

The Conditions and Guidelines for Student Club Administration in Nanning Normal University, People's Republic of China

Lei Yuan^{1*}, Phatchanee Kultanan², and Sripen Poldech²

Student, Program in Educational Administration, Faculty of Education,
Buriram Rajabhat University¹

Lecturer Dr., Faculty of Education, Buriram Rajabhat University²

*Corresponding author, e-mail: 660426021028@bru.ac.th

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Abstract

There are multiple challenges within the student club at Nanning Normal University, including deficiencies in financial record-keeping, low member participation, and inadequate risk management for activities. These issues significantly impede the sustainable development of the student club. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the conditions and guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal University. The study sample consists of 377 student members from 23 student clubs at Nanning Normal University. Data collection tools include questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, which cover the current status and guidelines of student club administration at the university. The questionnaire includes 41 questions, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, with the item correlation values ranging from 0.442 to 0.771 and a reliability of 0.975. Additionally, the semi-structured interviews were designed based on two questions from the three aspects with the lowest average scores in the questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and content analysis methods. The research results found that: 1. The overall level of conditions and guidelines for student club administration at Nanning Normal University is relatively high. Financial management received the highest average score, followed by student club activity management. 2. Guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal University across three aspects. The development guidelines are as follows: 1) Financial Management, student clubs should establish a scientific financial planning system and strict financial management policies to ensure transparency and efficiency in fund usage. Data collection and regular financial disclosures should be conducted to enhance members' sense of involvement. 2) Human Resource Management, student clubs should improve member engagement satisfaction by implementing transparent selection processes, fair evaluation standards, and incentive mechanisms. Attention should also be given to members' mental health and academic balance. 3) Activity Management, student clubs should implement comprehensive risk assessments and contingency plans, establish feedback mechanisms, and optimize activity content to enhance activity quality and strengthen members' sense of belonging. The research findings will serve as guidelines for the effective management of student clubs.

Keywords: Student Club, Student Club Administration, Nanning Normal University

Introduction

In 2016, the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, the Ministry of Education, and the All-China Students' Federation jointly issued the "Interim Measures for the Management of Student Clubs in Higher Education Institutions," setting higher requirements and regulations for enhancing the educational functions of student clubs and promoting their healthy development in universities. Although the country increasingly emphasizes the important role of student clubs in higher education, there are still challenges that need to be addressed in the construction of student clubs (Qiu, 2019 : 7).

Nanning Normal University, located in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. To further regulate the management of student clubs and deepen their moral education function, as well as to actively promote their healthy development, the university has established a student club administration policy. The university actively promotes the management of student clubs, including financial management, human resource management, and student club activity management. (Nanning Normal University, 2019) However, there are still some obstacles in achieving efficient management of student clubs, such as issues related to the accuracy of financial budgeting and the risk management of student club activities, which have been identified as key problems that need to be addressed.

In the process of cultural development in universities, student clubs play an important role in providing spaces for communication and interaction and offering conditions for campus ideological and political education (Yin & Li, 2022 : 146). Student clubs are an indispensable part of the higher education system. By continuously improving the management of student clubs through a collaborative management approach, universities can further improve the ideological and political work system and enhance the implementation of moral education, strengthen the supply of high-quality educational resources, and significantly contribute to the overall improvement of talent cultivation capabilities (Bao, 2023 : 8). In the context of higher education increasingly emphasizing innovation, entrepreneurship, and creative education, university student clubs serve as an essential platform not only for enriching campus culture and enhancing students' comprehensive qualities but also for cultivating talents in innovation and entrepreneurship (Ou, 2024 : 147). Student clubs provide a healthy and positive learning environment outside of the classroom, fostering students' healthy and optimistic worldview, life outlook, and values (Zhang, 2021 : 22). Effective management of student clubs is a strong guarantee for their smooth operation and development, directly affecting the reform and progress of student clubs within the university (Jin, 2023 : 127).

However, there are some issues with student club management. For instance, activities often lack innovation and diversity, failing to meet the varying interests and needs of different members, which impacts their participation (Ning & Wang, 2022 : 22). Furthermore, student clubs face limited funding, and public financial management is not standardized (Xu & Su, 2020 : 123).

