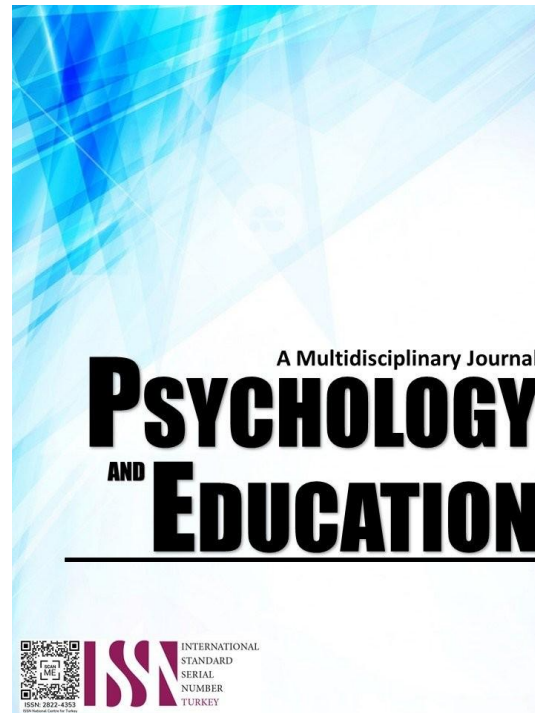


# FROM SCHOOLS TO SOCIETIES: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY ON CAMPUS JOURNALISM PRACTICES IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES



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## From Schools to Societies: A Multiple Case Study on Campus Journalism Practices in State Universities and Colleges in Southern Philippines

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### Abstract

This multiple-case study examined campus journalism practices among state universities and colleges in Southern Philippines, focusing on how student journalists work, construct discourses, and navigate similarities and differences across institutional contexts. The objective was to understand publications as training grounds and arenas for democratic participation. Five student journalists participated with inputs from publication advisers. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and cross-case comparison. Thematic analysis identified journalism practices and discourse strategies, while triangulation enhanced validity. Results showed that journalism practices in state universities and colleges extend beyond routine processes. The recruitment process and structured editorial reviews are not only administrative requirements but also strategies to safeguard credibility in resource-constrained environments. Fieldwork and institutional collaborations revealed the balancing act between independence and administrative expectations. Discourse practices reflected adaptability, as students employed conventional structures like the inverted pyramid while also embracing flexible and bilingual forms to connect with peers and assert cultural identity. Editorials demonstrated cautious yet purposeful advocacy, signaling their role as watchdogs within contested institutional spaces. Thus, campus journalism in Southern Philippines is both fragile and resilient—sustaining standards, experimenting with discourse, and enabling young journalists to claim their voices in shaping institutional and social conversations in the region.

**Keywords:** *campus journalism, journalism practices, discourse practices, state universities and colleges, multiple case study, Southern Philippines*

### Introduction

Campus journalism is a vital component of student engagement and democratic participation in educational institutions. It serves as a platform for students to express their views, report issues within their institutions, and practice the fundamentals of journalism. This fosters critical thinking, ethical reporting, and responsible communication, shaping future journalists and informed citizens (Faith, 2014). This provides an avenue for students to develop their writing, investigative, and editorial skills while promoting freedom of expression and press freedom within the academic community.

In the United States, campus journalism has been a battleground for free speech, yet student journalists still face censorship and administrative control. Similarly, Berger and Foote (2017) revealed that the university administrations often pressure student publications to self-censor content that critiques school policies or addresses controversial social issues. A notable case is the censorship of *The Red & Black*, the independent student newspaper at the University of Georgia, where editors resigned in protest against administrative interference in editorial decisions.

In the Philippines, despite the protection granted by the Campus Journalism Act of 1991, issues of censorship and financial instability persist. Multiple studies have pointed out that administrative interventions, financial constraints, and threats to press freedom continue to hinder the growth and development of campus journalism (Tuazon, 2021). Additionally, Advincula and Adtoon (2024) noted that student publications, such as *The Philippine Collegian* at the University of the Philippines Diliman, have faced budget cuts and attempts by administrators to control editorial content. In 2018, the publication faced delays in fund releases, threatening its operations and ability to publish critical reports on national issues, including government policies and social injustices. Thus, these challenges hinder student journalists from exercising true press freedom, making campus journalism in the Philippines a precarious field.

In Southern Philippines, particularly at Mindanao State University (MSU), student journalists encountered not only censorship but also security threats when covering sensitive topics like insurgency, human rights violations, and political corruption. Likewise, Ayieko (2018) noted that in conflict-prone regions, student journalists have been threatened for reporting on local governance issues and extrajudicial killings. In 2019, MSU's campus publication faced intimidation from political groups following investigative reports on local corruption.

Despite the rich history and significance of campus journalism in the Philippines, there remains a limited body of research on the journalistic practices of state universities and colleges (SUCs) in the Southern Philippines. Existing studies on campus journalism primarily emphasize either the broader national landscape or the legal aspects of student press freedom (Bermudo & Yango, 2021). However, there is a lack of in-depth, localized studies that examine the unique challenges faced by student journalists at state-funded institutions in the Southern Philippines, particularly in regions with political sensitivities and socio-economic disparities (Dagle, 2023). By addressing these gaps, this study aims to provide a comprehensive examination of campus journalism practices, discourse patterns, and media evolution in the state universities and colleges within Southern Philippines, offering insights that can inform policy

improvements and enhance student press freedom.

This study is socially relevant as it highlights the critical role of campus journalism in fostering an informed and engaged student body. Student publications serve as platforms for free expression, investigative reporting, and public discourse, allowing students to critically analyze institutional policies and national issues (Depoux et al., 2020). With the rise of misinformation and political disinformation, student journalists play a vital role in promoting media literacy and truthful reporting within their academic communities (Westerman & Spence, 2014). By examining campus journalism practices in state universities and colleges in the southern Philippines, this study contributed to an understanding of the challenges faced by student journalists, including censorship, administrative intervention, and financial constraints. The findings can help improve university policies that protect press freedom, ensuring that student publications remain independent and credible sources of information.

The urgency of this study stems from the growing challenges faced by campus journalism in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the southern Philippines, particularly issues of censorship, funding limitations, administrative control, limitations on editorial freedom, and investigative reporting (Advincula & Adtoon, 2024). By addressing these concerns, this research can contribute to policy recommendations that strengthen campus journalism practices, protect student journalists, and enhance the role of student publications in shaping informed and engaged societies.

To ensure that the findings of this study reach a broad and relevant audience, a multi-channel dissemination plan was employed. The first phase involves presenting the study's key insights at academic conferences and research symposiums focused on journalism and education. Additionally, the study will be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals, ensuring that educators, journalists, and researchers can access and cite the findings for further research and curriculum development. The second phase of dissemination was focused on practical applications and public engagement, particularly in educational and journalistic communities. The findings will be shared with student publication advisers and campus journalists through seminars and workshops conducted in partner universities and colleges.

## Research Questions

This study answered the following questions.

1. What are the journalism practices in different state universities and colleges in southern Philippines?
2. What are the discourse practices employed by student journalists in these campus journals?
3. What explains the dissimilarity and similarity of each case?

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a multiple case study design to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in its natural setting. Qualitative research is important for investigating the details of people's lives, as it reveals how individuals function and why. Similarly, Cleland (2017) argues that qualitative research is important in educational settings as it offers a rich understanding of phenomena, experiences, and their contexts. Thus, qualitative research is the best approach for capturing participants' social relations and individual experiences. The quality of qualitative research lies in the diversity of how it embraces human experience data through interviews, focus group discussions, and observation (Taylor & Francis, 2013).

In this research, each State University and College (SUC) in the southern Philippines serves as a case study, providing insights into the unique and shared campus journalism practices across institutions. The multiple case study approach enables cross-case analysis, highlighting variations in journalistic norms, challenges, and institutional policies that shape student publications (Stake, 2013). Thus, it is important to consider that focused studies provide richer detail and ideas by including several cases, while limiting the number of cases can lead to different patterns and themes, particularly in empowering youth voices.

### Respondents

The selection of case participants for this multiple-case study was carefully guided by Creswell's (2013) guidelines, which specify a range of 3 to 5 participants per case study. This study chose a total of five (5) campus journalists, with one participant representing each of the five identified cases from State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in Southern Philippines: Davao del Norte State College (Panabo City), Davao de Oro State College (Compostela), Davao Oriental State University (Mati City), Caraga State University (Butuan City), and North Eastern Mindanao State University (Surigao del Sur). In addition to these five case participants, the study included a small group of five individuals who served as moderators. They were interviewed to help verify, validate, and deepen the understanding of the participants' experiences and narratives. This strategy aims to triangulate the data and strengthen the credibility of the findings.

