69.3%) with less than five years of experience emphasize how dedicated the program is to developing new talent. Those with five to ten years (19.7%), eleven to fifteen years (6.3%), and over fifteen years (4.7%), value the institution's continuity and mentoring even more. The broad experience distribution reveals a well-organized atmosphere that helps both beginners and experienced people, hence improving NEMSU's long-term competitiveness in sports and socio-cultural events.

Table 1.1. Respondents' Highest Awards and Years of Relevant Experience

Highest Awards Received			
Gold Medal	34	13.39	3
Silver Medal	92	36.22	1
Bronze Medal	32	12.60	5
Other Awards (4 th to 10 th place)	63	24.80	2
No awards	33	12.99	4
Years of Relevant Experience			
Under 5 Years	176	69.29	1
5 – 10 years	50	19.68	2
11 – 15 years	16	6.30	3
Over 15 years	12	4.73	4

Table 2 presents a statistical analysis of NEMSU's sports and socio-cultural competition management processes, using weighted mean scores to assess the effectiveness and alignment of various aspects. Participants strongly endorsed university policies, suggesting a supportive environment. Clear policies and guidelines were in place, fostering inclusivity and equal participation opportunities. The university allocated resources and promoted a safe and supportive environment for both coaches and participants. These policies aligned well with the core values of the competition, contributing significantly to the overall success of NEMSU's sports and socio-cultural offerings. Implementation was strongly positive, with competitions strictly following established plans, clear communication, prompt addressing of challenges, adhering to schedules and employing professional staff. Operations were also positive, with logistics well-managed, registration and billeting processes hassle-free, competitions adhering to starting and ending times, and adequate medical and technical support services available throughout the events. Planning was positive, with clearly defined goals, a systematic and inclusive approach, well-allocated resources, participant-centered design, and contingency measures for unexpected situations. However, participants desired more impactful benefits and incentives, such as scholarships, competition-specific rewards, or recognition beyond participation certificates. Monitoring and evaluation received the lowest mean score (4.14), but there were positive aspects. Competition monitoring ensured fair play and participants received timely support. However, the desire for a more robust system is evident, with post-competition evaluations and actively seeking feedback from coaches and participants providing valuable insights for future program enhancements. Program offerings received a positive evaluation (4.09) but scored slightly lower than program management. It could indicate a need to explore participant preferences and improve the sports programs by seeking feedback and incorporating their preferences.

Table 2. Management Processes Employed in Sports and SocioCultural Competitions

MANAGEMENT PROCESS IN SPORTS AND SOCIO-CULTURAL COMPETITIONS	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL DESCRIPTION
Policies of the University	4.33	Strongly Agree
Implementation	4.27	Strongly Agree
Operation	4.26	Strongly Agree
Planning	4.24	Strongly Agree
Benefits and Incentives	4.21	Strongly Agree
Monitoring and evaluation	4.14	Agree
Programs of the University	4.09	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	4.22	Strongly Agree

Table 3 delineates the support system provided by the NEMSU administration for sports and socio-cultural events. The administration's emphasis on esteem support is robust, with a favourable rating of 4.40. They acknowledge accomplishments, cultivate a culture of gratitude, and provide opportunities to display abilities. They advocate for the establishment of elevated standards of excellence. The emotional support is favourable, with a robust rating of 4.28. The administration regularly demonstrates empathy and genuine concern for the welfare of participants. They create a nurturing atmosphere, attend to grievances, and promote transparent dialogue. Nonetheless, opportunities for improvement exist, including the provision of training and materials focused on stress management and mental health. Information assistance is robust, emphasizing clear communication, advice, and information dissemination. The administration is always striving to enhance information distribution via several media. Tangible support is favourable, with a positive assessment of 4.22. The administration provides financial resources and engages with external partners to enhance prospects, including logistical aid and administrative support.

