

## Campus Journalism in Higher Education Institutions in Region III: Implications to the Management of Student Publication Services

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to analyze and evaluate the practices on Campus Journalism so as to come up with management implications as regards student services. Using purposive samplings, 26 campus-wide publication faculty-advisers, 78 student-journalist and 140 students were given questionnaires and were interviewed from the 26 HEI's in the region out of the 66 HEI's with an existing student publication. Findings reveal that the editorial board, policies, funding, press conferences and the rules and regulations are still in the process of being institutionalized within the system. Many of the provisions of the R.A. 7079 of the Campus Journalism Act are not yet fully implemented. There is a need to increase faculty and students' support and to strengthen administrative collaboration. Campus journalism in the region served as the voice of the students, gave out information, helped to form public opinion, discussed issues and safeguarded the HEI's from its own inadequacies. In order for the student publication services become more responsive to the present changes, it is recommended that an upgrading and streamlining of the student services based on the needs and goals of the students should be initiated so as to make the campus journalism proactive and student-focused.

**Keywords:** campus journalism, press freedom, student services, student publication, educational management, R.A. 7079, campus journalism act, student publication management

### INTRODUCTION

The school publication being one of the vital components of student services provides an opportunity for freedom of expression for the students. This promotes the free growth of the individual. Even our constitution recognizes this right and a law was also passed to make campus journalism stronger, this is the Republic Act 7079 also known as the "Campus Journalism Act of 1991" [1]. Believing in man and ultimate potential for self-improvement, the educational institutions and agencies are looked upon as the means for man to develop those potentials to the optimum. Campus writing as an educational medium needs remedial education, completion program, and professional updating and in-service programs. In this context, the study hopes to contribute.

This study aimed to analyze and evaluate the practices on Campus Journalism in the selected HEI's in Region III and the possible implications these have on the management of the student services.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following:

1. How was campus journalism carried out through the following components:
  - 1.1. Student publication;

- 1.2. Student journalist;
- 1.3. Editorial board;
- 1.4. Funding of student publication;
- 1.5. Publication adviser;
- 1.6. Students' security of tenure;
- 1.7. Press conferences, trainings and seminars;
- 1.8. Rules and regulations?
2. How did the following school factors affect campus journalism in HEI's in Region III:
  - 2.1. Administrative support;
  - 2.2. Faculty support;
  - 2.3. Student patronage;
  - 2.4. Funding;
  - 2.5. Participation rate?
3. What was the level of awareness among student journalist and teacher advisers as the regards the different components:
  - 3.1. Student publication;
  - 3.2. Student journalist;
  - 3.3. Editorial board;
  - 3.4. Funding of student publication;
  - 3.5. Publication adviser;
  - 3.6. Students' security of tenure;
  - 3.7. Press conferences, trainings and seminars;
  - 3.8. Rules and regulations?
4. What had the campus journalism been able to achieve in HEI's in terms of its functions and

roles as mandated by the Campus Journalism Act 1991 or RA 7079?

5. What challenges, weaknesses and problems confronted campus journalism in the region?
6. What was the implication of the study's findings to the management of student publication services?

The study covered the campus journalist in the tertiary level as well as the publication adviser of the different student publication in the selected HEI's in Region III. Some student-readers were interviewed to obtain other data on satisfaction, evaluation and suggestion for the improvement of the campus publication.

To accomplish the objectives of this study, the descriptive method of research was utilized. The respondents of this study were some 116 Higher Education Institutions in Region III though, only twenty-six (26) out of the 66 were utilized in this study. The entire twenty-six (26) campus-wide publication faculty-advisers, 78 student-journalist (3 student journalist per HEI), and 140 students selected randomly were interviewed from the 26 universities and colleges in Region III.

#### **The following are the findings of the study:**

1. The components of campus journalism in the region were delivered quite positively in majority of the higher educational institutions whereby majority of the components were well defined particularly the student publication, journalist, security of tenure and publication adviser. Although important points as regards publication advisers and student journalist were still needing deeper analysis. The editorial board, policies, funding, press conferences and the rules and regulations are still in the process of being institutionalized within the system[2]. Many of the provisions are not yet fully implemented due to the EB's lack of knowledge. Most of the editorial policies and the rules and regulations were based on their college or university code.
2. There is a great need for campus journalism to be supported by the administration, faculty and students for this uplift the morale of the campus journalist. In HEI's were the support is low or minimal, campus journalism looks bleak and the staff feels disheartened and unappreciated. Conversely, the HEI's, which experience full support, tend to feel esteemed, significant and involved. There is

also a need to increase faculty and students' support and to strengthen administrative collaboration. Furthermore, the learning environment should be made such that support systems are intact and in place[3].

