

Assessing Technical Skills and Competence of BPE-SPE Students In Sports Officiating

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive research study aimed to assess the sports officiating proficiency of fifty Bachelor of Physical Education–Sports and Physical Education (BPE-SPE) students at Bukidnon State University. Data were collected from a simple random sample of students who served as assistant referees or umpires during the university’s annual intramural competition. The study utilized a modified questionnaire from Dooley (2010) to gather both quantitative data on challenges and qualitative data on coping strategies. The findings indicate that students frequently encountered difficulties in applying rules impartially and faced challenges in exercising tolerance and compassion toward athletes and other officials. Additionally, a specific difficulty was noted in performing proper hand signals. The study concludes that cultivating patience and compassion, along with a focus on practical rule application and hand signals, is crucial for improving the officiating performance of BPE-SPE students.

KEYWORDS: *Technical Skills, Competence, and Performance*

INTRODUCTION

The role of a sports official is fundamental to the integrity and fairness of any athletic competition. Beyond a mere understanding of rules, effective officiating requires a unique blend of technical proficiency, decisiveness under pressure, and the ability to manage complex interpersonal interactions. These skills are not innate; they are cultivated through rigorous training and extensive practical experience. As such, the quality of a physical education program can be measured, in part, by its ability to produce competent and confident sports officials who can uphold the values of sportsmanship and ensure a fair playing environment for all participants. Although officials are vital to the game, many students find officiating to be challenging due to communication issues, managing the stress of competition, and other obstacles. These difficulties may impact both individual performance and the overall standard of officiating.

While the theoretical knowledge of sports rules is often a core component of physical education curricula, the practical application of these skills in a real-world setting remains a critical area for assessment. This study addresses this need by focusing on the Bachelor of Physical Education–Sports and Physical Education (BPE-SPE) students at Bukidnon State University, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). These students are trained to be future educators and leaders in sports, and their competence in officiating is a direct reflection of their

program's effectiveness. This research aims to assess the technical skills and overall competence of BPE-SPE students in sports officiating, specifically during the university's annual intramural basketball and volleyball competitions. By evaluating their performance, this study seeks to identify key strengths, pinpoint areas for improvement, and explore the challenges they face in a practical context. Furthermore, to evaluate students' technical skills, decision-making competence, and overall performance during a sporting event.

Gaining an understanding of these elements is essential to raising the standard of students' learning to make principled decisions related to sports officiating, as well as the instruction and assistance given to them as aspiring officials (Stiggins, 2005). The findings will provide valuable insights for the university's physical education department, enabling them to enhance their curriculum and better prepare students to be skilled and confident sports officials.

FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This research is grounded in two key theoretical frameworks that inform the assessment of technical skills and competence in sports officiating: Sweller's (1988) Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) and Bandura's (1977) Theory of Self-Efficacy.

Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) explains that our working memory has a limited capacity, meaning it can only process a small amount of information at a time. To optimize learning, instructional methods should be designed to prevent this memory from becoming overloaded. Working memory handles immediate cognitive processes and attention, while long-term memory has a vast, almost infinite capacity for storing and retrieving information (Baddeley, 2003). Therefore, effective learning requires connecting new information with existing knowledge in long-term memory to reduce the burden on working memory. In the context of this study, CLT provides a foundation for understanding how to structure training and support for sports officiating to enhance learning and performance. Likewise, Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy focuses on how a person's belief in their own abilities influences their motivation and performance. Self-efficacy is the confidence an individual has in their ability to achieve specific goals. According to Bandura (1977), a strong sense of self-efficacy enables individuals to set ambitious goals, persevere through challenges, and view failures as learning opportunities. Conversely, those with low self-efficacy may lack confidence and are more likely to give up when faced with difficulties. This theory highlights the importance of fostering a positive sense of self-efficacy to improve motivation and performance, which is especially critical in high-pressure roles like sports officiating.

By integrating both theories, this research seeks to address the challenges faced by BPE-SPE students in sports officiating. CLT helps in structuring the instructional design to maximize learning, while Bandura's theory provides a lens to understand how students' confidence impacts their performance. The combination of these frameworks offers a comprehensive approach to identifying solutions that will improve the competence and performance of these students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The primary goal of this study is to examine the officiating abilities of Bachelor of Physical Education-Sports and Physical Education (BPE-SPE) students at Bukidnon State University. It specifically assesses their performance while officiating basketball and volleyball matches during

the university's annual intramural competition at the Secondary Laboratory School (SLS). The research will also determine the coping strategies these students use to address challenges they face while officiating:

1. To what extent do BPE-SPE students effectively apply the rules and perform their duties while officiating basketball and volleyball matches?
2. What coping strategies do BPE-SPE students employ to manage the challenges they encounter while officiating sports?

METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study evaluated the challenges Bachelor of Physical Education–Sports and Physical Education (BPE-SPE) students face when officiating sports. The research was conducted at the Secondary Laboratory School (SLS) of Bukidnon State University in Malaybalay City, Philippines, during the university's annual intramural competition. Participants included 50 male and female BPE-SPE students. A simple random sampling method was used to select participants from the pool of students appointed as assistant referees or umpires, ensuring each had an equal chance of being included. A modified version of the Dooley (2010) questionnaire was used to gather data. The instrument was designed to assess student motivation and metacognition in relation to their affective and cognitive responses. The questionnaire contained ten items specifically intended to evaluate the challenges students face when officiating sports. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Office of the Dean of the College of Teacher Education. The research instrument was administered to the selected participants, with a 100% retrieval rate achieved. The study focused on evaluating the students' ability to officiate basketball and volleyball matches.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION

With an aggregate mean rating of "Often," Table 1 shows that BPE-SPE students had trouble officiating during the University's annual sports tournament. This means that students encountered difficulties in their officiating positions regularly. According to the research, the most common problem that officials encountered was exercising compassion and patience when interacting with athletes and fellow officials. The average score for this task was "All the time."

The outcomes highlight the value of kindness and endurance in sports officiating. BPE-SPE students may frequently find it difficult to uphold these essential skills because working with athletes and co-officials is frequently tough. To connect with people, repair relationships, develop emotional intelligence, and promote overall well-being, officials need to possess compassion (Ibrahimuglu, Mersin, & Caglar, 2021). Compassion is also necessary for effective communication and dispute resolution. Similarly, it takes patience to bear the demands and difficulties of officiating. Empathy, poise, and the capacity to deal with challenging circumstances without losing patience are required (Okçu & Platin, 2018). It was also difficult for the students to exhibit appropriate hand signals, which are an essential part of officiating. Hand signals are crucial for efficient communication between players and spectators during sports. They offer a rapid and efficient means of communicating decisions. Given the challenges in this area, more instruction and practice are necessary to improve these communication abilities (Grunska, 1999).

Overall, the challenges that students face show how important it is to provide focused interventions to help them develop as officiants, especially in the areas of interpersonal interaction management and communication style mastery. Improved instruction that emphasizes empathy, forbearance, and clear signaling may be able to assist students in overcoming these obstacles and advancing their general officiating proficiency.

Table 1: Mean values of Technical Skills and Competencies by BPED students in Sports Officiating

Indicators As a Sports official, I have difficulty with;	Mean	SD	QS
1. Deal with athletes and co-officials. with compassion and patience.	4.57	.78	All the time
2. Convey confidence in signaling And dealing with players.	4.42	.78	All the time
3. Know the basic rules and hand signals.	4.28	.53	All the time
4. Adhere to my decisions during the actual competition.	4.28	.75	All the time
5. Apply most of the rules of the game, but can't respond accordingly to the situation.	4.14	.69	Most of the time
6. Deal with pressure and conflict during games.	4.14	.37	Most of the time
7. Assess effectively the severity of infringements/errors.	3.85	.89	Most of the time
8. Understand the rules and regulations of the game.	3.42	1.1	Most of the time
9. Demonstrate the proper (hand signal) in officiating mechanics.	3.28	.48	Sometimes
10. Promote conditions that result in effective teamwork with co-officials.	4.25	.59	All the time
Overall Mean	4.06	.86	Most of the time

However, the results show that students occasionally have trouble demonstrating the correct mechanics (hand signals) when officiating sports or games. A hand signal is an action carried out with one or more hands that is meant to convey a specific message to the observer (Collins English Dictionary, 2024). Hand signals are crucial because they allow anyone in the playing area to understand what is being said. Interaction among players is necessary for a positive, entertaining gaming experience. In addition to being mandated by the Laws of the Game, hand gestures are highly significant. It's simple to communicate with hand signals. It's advantageous for spectators as well as players and officials.

The game's flow and any interruptions are therefore simply translated. It's a simple method to stay up to date on game events. According to Grunski (1999), one of the keys to being a successful

official is having the capacity to handle game situations and communicate with participants efficiently. Furthermore, according to Taylor and Daniel (1987), Anshel and Weinberg (1995), and Rainey (1995), the officiating task itself and the potential for mistakes inherent in it can cause referees to lose confidence, experience high levels of anxiety, and experience increased stress. This explains why athletes and co-officials have differing opinions and lack mutual trust, but the actions taken by game officials are meant to convey a specific message to the audience or spectators who watch.

COPING MECHANISMS:

To overcome these obstacles, students might use a variety of coping mechanisms:

1. **Emotion-Focused Coping:** This tactic reduces the intensity of unpleasant feelings by using mental exercises like relaxation techniques or positive thinking to manage the emotional effects of stress.
2. **Problem-Focused Coping:** This strategy focuses on resolving stress by learning new techniques or knowledge to efficiently handle certain issues (Morgan, 2010). Effective coping mechanisms are crucial for enhancing resilience and improving performance under stress. By employing these strategies, students can better handle negative emotions and challenging situations, leading to improved officiating outcomes.

CONCLUSION:

1. To ensure that competitions are run properly and equitably, competitors need to be led and guided by someone with compassion and patience. A good official also possesses integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, and respect, among other essential traits.
2. Gaining confidence is essential for fostering good sportsmanship and fair play since it enables people to enhance their interpersonal skills and render just decisions.
3. The ethics of officiating, which include neutrality, respect, sensitivity, professionalism, discretion, and tactfulness, must be upheld by developing appropriate coping methods. Each game's success is greatly influenced by these attributes.

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