A set of standards was used in choosing participants to guarantee diversity was identified using Patton's (2002) maximum variation sampling technique to guarantee diversity and representativeness within campus journalism, which relies on a clearly defined set of inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure that only those with relevant and sufficient experience contribute to the study. Specifically,

the participants must be adult campus journalists (18 years or older) currently enrolled in the identified SUCs, regardless of gender or academic program, and they must be actively affiliated with an officially recognized student publication. Furthermore, they must have at least three academic years of experience in campus journalism to ensure deep familiarity with journalistic practices, editorial processes, and institutional dynamics.

The study also considers archival records, published student articles, and institutional policies to provide a comprehensive understanding of discourse patterns and governance structures. Excluded from the study are first-year student journalists, contributors without editorial roles, inactive or defunct student publications, and publications primarily focused on literary or creative writing, as they fall outside the scope of investigative and editorial journalism targeted by this research.

Regarding vulnerability, the selected participants were not classified as part of a vulnerable population because they are adults capable of providing informed consent. However, due to the nature of the study, which may involve sensitive issues related to campus governance, freedom of expression, and institutional policies, careful measures were taken to minimize potential risks or discomfort. Participants were assured that their identities and responses would be kept strictly confidential and that pseudonyms would be used in reporting the findings. Importantly, all participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequences. They were also reminded that participation is entirely voluntary, and they may decline to answer any questions they are uncomfortable with.

By ensuring a diverse and well-qualified group of participants and addressing ethical considerations such as vulnerability, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw, this study aims to offer a rigorous, ethical, and meaningful exploration of the discourse patterns, practices, and lived experiences of campus journalists across Southern Philippines.

### **Instrument**

The primary data sources for this study include campus journalists as participants, campus publication advisers as moderators, and informants from selected state universities and colleges (SUCs) in Southern Philippines. Through in-depth interviews, campus journalists provided firsthand accounts of their experiences in campus journalism, including editorial practices, ethical considerations, and challenges such as censorship and financial constraints. Campus publication advisers offered insights into administrative policies, mentorship roles, and the evolving landscape of student press freedom. Additionally, official student publications, including print and digital issues, were analyzed to examine discourse patterns, journalistic content, and adherence to the Campus Journalism Act of 1991 (RA 7079). Supplementary data was also gathered from institutional policies, university records, and regional journalism training programs to provide a comprehensive understanding of campus journalism practices in the region.

Information was collected from various sources and using different techniques to achieve triangulation and gain a rich understanding of the phenomenon. This study has sought to identify the similarities and differences in each case through the cross-validation of various data sources, focusing on the Campus Journalism practices, problems, challenges, and weaknesses of state universities and colleges in Southern Philippines.

### **Procedure**

As mentioned in the preceding sections of this research, at least five human participants are the primary data collection sources in this study. Proper protocol was strictly adhered to in the data collection.

Before the implementation, a letter of approval from the Dean of the University of the Immaculate Conception Graduate School is required. Following the dean's approval is the certificate from the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of the University of the Immaculate Conception. On the other hand, the interview guide was validated through a review process by the panel members. After that, the adviser was requested to write an endorsement letter, and then the paper had to be submitted. The endorsement from the dean and the approval from the REC were attached to my letter asking permission from the presidents of the selected state universities and colleges in Southern Philippines, namely: Davao del Norte State College, Davao De Oro State College, Davao Oriental State University, Caraga State University, and North Eastern Mindanao State University. Similarly, a letter requesting permission to conduct the study will also be given to student publication advisers, as they served as moderators in the data collection.

Upon approval to proceed with data collection, participants and moderators received an orientation on the study's relevance. In addition, a signed Informed Consent Form (ICF) indicating their voluntary involvement in the study was requested. These participants were purposively selected by the researcher based on the study's criteria and offered the option to participate voluntarily. Additionally, participants were provided with written informed consent stating that the interview was audio-recorded for notetaking and confirmation purposes. They were further informed how their confidentiality was protected. They were also assured that the collected data would be used solely for this research.

The corresponding research participants were interviewed in both in-person and online formats, conducted by the student publication advisers who served as moderators. This is to learn more about their campus journalism practices, problems, challenges, and weaknesses of state universities and colleges in Southern Philippines. The audio-recorded interview was used for cross-validation of the interview notes.

Additionally, one-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted to capture participants' campus journalism practices, problems, challenges, and the weaknesses of state universities and colleges in Southern Philippines. The researcher was responsible for welcoming the participants and informing them of their responsibilities, including the chosen time and location to accommodate everyone. During the face-to-face in-depth interview, the researcher prepared an interview guide and its corresponding follow-up questions to ensure comprehensive answers and gather the data needed for the study. During the interview, the researcher also thoroughly discussed the ethical considerations with the participants. While participating in the IDI, participants may experience some discomfort or inconvenience, such as the length of the interview. To mitigate this, a break time was included within the interview. The researcher ensures that the IDI is conducted in a comfortable, supportive environment and that participants are free to take breaks or withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

Throughout the data gathering process, ethical considerations remained paramount. The REC's guidelines were strictly adhered to, with special attention given to confidentiality and participants' privacy in conforming to Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Any unanticipated ethical concerns were promptly addressed. Furthermore, the transcript of the entire interview process was sent back to the participants for verification and accuracy checks. If participants wish to delete or modify any data or responses, the researcher will fully respect and accommodate their requests. The researcher is committed to protecting their privacy and will not disclose any personal information or identities without their explicit consent.

The data was analyzed in consultation with a data analyst to ensure an appropriate and accurate conclusion. This strict approach to participation and data management is essential for protecting the research's ethicality and methodological soundness, particularly in discovering and analyzing the practices, challenges, issues, and problems encountered by campus journalists.

### **Data Analysis**

In this research, the investigator reflexively conducted the study, aiming to acquire and organize interviews, documented observations, audio recordings, and various textual data to enhance the understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The analysis involved transcription, coding, categorization, and thematic and cross-case analysis. Each case was analyzed individually before searching for evident patterns of both similarities and differences.

Transcription in this research entailed translating all recorded audio information into written form. The process required the researcher to meticulously check and re-read the transcriptions to ensure clarity and accuracy. Transcribing recorded data involved typing portions of the recorded audio, reviewing the typed text, taking preliminary notes, and developing a general awareness of the data, as noted by Caulfield (2019).

During the coding and categorization step, data reduction was performed to exclude extraneous statements and avoid redundancy of key ideas. In line with Patton's (2002) viewpoint, the coding and categorizing process involved reducing raw information, searching for significant patterns, and ultimately assigning meaning to create a logical sequence of evidence.

The analysis employed thematic analysis, a method that identifies patterns and emerging themes from qualitative data, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The researcher utilized the cross-case analysis technique, as presented by Yin (2018), to compare similarities and differences among selected universities, ultimately providing a comprehensive understanding of campus journalism practices in the Southern Philippines. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality, were strictly adhered to to protect participants' rights, as emphasized by Creswell & Creswell (2023). By integrating qualitative methodologies with rigorous case study protocols, this research aimed to offer meaningful insights into the evolving role of campus journalism in academic and societal discourse.

The researcher employed thematic analysis to identify participants' beliefs, concerns, and opinions related to the research topic. The use of thematic analysis was purposefully conducted with precision to present accurate and meaningful findings, as deemed appropriate by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Additionally, cross-case analysis was applied in this study to identify both replicative and distinctive features regarding practices, discourse patterns, and the challenges faced within campus journalism. This approach empowered the researcher to define the system of factors influencing the outcomes. It also facilitated the discussion of potential reasons for the identified similarities and differences, thereby refining the understanding of the underlying principles.

### **Ethical Considerations**

According to Denzin (2005), ethics is essential for meeting the guidelines and standards required for approval by academic bodies. This specifically protects the identities of those involved in the research. Furthermore, Graciano and Raulin (2010) assert that ethical considerations are critical in all research design processes. Consulting the ethical guidelines of one's professional association can help clarify ethical considerations (Silverman, 2007). Research ethics are necessary for conducting a thorough study, as they can influence the results. To ensure this research adhered to the necessary rules, ethical standards were established to guide the inquiry, including social value, researcher qualifications, facility adequacy, and community involvement.