This study aims to investigate the conditions of student club administration in Nanning Normal University, with a focus on identifying its strengths and areas for improvement. Through data analysis of 377 student club members from 23 student clubs, this research will explore the conditions of student club administration in three main areas: financial management, human resource management, and student club activity management. Furthermore, the study will propose guidelines

to further enhance student club administration, to improve the quality of student club administration at Nanning Normal University.

Currently, there are several weaknesses in the management of student organizations at Nanning Normal University, such as unreasonable financial budgeting, improper financial record-keeping, and insufficient attention to member participation and mental health. Furthermore, the organizations also exhibit significant shortcomings in activity risk assessment and contingency planning.

This research is not only timely but also particularly significant in the context of China's broader higher education reform. By providing an in-depth analysis of the conditions of student club administration, this study aims to contribute to the enhancement of student club administration standards and ultimately support the comprehensive advancement of educational reform in universities.

Research Objectives

1. To study the conditions for student club administration in Nanning Normal University, People's Republic of China.
2. To study the guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal University, People's Republic of China.

Literature Review

The theory applied in this research is based on the ideas of Zhang & Guo (2021 : 85 - 90), which focuses on enhancing the student club administration. The study is divided into three key areas:

1. Financial management

Financial management is crucial for university clubs. It not only provides financial support for club activities, ensuring the smooth implementation of events and maintaining daily operations, but also, by standardizing fund management, helps clubs establish sound systems, improve organizational management, and enhance decision-making scientificity, thus driving the club's sustainable development (Zhao, 2019). Financial management is not only related to the safety and efficiency of organizational funds but is also key to improving financial transparency and boosting public trust. An effective financial management system ensures the rational allocation and use of funds, which helps optimize resource distribution and improve the efficiency of fund utilization (Li, 2024).

2. Human resource management

By establishing clear selection standards and methods, organizations can attract and screen talents that meet their needs. In addition, by establishing core values and encouraging innovation and collaboration, a cultural atmosphere that supports member growth can be fostered (Nam & Luu, 2022). Human resource management has a profound impact on the long-term development of organizations. Human resources are the cornerstone of an organization's long-term and stable development, helping to build a positive organizational culture and core values, strengthening internal cohesion, and enhancing the organization's overall effectiveness. (Zhang, 2021)

3. Activity Management

Student club activities promote students' self-development, social skills learning, and practical experience. At the same time, discussions on diverse topics and social practices stimulate students' critical thinking abilities and social responsibility awareness (Yang & Yang, 2024). By organizing educational activities that meet students' needs and offering flexible schedules, student participation can be enhanced. Additionally, establishing a fair and reasonable management and reward system can ensure the sustainability and stability of these activities (Han, 2024).

In conclusion, financial management, human resources management, and activity management form the foundation for the sustainable development of student clubs. These elements play a pivotal role in the development of student clubs, working synergistically to ensure their stable operation and long-term growth.

Research Framework

Based on the relevant literature and comprehensive theoretical knowledge, the researcher has developed a conceptual framework for studying the conditions and guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal University, as shown below.

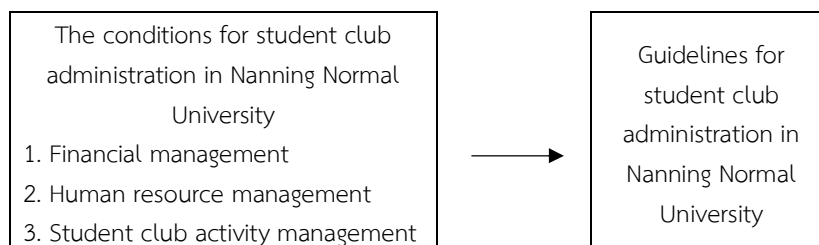


Figure 1 Research Framework

Research Methodology

1. Research Design

The research was conducted in the following two phases. Phase 1: Analyzing the conditions for student club administration in Nanning Normal University by using a questionnaire. Phase 2: Investigating the guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal University by using a semi-structured interview.