3. There is a need for campus journalist and their adviser to become fully aware of the basic components of campus journalism since evidently there is more campus journalist whose level of awareness is only minimal or almost none. Likewise, in some schools where administrators manifest openness and assistance, the level of awareness is high and the implementation becomes effortless since the administration is very supportive and recognizes the directive of the CJA [4].
4. Campus journalism in the region performed the following roles and functions: served as the voice of the students; gave our information; helped in modest ways to form public opinion through the editorial; discussed issues in school in the community and even national issues which are common to the students like budget cuts, tuition fee hikes and the like; and safeguarding the college from its won inadequacies, irregularity and ineptitude.
5. There exist in the region the pressing problems of engaging the students as well as the faculty to get involved in campus journalism; of meeting the needs of the campus writers for training, facility, and funding; and of wrestling with authorities for recognition, fiscal autonomy and campus press freedom[5].
6. There is a pressing need for the HEI's to adapt to the changing roles it plays in campus journalism. One which take on the leadership of providing a supportive and open-line communication with the school publication. It should be supportive of allowing budding journalist the space they need to fully develop into responsible journalist.
7. There are certain and particular management roles, which should be taken seriously by the student publication services and should take on a priority concern especially in involving the students in certain policies that, could affect them. This is to make the programs be student-focused and serving the best interest of its clientele.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations may be offered:

1. In order to make student publication services to be responsive to the present changes, an upgrading and streamlining of the student services organization based on the needs and specific goals of students, in effect the campus journalist, should be initiated so as to make the program proactive and student-focused.
2. To further improve the quality of campus journalism in the tertiary, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) should include in the Filipino and English subjects topics on journalism to respond to the need of minimizing or totally eradicating shortcomings in style and content.
3. The school administrators as well as the heads of student services could spearhead the revisions and/or amendments to the school's student handbook to take on the leadership role of frequently evaluating the total impact of programs to ensure that they are in keeping with the changing students' needs and institutional objectives. The revisions should be reflective of the national provisions stipulated in the Campus Journalism Act of 1991 particularly on fiscal and editorial autonomy[6]. This would likewise solve the conflict between the school's existing policies and the CJA's provisions.
4. To ensure the unceasing competency-building activities of the staff to better meet the needs of the students, heads of HEI's could lead on the creation of a student service program that enhances a climate of support that encourages involvement by the administration, faculty and students. This is also in keeping with the school's goals, which is to facilitate students. This integration will occur more regularly when existing staff members have had retraining to acquire new skills and to upgrade their understanding of emerging presumptions and viewpoints related to their task as student service workers.
5. Since campus journalists need to continue enhancing their services to the students, to work on developing their talents and to carry on their practice of fair, balance, truthful, and responsive journalism, they should incorporate in their editorial policy provisions that would work as a check and balance to avoid abuses in the practice of campus press freedom and to ensure that the code of ethics for journalist is strictly implemented [7]. This is also in response to the problem of censorship and sanctions for possible mishandling or misuse of press freedom by student-journalists.
6. Since only 66 out of the 116 HEI's in Region III have a working student publication, campus journalists, students and youth region wide should continue to serve the best interests of the students and the people despite the odds. Students are called upon to defend and assert the right to free speech, free expression and free press. Campus journalists and students could launch mass actions and other activities to further mobilize students for (a) the reopening of all closed student publications, (b) the establishment of publications in schools where none exists and (c) an end to all forms of campus press freedom.
7. Majority of the problems in campus journalism all point to lack of involvement and strong participation from the student, faculty and administration, work attitude of staffers and their capacity to write as well as lack of facilities and suppression of press freedom. Therefore there is a need to further intensify program policies in both English and Filipino subjects particularly in the teaching of journalism. There is also a need to educate the readers as to the value of reading news and in instilling in the student journalist certain work attitudes and skills through various training and workshops in writing[8]. Likewise remedial education be intensified to answer the need for increased readership as well as professional updating of the different faculty-advisers as to latest trends in campus journalism.
8. To better discharge more development orientation and healthy relation within the campus, student writers should write reasonable criticism, which are based on facts. They must institutionalize certain work policies as means of strengthening ethical values, critical and creative thinking, developing moral character and personal discipline.

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