The UIC Research Ethics Committee approved this research protocol, which has been classified into ten separate facets. The study

underwent a thorough and methodical review process to ensure that ethical standards were adhered to without a flinch. This section explained the attainment of each of the standards within the context of the study.

**Social Value.** This study carried significant social value by contributing to the understanding and enhancement of campus journalism as a vital institution for democratic engagement, civic education, and social transformation. By investigating the journalism practices, discourse patterns, and the implementation of RA 7079 (Campus Journalism Act of 1991), the study offers insights into how student journalists cultivate critical thinking, uphold press freedom, and empower youth voices within and beyond their universities. These insights can guide school administrators, journalism advisers, and policymakers in strengthening support systems for campus publications. Moreover, the study helps identify challenges, weaknesses, and institutional gaps faced by student publications, providing an evidence-based foundation for capacity-building, training programs, and policy interventions aimed at promoting responsible and ethical journalism practices in higher education institutions. Also, by analyzing the similarities and differences across cases, the research fosters cross-cultural understanding and knowledge sharing among universities, promoting the dissemination of best practices and innovative approaches in campus journalism. Thus, the study's outcomes are expected to benefit not only the academic community but also broader society by nurturing socially aware, media-literate, and civically engaged graduates who can contribute meaningfully to democratic processes and nation-building.

**Informed Consent.** This study strictly adhered to ethical standards by ensuring that all participants provided informed consent prior to their participation. Participants, including student journalists, student publication advisers (as moderators), and relevant university officials, were fully informed about the nature, objectives, and scope of the study. They received a clear explanation of the research purpose, the procedures involved, the types of questions to be asked, and the approximate time required for participation.

Participants were informed that their involvement was entirely voluntary, and they could decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequences. Moreover, participants were assured that their responses were treated with strict confidentiality. Names, institutional affiliations, and identifying details were not included in the final report or publications. Data were anonymized and stored securely. Additionally, participants were informed that the study posed minimal to no risk and that they might benefit by contributing to the improvement of campus journalism practices and policies in their institutions and region. Participants were also informed about how the data would be used, including its use for academic purposes, possible publication, and presentations. They were assured that data would not be used for any purpose beyond those stated without their additional consent. Lastly, the contact details of the principal investigator(s) were provided so participants could ask questions or raise concerns at any point. All participants were required to sign a written informed consent form, which was explained in detail before data collection began.

**Vulnerability of the Research Participants.** In this study, special attention was given to recognizing and addressing the potential vulnerabilities of the research participants. The participants, who were primarily campus journalists, student publication advisers, and university officials, had varying levels of power, experience, and institutional protection, which could influence their sense of autonomy and safety during the research process. Campus journalists might feel pressure to participate due to the perceived authority of faculty advisers or university administrators. To mitigate this, participants were clearly informed that their decision to participate or not would have no impact on their academic standing, publication involvement, or relationships with their institutions. Participants might disclose sensitive information regarding institutional challenges, internal conflicts, or weaknesses in campus journalism operations. To protect participants, all data were anonymized, and confidentiality was strictly maintained. Any information that could risk reputational harm to individuals or institutions was carefully handled and reported in aggregated form. Discussing institutional problems or personal experiences might cause emotional discomfort for some participants. They were informed of their right to decline to answer specific questions or withdraw from the study at any point without penalty.

**Risks, Benefits, and Safety.** In this study, careful attention was given to balancing potential risks and benefits while ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants. This study was considered low-risk; however, the following minimal risks were anticipated: participants might experience mild discomfort or anxiety when discussing sensitive topics such as institutional challenges, conflicts, censorship, or weaknesses in campus journalism practices. There was also a small risk of accidental disclosure of sensitive information, which could potentially affect participants' reputations or relationships within their universities. Also, student journalists might feel intimidated or pressured, particularly if faculty or administrators were involved in the study, as this involvement could influence their responses.

Moreover, this study offered several important individual and societal benefits, such as the opportunity to reflect on and share their experiences, to contribute to improving journalism practices, and to highlight the challenges they faced. State Universities and Colleges also gained insights into the effectiveness of campus journalism programs, identified areas for policy improvement, and gathered evidence to support capacity-building efforts. Society benefited as well through the strengthening of campus journalism's role in fostering democratic participation, civic engagement, critical thinking, and social awareness among the youth.

To safeguard participants throughout the research process, it was clearly communicated that participation was voluntary and that participants had the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. All personal and institutional identifiers were removed or anonymized in the data and reporting. Data were securely stored in password-protected digital files or locked cabinets accessible only to the research team. Participants were informed that they might skip any questions they were uncomfortable answering, and sensitive

topics were handled with care and respect. Should participants experience distress or have concerns, they were provided with the contact details of the principal investigator and, if needed, referral to university support services (e.g., counseling centers).

Overall, the anticipated benefits of this research were deemed to outweigh the identified risks. This assessment was grounded in the commitment to taking necessary precautions and obtaining appropriate permissions to ensure participants' welfare. Moreover, the study was positioned as socially relevant, holding potential significance for campus journalism. The balance between risk mitigation and the study's positive impact underscored its importance and ethical conduct in exploring the intricacies of the linguistic features of official student publications.

**Privacy and Confidentiality.** In this study, the researcher was committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all participants throughout the research process. With this, the researcher complied with the guidelines of openness, relevance, and proportionality when collecting, storing, and processing personal data (Data Privacy Act of 2012).

The identities of all participants, including student journalists, campus journalism advisers, and university officials, were kept strictly confidential. In-depth interviews were conducted in a private setting where participants felt secure and free to express themselves. Furthermore, all data (e.g., interview transcripts, audio recordings, survey responses) were anonymized. Names, institutional affiliations, and other identifying details were removed or replaced with coded identifiers during data transcription and analysis. Aggregated data were reported in the study findings to avoid singling out individuals or institutions. Digital data was stored in encrypted, password-protected files, and physical documents were stored in locked filing cabinets. Both were only accessible to the primary researcher. After the study was completed and the results published, data were securely archived or destroyed in accordance with institutional data retention policies.

To comply with Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, a coding system was used to refer to the online news media serving as the data source, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. In addition, the researcher ensured that no one would have access to the collected and analyzed data, as it was stored on a personal laptop protected by an encrypted password. Participants were informed that, while every effort was made to maintain confidentiality, there might be rare instances in which disclosure is required by law or institutional policy (for example, if evidence of serious harm or misconduct emerges). In such cases, the researcher would take all possible steps to handle disclosures ethically and sensitively.

**Justice.** This study upheld the principle of justice by ensuring fairness, equity, and respect in the recruitment of participants, their participation, and the dissemination of research findings. Hence, the researcher ensured that the participants were treated fairly throughout the study. The study included a diverse range of student journalists from selected state universities and colleges (SUCs) across the southern Philippines. The selection process was guided by principles of fairness and representativeness, avoiding the exclusion of any group or institution without a valid reason. Proper care was taken to ensure that no participant or institution was unfairly burdened or overrepresented. Interested participants were selected according to the inclusion criteria of this study.

The study aimed to ensure that all participants and their institutions stood to benefit from the research outcomes. These benefits included insights that could strengthen campus journalism, inform policy improvements, and address challenges faced by student publications. The burdens, such as the time and effort required to participate in the research, were kept minimal and shared fairly among participants. Moreover, tokens and reimbursement were allocated to participants who sacrificed a portion of their time and actively participated in this study. Lastly, the research findings were disseminated in ways that enabled participants, institutions, and other stakeholders to access them. The researcher considered providing summary reports or presentations to participating institutions to ensure that the knowledge generated was shared and applied to benefit the communities involved.

**Transparency.** This study upheld the principle of transparency at every stage of the research process to foster trust, accountability, and integrity among all participants and stakeholders. Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, objectives, research questions, procedures, and expected outcomes before they agreed to take part. This was done through a detailed participant information sheet and a consent form, both written in clear, accessible language.

The researcher clearly communicated the roles and responsibilities of both the researchers and the participants. Participants were informed of what was expected of them during data collection, the approximate time commitment, and any follow-up activities. They were allowed to ask any questions about the study, and these questions were correctly addressed to keep them informed. They were also informed of the results, interpretations, and transcriptions relevant to this study through member checking, which maintained the transparency of this research.