2. Population and Sample

The subjects of this study are the members of 46 university-level student Clubs at Nanning Normal University during the 2024 academic year, totalling 21,565 student club members. The sample group is the first phase of 377 members from the university-level student club at Nanning Normal University during the 2024 academic year. The sample size was determined based on Krejcie and Morgan's sample size table (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970 : 608 – 610, as cited in Suwannarak, 2012 : 148 - 149), followed by a multi-stage sampling technique.

The sample group used in the second phase included one university-level student club manager with at least five years of management experience at Nanning Normal University, and five college-level student club managers, each with at least five years of management experience.

3. Research Instrument

For the study on the conditions and guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal University, the instruments were used as follows:

1. A questionnaire with 41 items on a 5-level Likert scale. The questionnaire consisted of 41 items, using a 5-point Likert scale. It was first piloted with 30 student club members, and the quality was evaluated using Pearson's correlation coefficient, compared with a critical value of 0.306. The results showed that the correlation coefficients for all items ranged from 0.442 to 0.771, with an overall reliability of 0.975.

2. A semi-structured interview for the study aimed to explore the guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal, People's Republic of China. Six interview questions were developed based on the two questions with the lowest average scores across all three areas. The interview data were then analyzed using content analysis techniques.

4. Data Collection

For this research, the data collection was conducted through a questionnaire and interview: The researcher collected data on the conditions and guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal University.

5. Data Analysis

The researchers analyzed the data from the questionnaire and interview as follows.

1. Analyze the questionnaire and study the conditions for student club administration in Nanning Normal University, People's Republic of China by analyzing it using mean and standard deviation. The criteria for interpretation of the questionnaire data were as follows (Srisard, 2011):

Mean Range	Interpretation
4.51 - 5.00	The highest
3.51 - 4.50	High
2.51 - 3.50	Moderate
1.51 - 2.50	Low
1.00 - 1.50	The lowest

2. Analyze the interview and study the guidelines for Student club administration in Nanning Normal University, People's Republic of China by using Semi-structured interviews conducted with a smaller sample of student club managers. These interviews were focused on areas identified from the questionnaire as having the lowest mean scores. The interview data was analyzed through content analysis, where recurring themes and patterns were identified and categorized. This qualitative approach allowed for a deeper exploration of the challenges and opportunities related to the student club administration in Nanning Normal University. The interview responses were cross-referenced with the quantitative findings to provide a more nuanced understanding of the data and to validate the conclusions drawn from the questionnaire results. By employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, the study ensured a robust and well-rounded analysis of the collected data, allowing for actionable insights to improve the student club administration in Nanning Normal University.

Results

The research results found that:

1. The data on the conditions for student club administration in Nanning Normal University, People's Republic of China.

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 2

Table 1 Average and standard deviation of conditions for student club administration in Nanning Normal University People's Republic of China.

Aspects of using Student Club administration	Opinion Level			
	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning	Ranking
1. Financial management	3.79	0.72	High	1
2. Human resource management	3.56	0.77	High	3
3. Student club activity management	3.68	0.68	High	2
Total	3.68	0.72	High	

From Table 1, it can be observed that student club members have generally high opinions regarding the conditions for student club administration at Nanning Normal University. Specifically, the aspect of financial management received the highest average score ($\bar{X} = 3.79$, S.D. = 0.72), followed by student club activity management ($\bar{X} = 3.68$, S.D. = 0.68). On the contrary, the lowest average score was given to student club activity management ($\bar{X} = 3.56$, S.D. = 0.77).

