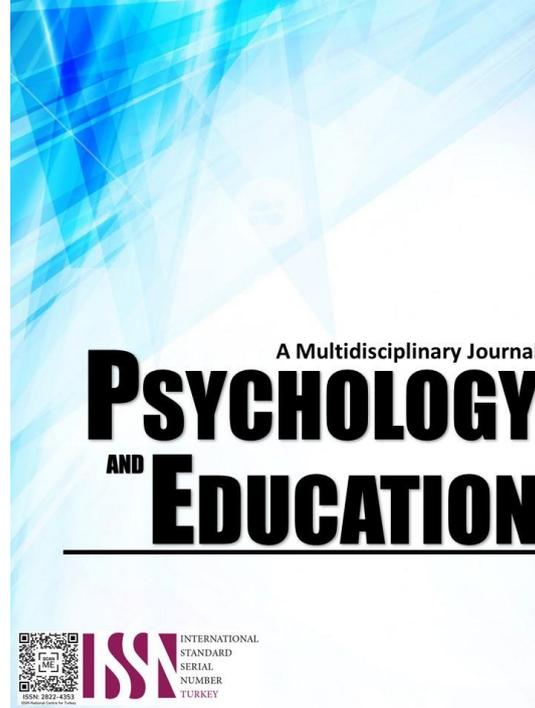


# **PUPIL’S JOURNALISTIC CAPABILITY: BASIS FOR TRAINING PROGRAM**



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## Pupil's Journalistic Capability: Basis for Training Program

Maria Lucia V. Miranda\*

*For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.*

### Abstract

Campus Journalism is considered as part of the school lives of the learners as it is one of the most participated extracurricular activities in schools. However, as the pandemic threatened everyone, the implementation of this was greatly affected. This study focused on the assessment of pupils' journalistic skills. It was conducted at San Francisco Elementary School during the School Year 2022-2023. Descriptive method of research was used utilizing an online survey questionnaire to gather necessary data regarding the journalistic skills of twenty (20) pupils. Based on the results, it was found out that the pupils' assessment on their journalistic skills obtained an overall mean of 2.53 in terms of knowledge, 2.60 on their writing skills, and 2.72 regarding their behavior towards campus journalism and all verbally interpreted as Agree. In addition, some of the cited challenges of the pupils were the insufficient knowledge regarding the basic guidelines in school papering, no training because of pandemic, and lack of motivation to join in campus journalism. They had suggested that the school should conduct a series of trainings to enhance their skills, engage them in different contests, and recognition of the journalists. The researcher also proposed a training program to further improve the implementation of campus journalism.

**Keywords:** *campus journalism, writing skills, pupil-journalists*

### Introduction

Campus Journalism is now considered as integral part of the academic undertakings of learners nowadays. It is actually offered in some schools as part of their Special Program in which students are engaged in various learning experiences that enhances their journalistic skills. In the Philippines, it refers to the practice of journalism within educational institutions, particularly in the secondary and tertiary levels. It serves as a platform for students to engage in various journalistic activities, such as news reporting, feature writing, editorial writing, photojournalism, radio and television broadcasting, and collaborative desktop publishing. Campus journalism plays a significant role in promoting press freedom, fostering critical thinking, and developing communication skills among students. As one of their extra-curricular undertakings in school, campus journalism encourages students to exercise their right to free expression and promotes a culture of free and independent media, enhances their writing, reporting, interviewing, and critical thinking skills, provides a platform for students to explore and discuss social issues affecting their communities, raising awareness and promoting dialogue, and creates a sense of community among students, fostering camaraderie and teamwork.

In the legal context, it is stipulated in Section 2 of the Republic Act 7079 or The Campus Journalism Act of 1991 that: It is the declared policy of the State to uphold and protect the freedom of the press even at the campus level and promote the development and

growth of campus journalism as a means of strengthening ethical values, encouraging critical and creative thinking, and developing moral character and personal discipline of the Filipino youth. In furtherance of this policy, the State shall undertake various programs and projects to improve students' journalistic skills and promote responsible and free journalism. Cognizant to the above provision, San Francisco Elementary School has been engaging its pupils to various activities related to school papering. The learners participated in the annual School Press Conference and other school-based programs about journalism. Also, the school had been joining in Schools Division Press Conference in which the pupils showcased their talents and skills in writing journalistic articles.

However, the scene quite changed as the sector of education had faced the alterations in its landscape due to the COVID-19 pandemic which effects are still seen in the system. Its impact is very evident as shown in the level of performance of the learners in their curricular and extra-curricular undertakings. With regard to campus journalism, there are pupils who lack insufficient knowledge regarding the school papering because of the two-year homeschooling which also hindered them to attend trainings about journalism. In addition, many do not show interest and enthusiasm to be engaged in this endeavor as they are still adjusting with the requirements they have to accomplish during their in-person classes. Hence, putting campus journalism as an extra-curricular activity or as a club cannot get maximum participation from the students. Considering the aforesaid scenarios, the



researcher, as school paper adviser wished to determine the current level of the journalistic capability of the pupils at San Francisco Elementary School. With the end view of conducting intensive trainings to uplift the knowledge and skills of the learners, she opted to investigate this matter. She believed that the result of this paper would provide her and the school vital inputs to improve the implementation of campus journalism in their school.

### Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the journalistic capability of the pupils at San Francisco Elementary School during the School Year 2022-2023. Specifically, it sought answers to the following research problems.

1. How do the pupil-respondents assess their journalistic capability in terms of their:
  - 1.1. knowledge;
  - 1.2. writing skills; and
  - 1.3. behavior towards campus journalism?
2. What are the challenges that the respondents experienced as regards to campus journalism?
3. What suggestions do the respondents offer to further enhance the implementation of Campus Journalism?
4. What plan can be proposed for the implementation of Campus Journalism?

### Literature Review

The importance of journalism in campus was given more attention in the Philippines, especially in public schools, when a law was approved in support to its development and promotion through Republic Act 7079 or the “Campus Journalism Act of 1991”. Its goal is to uphold and protect the freedom of the press even at the campus level and to promote the development and growth of campus journalism as a means of strengthening ethical values, encouraging critical and creative thinking, and developing moral character and personal discipline of the Filipino youth.” (wordpress, 2015). Campus journalism is popularly defined “that enjoyable activity of the staff of the campus paper in collecting, organizing and presenting news, writing editorials, columns, features, and literary articles, taking pictures, cartooning, copy reading, proofreading, dummying and writing headlines” (Elumba, 2014).

Relatively, Avelino (2022) stated that Campus Journalism plays essential roles in a school community. Some of these important roles that campus

press play includes delivering the school image to the community, providing its clientele both students and faculty the significant information to process school issues not otherwise available, this can be beneficial also to silence rumors that often arise due to the absence of information, and providing a check on and fiscalizing the student government, the school administration, and even the students, an essential for any democratic institution. The student publication, also, helps maintain order in the campus by reporting irregularities of school rules, analyzing these school rules and regulations and providing actual student reactions, and its editorials or opinion write-ups are instrumental to amplify the voice through reasoned and factual discussion. Patajo (2017) in his evaluation of the program’s congruence-contingency study for University of Santo Tomas found out that SPJ goals are being met in trainings and seminars and give better results to students’ performance in National Schools Press Conference. Patajo in his recommendation include constant support, evaluation, and technical assistance for this program to continually succeed. Meanwhile, a study by Laroya and Limjuco (2016) revealed that student writers who are more proficient, the more relevant articles can be found in the issues of the student papers and the higher the quality of the write ups are. The results suggested the creation of an action plan for the improvement and upgrade of the student publications which would make them more adoptive and responsive to the needs of their clientele.

Moreover, Rivera (2013) conducted a comprehensive study of the seventeen (17) pilot Special Program in Journalism implementers across the country. The study evaluated the SPJ status based on the following: (1) attainment of objectives, (2) adequacy of resources, (3) implementation and (4) curricular contents as variables. It was then recommended by Rivera (2013), that there is the need to sustain and enhance the existing curriculum content but much consideration also must be given in providing schools with adequate resources to make the program work; the objectives set for the program must be reviewed to possibly align them to the goals of K-12 Basic Education Program of making the students not only academically excellent individuals but are also ready for work which makes use of journalistic skills, knowledge and values; thus, a revision of the existing curriculum documents be made.

### Methodology

Descriptive method of research was used in this study



utilizing a researcher-made survey questionnaire. Descriptive research design is a powerful tool used by scientists and researchers to gather information about a particular group or phenomenon. This type of research provides a detailed and accurate picture of the characteristics and behaviors of a particular population or subject. By observing and collecting data on a given topic, descriptive research helps researchers gain a deeper understanding of a specific issue and provides valuable insights that can inform future studies (Sirisilla, 2023).

**Participants**

Twenty (20) pupils served as the respondents of this study. They were chosen using purposive sampling technique. According to Vijayamohan (2023), the purposive sampling method is about selecting samples from the overall sample size based on the judgment of the survey taker or researcher. In other words, a purposive sample is collected according to the requirements of the test, survey, or research that it'll be used for. This method was the suitable technique to be used in this study since the researcher knows the pupils as they are the ones who are in the campus journalism.

**Instruments of the Study**

The link of the online survey questionnaire was given to the respondents to gather necessary data regarding their assessment on their journalistic skills in terms of their knowledge, writing skills, and behavior towards campus journalism. The researcher herself monitored the completeness of the answers to ensure she could get enough data.

**Ethical Considerations**

The researcher herself explained and gave the informed consent to each participant before the conduct of the study. She ensured them that the information would be used with utmost confidentiality and within the purpose of the study only.