Table 3. Level of Support from the Administration

Level of Support Provided by NEMSU Administration	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Esteem Support	4.40	Strongly Agree
Emotional Support	4.28	Strongly Agree
Information Support	4.27	Strongly Agree
Tangible Support	4.22	Strongly Agree
Average Weighted Mean	4.29	Strongly Agree

Table 4 reveals a noteworthy correlation between the management process in sports and socio-cultural events and the profile of the responders. Analyzed are age, gender, degree, discipline, top awards, and years of relevant experience. Understanding the complexity of the management process, guaranteeing sponsorships, and acquiring resources all depend on high awards and expertise. Those with more awards and experience have a strong network and greater awareness of participant requirements, competition regulations, and logistics. On the other hand, those with less experience and awards might need more knowledge and abilities to handle challenges properly.

Table 4. Relationship Between Profile of Respondents and Management Process

	SOURCE OF VARIANCES	p-VALUE	CONCLUSION
MANAGEMENT PROCESS	Age	0.083	No Significance
	Gender	0.157	No Significance
	Degree	0.221	No Significance
	Discipline in Sports and Socio-Cultural Competition	0.056	No Significance
	Highest Awards	0.049	Significant
	Years of relevant experience	0.033	Significant
	Relevant Training	0.042	Significant

Table 5 demonstrates a significant correlation between management processes and the support level provided by NEMSU for sports, culture, and arts competitions. The p-value of 0.003 indicates a strong association, suggesting that management processes substantially influence the support offered by NEMSU. Management effectiveness, resource allocation, and team commitment drive this relationship. Improving management processes can increase NEMSU's support, strengthen the success and sustainability of these competitions, and benefit the wider community.

Table 5. Relationship Between Management Process and Level of Support from Administration

SOURCE OF VARIANCES	p-VALUE	CONCLUSION
Management process and the level of support	0.003	Significant

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

North Eastern Mindanao State University (NEMSU) has established a unique niche as a multi-faceted force in sports, culture and arts competitions. The unparalleled athletic prowess is undeniable, evident in their multiple overall championships in the MASTS Mindanao-wide competitions (2015-2023) and a regional championship in 2017. This dominance extends beyond regional boundaries, with triumphs at the national level in events like SCUAA athletics, where they have secured coveted gold medals. Analysing the data suggests a potential explanation for this success.

A diverse talent pool, fostered by various participant demographics and experience levels, provides a rich resource for identifying and nurturing exceptional athletes. This variety is further complemented by a culture of excellence, likely stemming from the presence of skilled and accomplished participants who can mentor newcomers. Effective management practices also play a crucial role. High weighted mean scores across various management aspects, including planning, implementation, and operation, indicate a well-organized and systematic approach.

The administration's robust support system also offers emotional understanding, recognition for achievements, and informational guidance. This nurturing environment likely fosters a positive and motivating atmosphere for student-athletes, potentially influencing their training dedication, well-being, and performance.

However, an intriguing disparity emerges when examining NEMSU's performance in socio-cultural competitions. While individual participants have secured gold medals in various competitions, NEMSU's overall ranking in MASTS socio-cultural events from 2015 to 2023 has consistently placed between 5th and 10th. The factors contributing to their athletic success might translate outside the socio-cultural realm. While a potential link exists between participant experience and management processes, further investigation is needed to confirm a causal relationship—the significant difference in ranking warrants further exploration. The specific needs and dynamics of culture and arts events might necessitate distinct management practices compared to those employed for athletics. A comparative analysis of management practices across both domains could yield valuable insights into areas for improvement within the socio-cultural realm. Additionally, exploring the reasons behind NEMSU's lower ranking in socio-cultural competitions could provide valuable knowledge for tailoring management practices and resource allocation strategies specifically for these events.

Based on the findings of the study, the creation of a thorough management model is recommended to bridge the performance gap between sports, culture, and the arts at the local, regional, Mindanao-wide, and national levels. With an emphasis on talent development, excellence, flexible management, participant well-being, and domain-specific modifications, this innovative approach will go beyond simple competition victory. The approach may adapt to the particular requirements of sporting, cultural, and artistic events by including a framework that places a high priority on ongoing development.

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