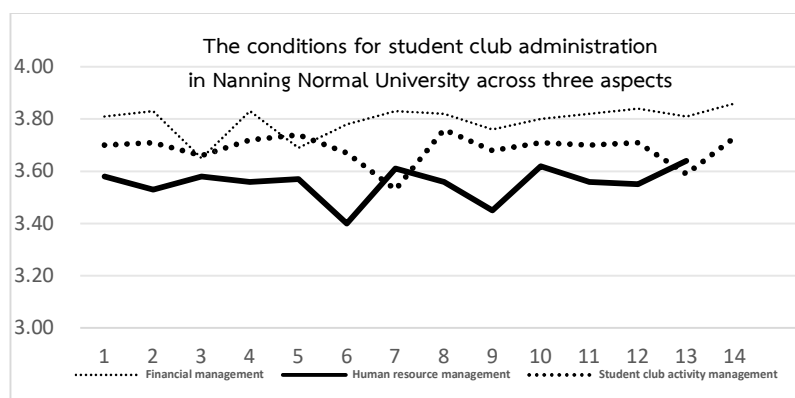


Figure 2 Comparative analysis of the results in three aspects of the conditions for student club administration in Nanning Normal University.

2. Guidelines for student club administration in Nanning Normal University across three aspects.

The development guidelines are as follows: (1) Financial Management, student clubs should establish a scientific financial planning system and strict financial management policies to ensure transparency and efficiency in fund usage. Data collection and regular financial disclosures should be conducted to enhance members' sense of involvement. (2) Human Resource Management,

student clubs should improve member engagement satisfaction by implementing transparent selection processes, fair evaluation standards, and incentive mechanisms. Attention should also be given to members' mental health and academic balance. (3) Activity Management, student clubs should implement comprehensive risk assessments and contingency plans, establish feedback mechanisms, and optimize activity content to enhance activity quality and strengthen members' sense of belonging. Based on the research findings, a synthesis can be made as in Figure 3.

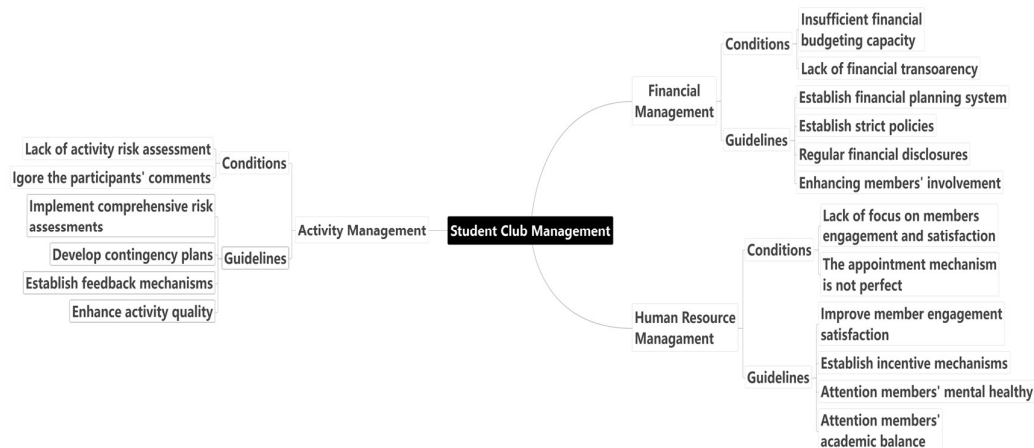


Figure 3 The three aspects of the conditions for student club administration in Nanning Normal University.

Conclusion and Discussion

1. The financial management received the highest average level of satisfaction, which may be attributed to the university's establishment of a strict financial management system for student clubs. This system clearly defines the funding sources for student clubs, including school allocations and legitimate channels such as membership fees. It requires that any student club activities have a clear budget, with fund usage being supervised by members, faculty advisors, and affiliated institutions, and evaluated by higher authorities. This aligns with the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League (2020 : 3 - 5), which states that student clubs should establish clear financial management systems, have stable funding sources, be subject to supervision and scrutiny by members, and undergo assessment and incentivization by higher authorities. However, Ni (2019 : 40) found that financial management of student clubs in the United States emphasizes standardization and transparency. The sources of funding are diversified, including university allocations, alumni donations, corporate sponsorships, and self-raised funds. In Vietnam, Duong & Thuy (2019 : 65) mentioned that student clubs manage their activities based on the available budget. The student clubs at Nanning Normal University create a financial budget according to the activities required. The research findings of Phunukram (2014) highlight that one of the primary reasons Thai students do not engage in student club activities is due to the overhead costs of activity implementation. Li (2024 : 29) mentions that financial management not only concerns the safety and efficiency of organizational funds but is also key to enhancing organizational financial transparency and increasing public trust.