Participants were given a transparent explanation of the minimal risks involved, the potential benefits, and their rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. They were informed about the procedures in place to protect their confidentiality and data security. Moreover, the research findings were reported honestly, accurately, and without fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data. The researcher aimed to share the results not only through academic channels but also by providing summaries or presentations to participating institutions and stakeholders. This approach ensured that the insights generated were accessible and valuable to those involved. The researcher provided contact information and remained available to answer any questions or concerns participants might have during and after the study. This openness helped ensure that participants felt informed, respected, and valued throughout the research process.

**Qualification as a Researcher.** As a doctoral candidate pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Education with a major in Applied Linguistics, the researcher was deeply engaged in both minor and major courses, specifically within English Language Studies and Journalism. This academic journey fostered a continuous fascination with the intricacies of language and campus journalism, recognizing the profound influence language has on individuals' lives and broader societal dynamics. The wealth of information amassed during this scholarly pursuit was significant not only for personal enrichment but also for fellow students in the field of Applied Linguistics. Undertaking this study carried with it a sense of utmost responsibility, demanding rigorous, ethical methodologies to safeguard the welfare and security of the organizations involved in data collection.

Taking on the role of the primary data analyst, the researcher committed to approaching the examination with objectivity, aligning with the underlying theories and concepts that formed the bedrock of this study. The analysis was conducted with a keen understanding of the theoretical frameworks guiding the research, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of embedded meanings within the online news articles. The researcher extended sincere appreciation for the invaluable guidance provided by the adviser, a Doctor of Philosophy in Education majoring in Applied Linguistics and a distinguished language expert affiliated with the University of Immaculate Conception. The adviser's profound knowledge, skills, and expertise in linguistics were instrumental in steering this study in the right direction. Seeking consultation with expert debriefers, the researcher aimed to evaluate the accuracy of frames and linguistic features, and the manifestation of power relations and political ideologies in online news discourse. This multi-faceted evaluation was crucial in assuring the validity and reliability of the conducted analysis.

Moreover, as the primary source for data collection and analysis, the researcher's past knowledge and experiences as a seasoned researcher significantly contributed to the methodological rigor of this study. By personally curating persuasive techniques in online e-commerce and carefully extracting pertinent information for analysis, the researcher ensured a meticulous, informed approach to the research process.

**Adequacy of Facilities.** This study ensured that the facilities and resources available were adequate to support the safe, ethical, and efficient conduct of the research. The institution provided the researcher with learning resources, necessary institutional support, and facilities. These included ProQuest, which made a substantial contribution to the study's literature review, as well as office space, computers, data storage systems, and communication tools to effectively organize and manage the study. These resources ensured that data collection, analysis, and reporting were carried out smoothly and securely. The institution had an ethics committee, which ensured the ethics and scientific validity of research. Also, Davao del Norte State College, where the researcher was an instructor, had online library resources/databases, which contributed to the maintenance of academic integrity in this study.

The researcher also secured digital systems for data storage, including password-protected computers and encrypted files, as well as locked cabinets for any physical documents. These systems met institutional and ethical standards for data protection and helped safeguard the confidentiality and integrity of all research materials. Technology was also available for recording, transcription, and data management, ensuring that the study was conducted efficiently and professionally.

**Community Involvement.** This study recognized the importance of meaningful community involvement to ensure that the research was relevant, respectful, and beneficial to the communities it served. The research actively engaged student journalists and student publication advisers as key stakeholders throughout the research process. Their insights were of great help in shaping the study design, ensuring that the research questions addressed real-world concerns, and improving the accuracy and relevance of data interpretation. Participants did not merely serve as data sources but as valued partners in the research process. The researcher encouraged all the participants to share their perspectives, provide feedback, and suggest topics or areas of importance related to campus journalism practices. This participatory approach fostered a sense of ownership and mutual respect.

Community involvement was not merely an endpoint but a central outcome of this study, with the community's participation itself being a valuable result. The dissemination strategy was crafted with a focus on informing and engaging a diverse array of stakeholders, particularly media practitioners and those immersed in journalism. The intent was not only to share the research findings but also to encourage practical application within these professional spheres. Additionally, this strategy extended beyond the broader community, encompassing direct communication with the study's participants. Those who generously shared their insights and experiences received comprehensive feedback, fostering transparency and acknowledging the significant role they played in advancing the research.

To amplify the study's impact, a proactive approach involved presenting its findings at various research conferences on local, national, and international platforms. This multi-tiered dissemination not only broadened the audience but also aligned with the researcher's ethical responsibility to contribute to the field's collective knowledge. The dissemination plan recognized the reciprocal nature of the researcher's obligation to share insights with the public and the community's role in contributing to the body of knowledge through participation.

Moreover, the study took a targeted approach in communicating its results to those directly engaged in journalism writing. This segment, intricately connected to the study's focal point, received tailored communication to ensure the insights garnered were not only accessible but also directly applicable to their professional practices. By doing so, the study aimed to create a more immediate and meaningful impact within the community it sought to serve, aligning with the overarching goal of enriching knowledge and practices in media and journalism.



## Results and Discussion

### Cross-Case Analysis

This study highlighted the journalism practices in different state universities and colleges in the southern Philippines, as well as the discourse practices employed by student journalists in these campus journals. Table 1 illustrates the profile of the participants in the in-depth interviews.

Table 1. Profile of the Participants in In-depth Interviews

	<i>Campus Journalist Who Is Exposed To Training (Case A)</i>	<i>Campus Journalist Who Has No Previous Journalism Experience (Case B)</i>	<i>Campus Journalist Who Is A Municipal Office Writer (Case C)</i>	<i>Campus Journalist Who Has No Permanent Adviser (Case D)</i>	<i>Campus Journalist Who Has Two Advisers Leading Them (Case E)</i>
Age	23	24	20	21	20
Sex	Male	Female	Male	Male	Male
Course/ Program	BSED- Science	BSED- English	BSED- English	BS-Psychology	BS- Environmental Science
Campus/ College/ Department Name	Institute of Teacher Education	Teacher Education Department	Faculty of Teacher Education	College of Humanities	College of Arts and Sciences
Region	Davao Region	Davao Region	Davao Region	Caraga Region	Caraga Region
Number of Years as Campus Journalist	4 years	3 years	4 years	3 years	3 years
Year Level	Fourth Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Third Year	Third Year
Unique Aspects	(1) rigorous annual screening for all members  (2) systematic editing hierarchy that reinforces factual accuracy and fairness	(1) strict adherence to constitutional bylaws and internal agreements  (2) emphasis on credibility checks before writing reflects a methodical and principled approach to journalism	(1) systematic approach to event coverage  (2) deep commitment to ethical reporting	(1) outreach efforts beyond the university and a strong hierarchical editorial review system  (2) emphasis on training external schools showcases a commitment to journalism's educational and community-oriented mission	(1) high volume of output and structured multi-layered editorial review  (2) focus on national student-related issues expands the scope of campus journalism beyond the immediate university environment
Participant Code	CJ01	CJ02	CJ03	CJ04	CJ05
Moderator Code	SPA06	SPA07	SPA08	SPA09	SPA10

As depicted in the table, the five case participants were differentiated in terms of their demographics and unique aspects. The first case involved a fourth-year Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Science, who has been a campus journalist for four years, serving as both sports editor and sports writer, consistently producing 5–10 articles per semester. He joined campus journalism initially out of curiosity, which later developed into a genuine passion, viewing it as a means to serve the student body and amplify student voices. While he has encountered press freedom issues such as administrative censorship, he remains committed to journalism as the ‘voice of the students.’

The second case is a third-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English, with three years of campus journalism experience, having served as an associate editor and staff writer across news, feature, and sports sections. Although she had no prior journalism experience before college, she writes around two articles per semester. She joined journalism for the sense of fulfillment it brought and to expand her writing skills, which she sees as valuable for her future career.

The third case is a fourth-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English. This student also works as a municipal office writer and has four years of campus journalism experience, producing 5–6 articles per semester. Motivated by a passion for writing, he sees journalism as a way to uplift the marginalized and amplify the voices of ‘the last, the least, and the lost.’

The fourth case is a third-year student taking up a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. A working student and has been a campus journalist for three years, holding various positions including science and technology writer, news writer, technical editor, news editor, and currently editor-in-chief, producing 4–5 articles per semester. He joined journalism out of love for writing and to expand his skills for real-world application.



The fifth case is a third-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science, with three years of campus journalism experience. He is currently the editor-in-chief, having previously served as a news writer. His background in journalism began in high school, focusing on news, sports, and opinion articles, with an unusually high writing frequency of 7–6 articles per semester. He initially joined to compete in press conferences, but over time, his passion for journalism grew, particularly in empowering youth voices.

