School-Based Management and Athletic Program Sustainability: A Case Study of Wushu Teams in Selected Philippine Private Schools

Ding Yan
Jose Rizal University, Manila, Philippines

***Abstract*—This study examined the relationship between school-based management (SBM) practices and the sustainability of Wushu athletic programs in selected private schools in the Philippines. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were gathered from 12 school administrators and 45 Wushu coaches through surveys and semi-structured interviews. Results indicated that schools with decentralized decision-making structures, adequate budget allocation autonomy, and community engagement mechanisms demonstrated higher program sustainability. Conversely, programs under centralized management with limited local discretion faced recurring challenges in funding continuity, talent retention, and facility maintenance. The study proposes a School-Based Sports Management (SBSM) framework to guide private schools in sustaining specialized athletic programs.**

***Index Terms*—school-based management, athletic program sustainability, Wushu, private schools, Philippines, sports administration**

I. INTRODUCTION

School-based management (SBM) has been widely adopted as a decentralization strategy in education systems globally, shifting decision-making authority from central offices to individual school sites. In the Philippine private education sector, SBM manifests through governing boards, principal autonomy, and stakeholder participation in school governance.

While SBM research has focused predominantly on academic outcomes, its application to extracurricular and athletic programs remains underexplored. Specialized sports programs—such as Wushu teams—require sustained investment in coaching, facilities, competition travel, and equipment. These programs often operate at the margins of school budgets, making their survival heavily dependent on local management decisions.

This study investigates how SBM practices influence the sustainability of Wushu programs in Philippine private schools, addressing a gap at the intersection of educational administration and sports management.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 School-Based Management: Core Principles

SBM is characterized by decentralization of authority, school-level decision-making, and stakeholder involvement (Caldwell, 2005). Key dimensions include: (a) budgetary autonomy, (b) personnel management, (c) curriculum/program design, and (d) accountability mechanisms. Research consistently shows that SBM effectiveness depends on the capacity of school leaders and the extent of genuine autonomy granted (Hanushek et al., 2013).

2.2 Athletic Program Sustainability

Program sustainability in school sports involves financial viability, continuity of participation, facility upkeep, and competitive performance over time (Bowers & Green, 2013). Sustainable programs typically feature diversified funding sources, strong community support, and alignment with school identity.

2.3 Wushu in Philippine Schools

Wushu was introduced to Philippine schools in the late 1990s, initially through university programs and later extending to private secondary schools. The sport's inclusion in the Southeast Asian Games has driven institutional interest, but program continuity varies widely across schools.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed: quantitative survey data were collected first, followed by qualitative interviews to explain and contextualize the findings.

3.2 Participants

Survey: 12 school administrators (principals, athletic directors) and 45 Wushu coaches from 12 private schools in Metro Manila. Interviews: 6 administrators and 6 coaches purposively selected based on program sustainability outcomes (3 from high-sustainability programs, 3 from low-sustainability programs).

3.3 Instruments

SBM Assessment Tool: Adapted from Caldwell's (2005) SBM dimensions, measuring budgetary autonomy, personnel decisions, program design authority, and stakeholder engagement (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$).

Program Sustainability Index: A researcher-developed 15-item scale assessing financial continuity, participation stability, facility condition, and competitive consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$).

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol: Open-ended questions exploring management practices, challenges, and success factors.

3.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and multiple regression. Qualitative data were coded thematically using Braun and Clarke's (2006) reflexive thematic analysis approach.

IV. RESULTS

4.1 Quantitative Findings

Variable	Mean	SD	Correlation with Sustainability
Budgetary Autonomy	3.42	.81	r = .67**
Personnel Management	3.18	.74	r = .54*
Program Design Authority	3.71	.63	r = .72**
Stakeholder Engagement	3.55	.69	r = .61**
Program Sustainability Index	3.28	.77	—

*$p < .01$, **$p < .05$

Multiple regression revealed that program design authority ($\beta = .38$, $p < .01$) and budgetary autonomy ($\beta = .31$, $p < .01$) were the strongest predictors of program sustainability, explaining 58% of variance ($R^2 = .58$, $F(4,7) = 2.41$, $p < .05$).

4.2 Qualitative Themes

Theme 1: "We decide what matters locally."

“When we have the freedom to allocate our own budget to Wushu without waiting for head office approval, we can respond quickly—register for a tournament, buy equipment before prices go up.” (Administrator, High-Sustainability School)

Theme 2: "Parents are partners, not just payers."

Schools with active parent-booster clubs reported greater financial resilience. One coach noted: “Our parents organized a fundraising tournament that covered our travel to the national championships.”

Theme 3: "Without autonomy, we're always firefighting."

Low-sustainability programs described chronic delays: “Every purchase need three signatures and a two-month wait. By then, the competition season is over.”

V. DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that SBM dimensions—particularly budgetary autonomy and program design authority—are significantly associated with athletic program sustainability. This aligns with Caldwell's (2005) assertion that genuine decentralization empowers schools to respond to local needs.

The qualitative data reveal a nuanced mechanism: autonomy enables agility. Wushu programs require timely decisions (e.g., tournament registration deadlines, equipment procurement), and centralized approval processes create structural disadvantages.

Stakeholder engagement emerged as both a management practice and a sustainability resource. Schools that actively involved parents and alumni in program governance created diversified support networks, buffering against budget fluctuations.

VI. THE SCHOOL-BASED SPORTS MANAGEMENT (SBSM) FRAMEWORK

Based on the findings, this study proposes a four-pillar framework:

Pillar	Key Actions
Autonomy	Devolve budget and program decisions to school-level athletic directors
Accountability	Establish clear performance and financial reporting metrics
Engagement	Formalize parent, alumni, and community roles in sports governance
Capacity	Provide administrative training for coaches on budgeting and program planning

VII. CONCLUSION

School-based management practices significantly influence the sustainability of Wushu programs in Philippine private schools. Budgetary autonomy and program design authority are the strongest predictors of program continuity. Schools seeking to sustain specialized athletic programs should adopt decentralized governance structures, actively engage stakeholders, and invest in administrative capacity building for sports staff.

REFERENCES

[1] M. T. Bowers and B. C. Green, "Community and the youth sports experience," *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 27, no. 6, pp. 484–497, 2013.
[2] V. Braun and V. Clarke, "Using thematic analysis in psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 77–101, 2006.
[3] B. J. Caldwell, "School-based management," *Education Policy Series*, vol. 3, pp. 1–39, 2005.
[4] E. A. Hanushek, S. Link, and L. Woessmann, "Does school autonomy make sense everywhere?" *Journal of Comparative Economics*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 683–699, 2013.