**Results and Discussion**

**Assessment of Pupil-Respondents on their Journalistic Capability**

Table 1. *Assessment of Pupil-Respondents on their Journalistic Capability in terms of their Knowledge*

<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
1. I have sufficient knowledge as regards to the basic of writing journalistic articles.	2.50	Agree
2. I demonstrate in-depth understanding of the guidelines in writing articles like News, Sports, Editorial, Feature, and Science.	2.60	Agree
3. I understand well the categories in campus journalism.	2.53	Agree
4. I exemplify critical thinking skills in choosing topics in journalism.	2.55	Agree
5. I exhibit broad understanding of all the aspects about school papering.	2.45	Disagree
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.53</b>	<b>Agree</b>

It can be seen on the table that the pupils' assessment on their journalistic capability in terms of their knowledge gained an overall weighted mean of 2.53 and verbally interpreted as Agree. This means that the pupils believed that they possess knowledge as regards to campus journalism. However, it is important to note that their responses fell under the lowest range of agree level which means that their understanding on the school papering is not that sufficient for pupil-journalists. Also, it can be noted that statement number 5 gained a mean of 2.45 and verbally interpreted as Disagree. It can be inferred from this that the pupils lack of extensive learning about campus journalism.

It is then recommended that the school may provide them capacity training that would gear them with adequate information regarding writing of journalistic articles as they engage themselves in campus journalism in the next years.

Table 2. *Assessment of Pupil-Respondents on their Journalistic Capability in terms of their Writing Skills*

<i>Writing Skills</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
1. I can write accurate, precise, and compelling headline/ title of my article.	2.50	Agree
2. I can write relevant, impactful, and correct lead of my article.	2.55	Agree
3. I can write informative and effective body of my article.	2.50	Agree
4. I can write different journalistic articles (news, sports, editorial, feature).	2.45	Disagree
5. I can write articles to contribute in producing our school paper.	2.60	Agree
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>Agree</b>

It can be gleaned on the table that the pupils' assessment on their journalistic capability in terms of

their writing skills gained an overall weighted mean of 2.60 and verbally interpreted as Agree. This means that the pupils concurred to the idea that they compose articles related to journalism. Meanwhile, it can also be seen that statement number 4 gained a mean of 2.45 which fell on Disagree. This shows that as regards to pupils writing skills, enhancement of this vital skills in school papering should be prioritized.

It can be recommended that the school may engage the learners in various workshops that would uplift their ability in writing articles that are aligned to campus journalism.

Table 3. Assessment of Pupil-Respondents on their Journalistic Capability in terms of their Behavior towards Campus Journalism

<i>Behavior towards Campus Journalism</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
1. I know that campus journalism would help me improve my writing skill.	2.60	Agree
2. I am interested to be one of the school journalists.	2.50	Agree
3. I love campus journalism.	2.95	Agree
4. I consider campus journalism as one of the extra-curricular activities that I can engage myself to.	2.70	Agree
5. I am happy to write journalistic articles for our school paper.	2.85	Agree
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>Agree</b>

It can be glanced on the table that the pupils' assessment on their journalistic capability in terms of their behavior towards campus journalism gained an overall weighted mean of 2.72 and verbally interpreted as Agree. It means that the pupil-respondents still have a positive perception to campus journalism. Likewise, their love on this craft can still be seen on their responses as they expressed their willingness to be engaged in this extra-curricular activity that would help them improve especially their writing skills.

Based on the result, it can be recommended that the school may continuously offer opportunities to young journalist for them to manifest passion on journalism and exhibit effective writing skills that they could use in the future.

### Challenges that the Respondents Experienced as regards to Campus Journalism

From the responses of the pupils, the following frequent answers reflected the challenges they encountered as they engaged themselves in campus journalism this school year.

- a. They have insufficient knowledge regarding the guidelines on writing journalistic articles because they were at homeschooling for two years and they were not able to attend any trainings for the past years.
- b. They are new in campus journalism, and they need more intensive cliniquing to be good writers.
- c. There were no trainings on campus journalism because of the school shifted to modular distance learning for two years.
- d. There are so many academic requirements especially now that we are still adjusting on the transition from modular to in-person classes.
- e. The pupils do not have enough motivation to be engaged in campus journalism.

### Suggestions of the respondents offer to further enhance the implementation of Campus Journalism

The following were the suggestions of the pupil-respondents for further improvement of the implementation of Campus Journalism in San Francisco Elementary School.

- a. The school shall conduct series of trainings to enhance the journalistic skills of the learners.
- b. The school shall engage the pupils in different contest to boost their confidence and abilities in writing various journalistic articles.
- c. The school shall recognize the learners so that they can be motivated.
- d. The school shall provide learning materials that could develop the writing skills of the pupils in campus journalism.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following are the conclusions: (1)The pupils evaluated their journalistic skills as regards to their knowledge, writing skills, and behavior towards campus journalism based on their perceptions after being in the homeschooling for two years. (2)The pupils encountered different challenges as they engaged in campus journalism which hinder them to perform well in campus journalism. (3)The pupils suggested the school to conduct trainings that would enhance the skills of the leaners with regard to school papering.

Based on the conclusions, the following are hereby recommended: (1)The school may conduct capacity building to the pupil-journalists to improve their knowledge, writing skills, and behavior towards



campus journalism. (2)The school may engage the learners in various activities related to campus journalism to bring back the culture of school papering as the schools returned to in-person classes. (3)The suggestions of the pupils may be considered to further improve the implementation of campus journalism.

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## Affiliations and Corresponding Information

**Maria Lucia V. Miranda**

San Francisco Elementary School  
Department of Education - Philippines