An effective financial management system ensures the rational allocation and use of funds, which aids in optimizing resource distribution and improving funding efficiency. Qiao (2024 : 98) points out that financial management, as an integral part of organizational management, directly impacts the survival and development of the organization. Zhao (2019 : 158) emphasizes that financial management is crucial for university student clubs. It not only provides financial support for student club activities, ensuring their smooth execution and the daily operations of the club, but also standardizes fund management, prompting student clubs to establish sound systems, improve organizational management, and enhance decision-making science, thereby driving the sustainable development of student clubs. In conclusion, the financial management measures at Nanning Normal University validate the important role they play in enhancing student club administration.

2. The human resource management at the student club ranked the lowest compared to other areas. Human resource management is particularly important for cultural and art clubs, because this type of club has the largest number of participants, so this type of club must have good human resource management. During interviews, respondents indicated that human resource management plays a crucial role in student club administration and can significantly impact the management level of student clubs. This may be because many student clubs lack sufficient care for their members in terms of human resource management, leading to high member turnover, especially with low member participation in the appointment of Student Club Administration members. This aligns with the research by Qiu (2019 : 54), who pointed out that many student clubs face issues such as a lack of cohesion among participants, high staff turnover, weak communication between faculty advisors and student clubs, and inadequate evaluation and assessment mechanisms for student clubs. These problems result in insufficient control over personnel management, affecting the sustainable development of student clubs. Furthermore, Song (2019 : 110) noted that student clubs generally exhibit low activity levels, weakened organizational cohesion, and a weak sense of belonging among members. One issue is that after members pay their membership fees, they participate in fewer activities, accelerating member loss. Another issue is the lack of core personnel, incomplete regulations, and irregular elections. Additionally, Gao & Liu (2024 : 74) pointed out that some university student clubs have a narrow range of activities, lack innovation in their content, and struggle to motivate students to actively participate, leading to an inability to continuously attract students. The lack of lasting appeal and binding power in student clubs leads to significant member turnover. Additionally, Ni (2019 : 43) discovered that, like in China, student clubs in the United States achieve the institutionalization, professionalization, and democratization of human resource management through clear organizational structures, rigorous selection and training processes, incentive and evaluation mechanisms, democratic and transparent decision-making processes, as well as legal and institutional safeguards, all of which ensure the efficient operation of the clubs and the comprehensive development of their members. However, in Nanning Normal University, the advisors of student clubs are all faculty members from within the institution. Therefore, Nanning Normal University must promptly develop guidelines for human resource management to enhance the level of human resource management and ensure that student club personnel configurations operate efficiently, thereby promoting the sustainable development of student clubs.

Suggestion

The research findings indicate that the overall evaluation of student club management at Nanning Normal University is generally at a high level. The highest-rated aspect is financial management, followed by the management of club activities and activity management. The guidelines for student clubs at Nanning Normal University, People's Republic of China, can be summarized as follows:

1. Financial Management: Student clubs should ensure the transparency and efficiency of fund usage by establishing a scientific financial planning system, a comprehensive financial review mechanism, and strict financial management policies. Additionally, data should be collected through surveys, interviews, and financial reviews to support budget preparation. Financial status should be regularly disclosed to enhance members' sense of involvement and understanding.

2. Human Resource Management: Student clubs should ensure fairness and impartiality in the selection of core members by adopting transparent selection criteria and multi-level selection methods, while also encouraging members to participate in recommendations and feedback. Moreover, to enhance members' satisfaction and engagement, student clubs should implement incentive mechanisms, organize team-building activities, focus on members' mental well-being, arrange activities reasonably to avoid undue pressure, create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, and offer flexible work schedules to balance academic and club responsibilities.

3. Activity Management: Student clubs should ensure smooth operations and enhance emergency response capabilities through comprehensive risk assessments, contingency plans, and safety training. At the same time, clubs should establish feedback mechanisms to gather participant opinions through various channels, develop improvement plans, and conduct regular follow-ups to optimize activity quality and strengthen members' sense of involvement and belonging.

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