**Journalism Practices in different State Universities and Colleges in Southern Philippines**

In the cross-case analysis, five themes emerged that explained the journalism practices in different state universities and colleges in southern Philippines. As shown in Table 2, these themes were: screening recruits; structuring reviews; conducting fieldwork; collaborating institutionally; and expanding social relevance. Each theme consists of core ideas that were derived from the typical responses of all case participants in the interviews. These core ideas reflected the participants' upbringing and influenced their campus journalism practices at their university. Moreover, these core ideas can be viewed in the second column of Table 2.

Table 2. *Journalism practices in different State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in Southern Philippines*

<i>Essential Themes</i>	<i>Core Ideas</i>
Screening recruits	Submitting annual intent forms even for returning members
	Implementing a multi-step application process including written, practical, and oral interviews
	Assessing skills in writing, photography, and captioning
	Deliberating within the editorial board for final member selection
Structuring reviews	Selecting advisers who respect journalistic freedom
	Conducting peer review by editorial staff before publication
	Applying a multi-layer editing hierarchy from writer to section editor, technical editor, and EIC
	Checking grammar, punctuation, and adherence to publication structure
	Fact-checking against actual event coverage to ensure accuracy
Conducting fieldwork	Consulting advisers on sensitive content such as editorials and opinion pieces
	Reviewing final drafts by the editorial board to ensure ethical and fair reporting
	Posting assignments on bulletin boards for coverage distribution
	Attending events for direct observation and interviews
	Verifying source credibility before writing
Collaborating institutionally	Sourcing information ethically
	Avoiding assumptions and personal interpretations in news coverage
	Balancing traditional reporting with modern engagement strategies
	Emphasizing humility and openness in gathering information
	Maintaining independence in editorial decisions while collaborating with the university when necessary
Expanding Social Relevance	Adhering to interim guidelines for covering faculty/staff activities
	Waiting for official releases on certain university announcements
	Jointly covering major events such as graduations
	Sharing university website space for publication articles
	Following protocols to prevent conflicts between publication content and institutional image
Expanding Social Relevance	Extending coverage beyond the home university to reach other schools and communities
	Conducting workshops for other colleges to improve their publications
	Training younger students from elementary and high school in journalism
	Writing on national and social issues relevant to students
Expanding Social Relevance	Producing diverse content types—news, features, opinions, broadcasts
	Upholding the journalistic code of ethics to build public trust

**Screening Recruits.** The participants recognized that their campus journalism practices adhere strictly to their bylaws, maintaining structured application and testing processes to ensure competence before membership. They also required annual reapplication for all members, which serves as a built-in performance evaluation and incorporates peer review and adviser polishing as part of the recruitment evaluation, ensuring applicants meet collaborative and editorial standards. As a result, these practices warrant sustained quality writing for all staff, ensuring skill evaluation and commitment. In connection, a pertinent statement of this practice was made by Case A below:

For the student publication screening process, every year the members submit their intent. Even if they are already a member, they still need to submit. And they still undergo the application process, wherein they are to submit their intent; they also undergo an interview, as well as a test of writing or producing something. (CJ01\_RQ1.MQ1)

For the student publication screening process, members submit a letter of intent each year. Even if they are already part of the publication, they still need to submit one. They also go through the application process, which includes submitting their intent, undergoing an interview, and being assessed on their writing skills or their ability to produce something.

**Structuring Reviews.** Another essential theme is the multi-layered system of editing and review that student journalists use to ensure quality and credibility. Drafts typically pass from the writer to section editors and technical editors, then to the editor-in-chief, before being finalized. According to Case B:

So, first is, gina-peer review sa namo, ma'am. Kami nga, parts editorial. Tapos, ang last boss, si ma'am Joyce, gina-pacheck na mo daan sa iyaha kasi basin diay naay ka ng blind spot ba naa may na miss nga mga ano, mga things nga, dili-dali dapat i-include. So, siya ang mag, ano, mag-polish. (CJ02\_RQ1.MQ1)

So, first, we do a peer review, Ma'am. We, in the editorial team, review it among ourselves. Then, as the final authority, Ma'am Joyce, we let her check it first because there might be blind spots—things we might have missed or things that shouldn't easily be included. So, she is the one who polishes it.

This structured system minimizes errors in grammar, structure, and factual content. Fact-checking is also integral to this process, especially on controversial topics. For instance, Case C explained:

Ano po, Miss. Firstly, we have these bulletin boards for kung saan na-assign. Dito na, Miss, kung saan na-assign to cover for this event, kung saan na-assign to cover for that event on the coming days. And in the context of gathering factual information, Miss, nag-adto usually sa mga events or sa venues, then ask. nag-interview me sa mga tao, then yeah, interview, then gina-organize siya, Miss, through postings and gina-organize siya by checking, gina-scrutinize pa siya if credible ba ang source or kung ano ba, yeah. Things like those, Miss. (CJ03\_RQ1.MQ1)

Firstly, Miss, we have these bulletin boards where the assignments are posted. For example, who is assigned to cover this event, and who is assigned to cover that event in the coming days. And in the context of gathering factual information, Miss, we usually go to the events or venues and then conduct interviews with people. After that, we organize the information through postings, and we also check and scrutinize it to see if the sources are credible or not. Things like that, Miss.

In sensitive situations, articles may be reviewed by advisers for ethical soundness before release. This editorial hierarchy reflects not just journalistic professionalism but also a way to guard against administrative scrutiny, ensuring that all outputs align with ethical codes. Case D highlighted:

So, we usually operate independently from our adviser. But, on sensitive topics that's when we go to the adviser to like for example uh that this really applies when it comes to um editorial opinion and columns because those are really sensitive so like that's those we consult those to the adviser but when it comes to news or like videos or like um what they call this uh yeah feature sports we usually just you know publish it and then. (CJ04\_RQ1.MQ1)

So, we usually operate independently from our adviser. But when it comes to sensitive topics, that's when we approach the adviser. For example, this usually applies to editorial opinions and columns because those are really sensitive. So, for those, we consult the adviser. But when it comes to news, videos, features, or sports, we usually just go ahead and publish them on our own.

Conducting Fieldwork. Fieldwork emerged as a vital theme, with student journalists emphasizing their reliance on firsthand coverage, interviews, and direct observation. Assignments are often posted on bulletin boards to organize coverage, ensuring equitable distribution among staff. Case D stressed the importance of field presence:

When it comes to gathering factual information, so like what we usually do is like we go to like the main person who is like the in charge of like for example an event because like usually we cover a lot of events within the university and so like we go to like basically I guess the organizer and then we go to like the advisor or faculty that is involved in it and then we also ask the students so like you know we could also compare how it looks in different perspectives because sometimes yeah it's not always like you know the same to the three people's eyes. (CJ04\_RQ1.PQ1.1)

When it comes to gathering factual information, what we usually do is go to the main person in charge—for example, the organizer of an event, since we often cover many activities within the university. Then, we also approach the adviser or faculty member involved, and we ask the students as well. This way, we can compare how the event looks from different perspectives, because sometimes it's not the same in the eyes of those three people.

Equally significant is the insistence on ethical sourcing. Student journalists avoid assumptions or inserting personal interpretations into coverage. Instead, they cross-check facts, often combining traditional reporting with more interactive strategies such as social media engagement. This shows how campus journalism adapts to both traditional and modern challenges in news gathering. As Case A put it:

Maadtu na po na siya sa EIC, then final check-in sa amoa, or sa head sa student publication to ensure ka ng accuracy. We also cross-verify ganun sa first test and we do policy na ginagawa tayo, task-testing din. Also, to remain fair. We have to fence multiple sides. (CJ01\_RQ1.PQ1.2)

That will then go to the EIC for a final check with us, or with the head of the student publication, to ensure accuracy. We also cross-verify, like through a first test, and we have policies that guide us, including task-testing. Also, to remain fair, we have to consider and balance multiple sides.

Collaborating Institutionally. Collaboration with university stakeholders, while maintaining editorial independence, was another recurring theme. Student journalists often cover institutional events like graduations or university anniversaries in partnership with



administrative offices, but they remain cautious about maintaining autonomy. Protocols are also observed when dealing with sensitive faculty- or staff-related issues to avoid conflicts with institutional image. Yet, participants affirmed that they guard their independence by not allowing administrators to dictate content. This delicate balance reflects how campus journalism operates within institutional spaces while still embodying the spirit of RA 7079. For example, one moderator verified and shared:

But if it is an activity that concerns the faculty or the staff, they are to wait for our release first or if they are statements or announcements or memoranda from the office of the president that entails the student's attention, they have to wait for us first before they can publish anything. So, if na ay mga classes na isi-spend, or abrupt ng mga crises in the university, they have to wait for us before they release their own version of the story because that is our interim guideline. So, we have this sort of agreement. (SPA09\_RQ1.MQ1)

But if it is an activity that concerns the faculty or the staff, they have to wait for our release first. Likewise, if there are statements, announcements, or memoranda from the Office of the President that require the students' attention, they also have to wait for us before they can publish anything. So, if there are class suspensions or sudden crises in the university, they must wait for us before releasing their own version of the story because that is our interim guideline. We have this sort of agreement.

Expanding Social Relevance. Finally, campus journalists underscored the importance of going beyond campus-based stories to tackle national issues and broader community concerns. Publications extend their role by holding workshops for elementary and high school students, thereby serving as a training ground for the next generation of journalists. This outward orientation marks campus journalism as not only an internal student activity but also a social responsibility. Case D mentioned:

And then we've, we also have, like, our initiatives as well to, like, conduct workshops outside of, like, for example, to, like, other colleges who needs, I guess, like, some idea or insights on how they could improve their campus publication and we also train little kids from elementary and high school so like yeah, I think just those traditional but now we're slowly broadening our scope. (CJ04\_RQ1.MQ1)

And then we also have our own initiatives, like conducting workshops for other colleges that need ideas or insights on how they could improve their campus publications. We also train younger students from elementary and high school. So yes, it started with those traditional efforts, but now we are slowly broadening our scope.

Additionally, campus publications increasingly write about political and social issues, situating student perspectives within national discourse. This demonstrates that campus journalism in Southern Philippines fulfills its broader function of shaping minds and promoting democratic engagement, consistent with RA 7079's vision of nation-building. As Case E shared:

So, the usual journalism, I mean, journalism practices observed usually kay more on kami here. More on disseminating lang nga yun ng information. Like making a news article to a certain event. During the academic year, when the academic year starts, dito nagsugod ka ng news articles, broadcasts. feature and opinion. Aside from news writing, we also write opinion articles. Depends sa issue, sa existing issue, especially here in the university, we also engage sa national issues like yun, mga especially yung mga related sa mga students na makaka-relate. (CJ05\_RQ1.MQ1)

So, the usual journalism practices we observe here are mostly focused on disseminating information—like writing news articles about certain events. When the academic year starts, that's when we begin producing news articles, broadcasts, features, and opinions. Aside from news writing, we also write opinion articles, depending on the issues, especially those within the university. But we also engage with national issues, particularly those that students can relate to.

**Discourse Practices employed by student journalists in these campus journals**

The discourse practices employed by student journalists in these campus journals were also unveiled in this dissertation. As depicted in Table 3, five emerging themes were presented: following standard structures; adapting language; shaping identities; engaging audiences; and upholding ethics. These themes consisted of their corresponding core ideas, which reflected the participants' responses to the discourse pattern they employed in their writing.

Table 3. *Discourse practices employed by student journalists in these campus journals*

<i>Essential Themes</i>	<i>Core Ideas</i>
Following standard structures	Applying the inverted pyramid for news writing — most important facts first, followed by supporting details Maintaining formal tone and brevity for news, with short, concise sentences Using 5Ws and 1H to structure content clearly Modeling feature writing on story arcs with plot, climax, and resolution or call to action Infusing sports writing with active verbs and sports-specific jargon Structuring editorials with scenario presentation, opinion insertion, and persuasive closure Using English as the primary medium, with Filipino for cultural events like Buwan ng Wika
Adapting language	Allowing writers freedom of style, with adjustments made during editorial review Shifting tone from objective (news) to conversational or narrative (features/opinions) Modifying language for clarity and accessibility to reach broader student audiences Balancing writer individuality with publication standards through revisions.



Shaping identities	<p>Avoiding complex or “hyped” vocabulary to ensure content is easy to understand.</p> <p>Writing news in an objective, factual, concise, and time-sensitive manner</p> <p>Employing creative non-fiction style and storytelling techniques from fiction for features</p> <p>Crafting persuasive, personal, or first-person voice editorials for touchy topics</p> <p>Using energetic, action-oriented language with clear event recounting for sports</p> <p>Producing creative pieces in separate spaces like literature magazines or dedicated social media pages</p>
Engaging audiences	<p>Aiming opinion writing to shift reader perspective, not just present arguments</p> <p>Framing editorial/opinion pieces to hook readers by presenting real-life scenarios first</p> <p>Injecting informed personal opinions after laying factual groundwork</p> <p>Using persuasive language to encourage reader agreement with the stance.</p> <p>Ending with call-to-action or reflective conclusion.</p> <p>Balancing criticism of authority with constructive suggestions.</p> <p>Maintaining engagement by aligning topics with student concerns and interests.</p> <p>Encouraging truth-telling even when it criticizes administration, as long as it is fair.</p> <p>Acknowledging administrative feedback when articles are perceived as unfair.</p>
Upholding ethics	<p>Ensuring sensitive pieces are reviewed by editors/advisers before publication.</p> <p>Maintaining organizational reputation alongside journalistic freedom.</p> <p>Observing accuracy and fairness per journalistic codes of ethics.</p> <p>Upholding reader trust by avoiding bias and using credible sources.</p>

Following Standard Structures. Campus publications across the SUCs consistently adhered to standard journalistic structures such as the inverted pyramid style, factual lead writing, and structured chronology. This reliance on chronology shows how discourse patterns are anchored on objectivity and transparency. By sticking to journalistic structures, the credibility of their reporting is strengthened. This structured approach reflects the goal of aligning student outputs with professional standards, reinforcing discipline and authority in student writing. Similarly, in Case E the emphasis was on formal and structured reporting:

Usually, the common pattern kay the news article should answer the 5 W's and 1 H. Tapos, inverted pyramid pa rin. The most important information should be at the top ng article kay para mabasagay siya dayon. Tapos, sa preceding na na paragraphs, kaya dito na i-elaborate kung ano yung, kung about saan talaga yung article na ginagawa. Sa feature writing, ma'am, kaya usually freestyle ang feature writing, pero meron pa rin siyang, I mean, in feature writing sa campus journalism, kaya nagpa-follow lang siya ng newspeg, tapos interviews, direct quotation, dito kami nagbe-base. Tapos sa opinion article, kaya of course, the same method, yun. Kailimitan ko sa method na ginagamit per me, pero ang ako, personally, I write opinion article by Stating the problem diretso at the start tapos call to action as a short call to action dayon sa end ng first paragraph.

Tapos sa second to preceding na paragraph kayo dito ko elaborate kung bakit yun yung call to action ko. And sa conclusion, kumbaga i-elaborate ko rin ako call to action. na nabanggit sa first paragraph, yun yung usually na ginagawa ko po. And especially pag nagchecheck ng opinion article, ganun din po yung ginagawa ko talaga. (CJ05\_RQ2.PQ2.1)

Usually, the common pattern is that the news article should answer the 5 W's and 1 H. Then, it should still follow the inverted pyramid style, where the most important information is placed at the top of the article so that readers can immediately understand it. The succeeding paragraphs then elaborate on what the article is really about.

For feature writing, Ma'am, it is usually more freestyle. But in campus journalism, it still follows a news peg, supported by interviews and direct quotations—that's our basis.

For opinion articles, of course, the same method applies, but personally, the way I write is by stating the problem right at the start, then presenting a short call to action at the end of the first paragraph. In the second and succeeding paragraphs, I elaborate on why I made that call to action. And in the conclusion, I emphasize again the call to action that I mentioned in the first paragraph. That's usually what I do. And especially when I check opinion articles, I also follow that method.

Adapting Language. Student journalists also demonstrated adaptability in language use to cater to diverse audiences. Case C noted that flexibility was tied to their publication's brand:

Kapag August miss, diba, it's buwan ng wika. So, entire August miss, Filipino ang language na ginagamit usually. (CJ03\_RQ2.PQ2.1)

During August, Miss, since it's Buwan ng Wika, the entire month we usually use Filipino as the language.

Furthermore, this flexible discourse allows writers to adjust tone and formality depending on the section and audience. It nurtures creativity while maintaining institutional coherence. This reveals an adaptive style that prioritizes accessibility, ensuring campus journalism connects with its intended readers. Meanwhile, Case E showed how bilingual reporting is used when necessary:

Shaping Identities. Discourse practices also varied depending on the publication section. Case C stressed objectivity in news but creativity in feature writing:

I maintain or sa among organization, we maintain objectivity in reporting facts but we use features and editorials as avenue for

advocacy, ma'am. Even then, our opinions are grounded jud, ma'am, with truth and community relevance, ma'am, kanang mga evidences that supports our stand jud, ma'am, para hindi siya magmukhang biased and maintain the objectivity ng part jud sa article. (CJ01\_RQ2.PQ2.6)

In our organization, we maintain objectivity in reporting facts, but we use features and editorials as avenues for advocacy, Ma'am. Even then, our opinions are really grounded in truth and community relevance, supported by evidence that backs up our stand, so that the article will not appear biased and will still maintain objectivity.

This demonstrates how section-specific identities are maintained to preserve credibility in news while cultivating artistry in features and literary works. Such careful handling of editorials reinforces the higher responsibility attached to advocacy and opinion sections, distinguishing them from straightforward reporting. Meanwhile, Case E followed strict review processes distinguished sensitive editorial and opinion pieces:

So, objectivity and advocacy usually comes in hand. Like, they exist and they coexist in an article. Of course, sa mga opinion article, kaya objective man siya based on judgment, kaya based sa solid proofs. Tapos, ito ma'am, of course, ang opinion is aligned with our advocacy to the campus publication. (CJ05\_RQ2.PQ2.6)

So, objectivity and advocacy usually go hand in hand. They exist and coexist in an article. Of course, in opinion articles, they are still objective because they are based on judgment that relies on solid proofs. And, Ma'am, our opinions are always aligned with the advocacy of the campus publication.

Engaging audiences. Persuasive techniques were also embedded in discourse, especially in editorials and advocacy-centered pieces. This demonstrates how persuasion is employed not only for readership engagement but also as a tool for advocacy. Case D shared:

So yeah, when it comes to student concerns, they're often framed within student rights or is it fair or is it within the social justice lens. Articles usually follow a pattern of contextualizing the issue, presenting the voices from the opinions of the people from the ground, and then calling for institutional response. But yes, sometimes the institutional response doesn't usually happen. (CJ04\_RQ2.PQ2.5)

So yes, when it comes to student concerns, they are often framed within the context of student rights, fairness, or through a social justice lens. Articles usually follow a pattern: first, contextualizing the issue; then, presenting the voices and opinions of people on the ground; and finally, calling for an institutional response. However, the institutional response does not always happen.

Indeed, journalism becomes a channel of empowerment, encouraging readers to take part in discourse. Persuasion here is grounded in factual accuracy rather than rhetoric, highlighting a credibility-driven engagement style. Moreover, Case A stated that persuasion was achieved through cautious detail and credibility:

Ano, Miss. Naay mga agreements or mga, yeah, ginafollow man namo ang mga katong MLA or katong campus journalism handbooks. Pero now, we do have these internal agreements within the org ngayon. Ano siya, we follow certain process na gina-set, nga naasa mo ang sa tawag sa Constitutional Bylaws. Katong nakastipulate sa inyong CBL. Hindi dapat fabricated ang news. Ang angle, it should be fair. Remember, you are a journalist, you are not a fan. Then, of course, avoid bias. (CJ03\_RQ2.PQ2.5)

Yes, Miss. We have agreements, and we also follow references like the MLA and the campus journalism handbooks. But now, we also have internal agreements within the organization. We follow certain processes set in the Constitutional Bylaws. As stipulated in the CBL, news should not be fabricated, and the angle should be fair. Remember, you are a journalist, not a fan. And of course, bias must be avoided.

Thus, shows how institutional rules help frame ethical reporting standards, ensuring students act responsibly as campus journalists. Additionally, journalism demonstrated by careful navigation between truth-telling and institutional sensitivity and balancing independence with accountability. Similarly, Case E accentuated that ethical considerations were tied to diplomacy with faculty and administrators:

Actually, ang amo, President, kuman, kaya gina-encourage man niya ang editorial independence ng amo publication. Wala namang, so far, there are no restrictions pang naitabo sa ano, sa mga amo. content na i-publish. Pero, sometimes, we are the one who will, ano, who will think twice kung dapat ba yun i-publish or dili na.

Ganon. kami ra mismo ang nag, ano, nag i-stop sa amo if, ano, if worthy ba talaga siya. Kaya, Something like that. We also consider the situations kung ano yung mga pwedeng mahitabo. Pero if we are really on ano, pero it rarely happens sa raman, ma'am. Ang moderators is very supportive din talaga sila. We are just like, ano lang, ma'am, na we like, we have the same sentiments about the press freedom. (CJ05\_RQ2.PQ2.6)

Actually, our President encourages the editorial independence of our publication. So far, there have been no restrictions on the content we publish. But sometimes, we ourselves are the ones who think twice about whether or not something should be published.

It's like we are the ones who stop ourselves if we feel it is not really worthy. Something like that. We also consider the situations and the possible consequences. But if we are really firm about it—though that rarely happens—we push through. Our moderators are also very supportive. It's just that, Ma'am, we share the same sentiments about press freedom.



Table 4. Cross-case Analysis

Themes	Case Unit		Remarks
	Similar	Different	
Journalism practices:			
Screening recruits	Case C Case D Case E		All maintain structured application and testing processes to ensure competence before membership.
		Case A Case B	Requires annual reapplication for all members, even incumbents, which serves as a built-in performance review system ensuring sustained quality. Incorporates peer review and adviser polishing as part of recruitment evaluation, ensuring applicants meet collaborative and editorial standards.
Structuring reviews	Case A Case C Case E		Editorial articles undergo a defined review process before publication
		Case B Case D	Employs a dual-layer system of peer review followed by adviser polishing, providing multiple quality checkpoints before release. Implements a multi-tier editorial chain—section editor to technical editor to EIC—ensuring branding consistency and high editorial standards.
Conducting fieldwork	Case A Case B Case E		Field interviews and event coverage are core information-gathering strategies.
		Case C Case D	Uses a bulletin board assignment system and verifies sources post-interview, ensuring organized task distribution and credibility checks. Prioritizes on-site fact-checking and immediate editorial corrections during coverage events, minimizing post-event editing.
Collaborating institutionally	Case A Case B Case C		Work with institutional stakeholders when necessary while maintaining journalistic functions.
		Case D Case E	Operates autonomously and consults adviser only for sensitive issues, keeping editorial control internal. Actively engages on national issues with strong moderator support, blending advocacy with cooperative institutional relations.
Expanding Social Relevance	Case A Case B Case C		Seek to address topics beyond basic campus reporting
		Case D Case E	Conducts workshops for other schools and trains young journalists, extending campus journalism’s educational role outward. Regularly covers national student concerns, bringing outside socio-political issues into campus awareness.
Discourse practices:			
Following standard structures	Case D Case E		Consistent use of the inverted pyramid for news reporting.
		Case A Case B Case C	Adheres strictly to standard journalism formats without stylistic experimentation. Merges news structures with feature-style arcs and sports jargon for variety. Blends sports reporting with feature profiling, creating hybrid narrative forms.
Adapting language	Case A Case B		Employ English and Filipino depending on content type.
		Case C Case D Case E	Shifts entirely to Filipino during Buwan ng Wika to align with cultural celebrations. Adopts a student-friendly tone to make all content easily accessible to the target audience. Gives writers autonomy over style but applies editorial adjustments when needed.
Shaping identities	Case A Case C Case E		Tailors tone and structure depending on the section.
		Case B Case D	Uses action-heavy verbs and sports jargon to energize sports content. Writes features and opinions in conversational, narrative-driven formats.
Engaging audiences	Case A Case B Case C		Incorporate persuasive elements in editorials to influence reader perspectives.
		Case D	Uses a rigorous review process to ensure editorials meet institutional



Upholding ethics	Case E	branding and factual accuracy. Takes bold editorial stances even against opposition, reinforcing the press’s advocacy role.
	Case A	
	Case B	Maintain ethical guidelines in handling sensitive topics.
	Case C	
	Case D	Adviser consulted selectively for opinion pieces, balancing autonomy with oversight.
	Case E	Screens potentially risky content for safety before publication.

Regarding information gathering, Cases A, B, and E leaned on fieldwork with student journalists actively attending events and verifying sources. Case C, on the other hand, uniquely used bulletin board assignment systems for task distribution, while Case D emphasized on-site fact-checking to minimize errors later. These variations reflect how different reporting contexts shape journalistic practices that prioritize real-world application. To be specific, Case D mentioned that:

When it comes to gathering factual information, so like what we usually do is like we go to like the main person who is like the in charge of like for example an event because like usually we cover a lot of events within the university and so like we go to like basically I guess the organizer and then we go to like the advisor or faculty that is involved in it and then we also ask the students so like you know we could also compare how it looks in different perspectives because sometimes yeah it's not always like you know the same to the three people's eyes.(CJ04\_RQ1.PQ1.1)

In terms of gathering factual information, the publication staff typically approaches the main person in charge of the event, such as the organizer, since most of the coverage revolves around university activities. They also coordinate with the faculty advisers or staff involved to ensure an official account of the event is obtained. Beyond these primary sources, they likewise seek the perspectives of student participants. This triangulation allows them to compare how the event is perceived by different stakeholders—organizers, faculty, and students—while acknowledging that each group may view the same event differently.

In terms of institutional collaboration, Cases A, B, and C balanced independence with necessary cooperation that follows guidelines or uses shared platforms within their universities. Case D preserved autonomy and involved only advisers for sensitive material, while Case E relied on strong moderator support to manage institutional relations while pursuing national-level advocacy. These dynamics reflect findings that student media often acts as both partner and watchdog within institutional ecosystems. Here was Case E’s statement during the interview:

So, yun, the Vanguard Publication, of course, we embrace the Campus Journalism Act of 1991. Kaya, we usually pursue, ano, articles na, ano na, kahit marami ang against dun sa article na yun. We uphold the functions of the Campus Journalism Act. And of course, with the support of our moderators, despite the comments from the higher-ups, we still pursue. Except na lang if medyo risky kayo siya sa amo side or medyo di siya safe para sa amo.

More and more, kaya, ano, we, I mean, yun, na, ano, na, na, mamaximize talaga namin yung, ano, yung Republic Act ng Campus Journalism, ng Campus Journalism, na mamaximize guide na museum. Of course, as watchdogs, we really need to, ano, tell, to voice out para sa like, laong pagani para sa malayang pamamahayag. ma'am. (CJ05\_RQ3.MQ3)

So, in the Vanguard Publication, of course, we embrace the Campus Journalism Act of 1991. That is why we usually pursue articles even if many are against them. That’s the way we uphold the functions of the Campus Journalism Act. And of course, with the support of our moderators, despite comments from higher-ups, we still pursue those articles—except when it is too risky for us or not safe.

More and more, we are able to maximize the provisions of the Campus Journalism Act. As watchdogs, we really need to voice out the truth and uphold freedom of the press.

All campuses demonstrated a commitment to expanding social relevance. While Cases A, B, and C focused on outreach beyond campus, Case E regularly engaged with national issues, and Case D conducted workshops for other schools. This echoes the mission of campus press as a training ground not just for journalism skills but also for civic responsibility. Here was his statement during the interview:

And then we've, we also have, like, our initiatives as well to, like, conduct workshops outside of, like, for example, to, like, other colleges who needs, I guess, like, some idea or insights on how they could improve their campus publication and we also train little kids from elementary and high school so like yeah, I think just those traditional but now we're slowly broadening our scope. (CJ04\_RQ1.MQ1)

And then we also have our own initiatives, like conducting workshops for other colleges that need ideas or insights on how they could improve their campus publications. We also train younger students from elementary and high school. So yes, it started with those traditional efforts, but now we are slowly broadening our scope.

Discourse Practices employed by student journalists in these Campus Journals. Cases D and E consistently applied the inverted pyramid in news writing, while Case A adhered strictly to classic journalistic formats. Case B innovated by blending news with feature-style

storytelling and sports jargon, and Case C created hybrid styles combining sports reporting with narrative profiling. These variations reflect how student journalists adapt formats to resonate with their audience. Below is Case B's words:

Tapos sa kuan, sa feature story kay, ako mga good maam. So ako lang po siyang gina-follow. Gina-follow na akong elements of the story tong naa mga plot, naay climax, anana. Tapos, kasagaran ako siya gina-apply sa mga success stories na akong ginasulat. Ng nay resolution or call to action sa pinaka-last. Tapos ang, ano, sa sports, ako ang napansin kay, ano, moving siya. So magamit-gamit kang mga verbs. Huwag ka tong mga Gatong mga jargons para sa sports. (CJ02\_RQ2.MQ2)

For feature stories, I personally take charge of writing them. In doing so, I make sure to follow the essential elements of storytelling—such as the plot, climax, and resolution. Most of the time, I apply this structure to success stories, which usually conclude with a resolution or a call to action. On the other hand, in sports writing, I noticed that the writing style needs to be dynamic and engaging. This involves frequently using action verbs and avoiding excessive technical jargon, ensuring the report remains understandable and appealing to a broader audience.

Campus-specific language strategies also varied: Case A and B used both English and Filipino; Case C shifted entirely to Filipino during cultural events; Case D preferred a student-friendly tone; and Case E offered writers high stylistic autonomy with editorial refinement. These findings align with the idea that bilingual and audience-aware discourse enhances engagement and relevance in community-based journalism. Case C underscores that:

Kapag August miss, diba, it's buwan ng wika. So, entire August miss, Filipino ang language na ginagamit usually. (CJ03\_RQ2.PQ2.1)

During August, Miss, since it's Buwan ng Wika, the entire month we usually use Filipino as the language.

## Conclusions

This study establishes that campus journalism in the different State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in southern Philippines is anchored in a strong tradition of skill-based training, ethical standards, and commitment to public service. Despite institutional and regional differences, standard practices — such as rigorous recruitment, multi-tiered editorial review, and ethical fact-checking — reflect a shared dedication to truth-telling and press freedom as enshrined in RA 7079.

However, the cross-case analysis reveals nuanced differences. Some institutions require annual reapplication to sustain quality, while others expand their role by training student journalists in other schools or covering national socio-political issues. These variations are shaped by factors such as institutional culture, adviser involvement, and administrative relationships.

Ultimately, campus journalism emerges from this study not merely as a student-led activity but as a formative institution that shapes informed, engaged, and socially responsible citizens. By fostering editorial independence, supporting ethical practice, and addressing operational constraints, state universities and colleges can ensure that campuses continue to bridge the gap between schools and societies — empowering young voices to participate meaningfully in democratic life.

The scholarly endeavor has managed to unveil the significant aspects of campus journalism among State Universities and Colleges in the southern Philippines, specifically the practices and discourse employed. Findings were derived from the analysis, which provided comprehensive accounts of the research topic. However, the study has not covered all aspects of the investigated phenomenon, which merits further research by other interested scholars and researchers in applied linguistics.

Given that the limitations of research participants and study sites were cited after this study was conducted, future research may focus on campus journalism in different study sites and include a more diverse range of participants. Future research may focus on exploring the digital transformation of campus journalism and its impact on student engagement, discourse practices, and editorial processes. With the growing shift from traditional print media to online platforms, it is important to understand how this transition affects readership habits, content accessibility, and the preservation of journalistic standards in a fast-paced digital environment. Such studies could also examine how multimedia tools, social media algorithms, and online interactions reshape the way campus journalist produce and deliver their stories.

Furthermore, a longitudinal study following student journalists beyond graduation would also provide valuable insights into the long-term benefits of campus journalism involvement. This type of research could explore how skills learned in campus publications — such as critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and public communication — translate into professional careers, civic participation, and advocacy work. This would help institutions assess the broader development impact of campus journalism on alumni.

Another area worth investigating is the implementation of the Campus Journalism Act of 1991 (RA 7079) across different State Universities and Colleges. While the law provides a framework for press freedom and student publication autonomy, actual practices vary depending on institutional culture and administrative policies. Comparative policy implementation studies could identify best practices, gaps, and areas where policy revisions or reinforcement may be necessary to fully realize the law's intent.

Moreover, research on ethical dilemmas in student journalism would also be valuable. Given that student publications often navigate sensitive political, social, and institutional topics, it is important to understand how editors and writers balance freedom of expression with fairness, objectivity, and potential risks. In the age of rapid information dissemination and social media debates, this line of inquiry

could provide actionable guidelines for addressing issues such as misinformation, bias, and administrative pressures without compromising ethical integrity.

Finally, a comparative regional analysis of campus journalism practices can be conducted to examine how socio-cultural contexts, political climates, and regional traditions influence content, editorial independence, and public reception. By comparing State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Southern Philippines with those in other regions, researchers can map a broader picture of campus journalism's role in shaping not just school communities but also public discourse across the country.

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