

Extent of Institutional Implementation of Republic Act No. 7079 Among Secondary Schools in the Division of Bacolod City

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the status and effectiveness of campus journalism programs in selected secondary schools, focusing on school policies, journalism practices, institutional support, and program enhancement across Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) levels. It aimed to determine how these dimensions are implemented and experienced by student journalists and to identify areas for improvement. The study is significant as it addresses the need to evaluate whether campus journalism programs are not only policy-driven but also effectively supported and sustained in practice, particularly in preparing students for responsible media engagement. A quantitative research design was employed. Data were collected from 302 student journalists using a validated survey questionnaire, and statistical analyses included descriptive measures, independent samples tests, and non-parametric techniques due to non-normal data distribution. Findings revealed that campus journalism programs are highly implemented and consistently experienced across both grade levels. School policies are clear and effectively translated into practice, while journalism activities demonstrate strong adherence to professional standards, particularly in editorial independence and skill development. Institutional support is generally strong, especially in technical guidance; however, resource provision emerged as a relative weakness, indicating inconsistencies in access to materials and logistical support. The study concludes that campus journalism is a well-institutionalized and professionally oriented program that fosters student competence, independence, and civic awareness. Its effectiveness lies in the alignment of policy, practice, and support systems. However, enhancing resource allocation is essential to fully maximize its impact. These findings underscore the importance of sustained institutional commitment in strengthening campus journalism as a vital platform for student development.

Keywords: Campus Journalism Programs, Secondary School Education, Institutional Support, Program Effectiveness, Quantitative Research Design, Resource Allocation

INTRODUCTION

Globally, campus journalism programs are recognized as transformative educational spaces that extend far beyond basic literacy cultivating advanced student competencies. These programs foster rigorous skills in research, investigative writing, multimedia production, ethical decision-making, critical thinking, and leadership, while simultaneously promoting editorial independence, collaborative learning, civic engagement, and responsible media practices. International literature underscores that student publications significantly strengthen learners' communicative competence, enabling them to articulate ideas effectively, investigate localized issues, and actively participate in public discourse.

From a theoretical standpoint, Ahva (2016) operationalizes practice theory to examine how citizen participation and emerging journalistic practices shape the field, demonstrating that novel practices allow journalism to maintain its core identity while undergoing renewal. This perspective is uniquely salient within the Philippine context. Although Republic Act No. 7079 (The Campus Journalism Act of 1991) was originally enacted to target traditional print media, contemporary campus journalists rely heavily on social media, blogs, and digital broadcasts. Ahva's framework supports the argument that the statutory intent of RA 7079—to safeguard press freedom at the campus level—must logically extend to modern digital materialities; adaptation to digital platforms represents a valid evolution of journalistic practice that warrants equal legal protection.

Crucially, Cowling and Harber (2005) contend that a student-run publication functions as a vital bridge connecting academic theory with real-world media practice. Rather than merely completing isolated assignments, students operating a campus paper navigate the comprehensive, continuous lifecycle of news production. This immersive environment challenges them to manage rigid deadlines, navigate editorial pressure, respond to real-world feedback from a live audience—comprising both the student body and university administration—and master the collaborative dynamics of newsroom teamwork and hierarchy.

Complementing this, a phenomenological study by Alfaro and Protacio (2025) revealed that campus journalists develop a transformative and elastic worldview shaped by the subjective demands of journalistic practice. Despite persistent structural deficiencies, such as insufficient training colloquiums and the psychological pressures inherent in inter-school competitions, their findings indicate that the lived experience of student journalism cultivates an enduring dispositional framework grounded in civic duty, rigorous ethical standards, and personal resilience. This body of evidence suggests that the psychological and institutional formation of campus journalists extends well beyond technical skill acquisition, reinforcing the need for policy structures that recognize and support the holistic development of student-journalists under the mandate of RA 7079.

Empirical studies demonstrate that a program's operational excellence and overall success heavily depend on robust institutional factors, including consistent funding, active administrative support, and structurally supported publication advisers. According to Taripe (2025), educators perceive their involvement in campus journalism as professionally beneficial, noting advancements in teaching effectiveness and media literacy. Nevertheless, substantial obstacles remain undeniable, including role conflict, emotional strain, restricted training access, and student language deficiencies. Specifically, school paper advisers frequently confront challenges such as arbitrary appointments, lacking training opportunities, inadequate publication budget allocations, workload overload, and the unsatisfactory performance of student writers (Castillo & Velasco, 2025). Furthermore, when institutions impose unjustified administrative restrictions or compromise editorial independence, both student civic engagement and learner participation in publication activities suffer significantly.

To mitigate these institutional challenges and safeguard grassroots press freedom, Republic Act No. 7079, otherwise known as the Campus Journalism Act of 1991, was enacted on July 5, 1991, during the Philippines' Eighth Congress. The law aims to promote the development and growth of campus journalism as a mechanism for strengthening ethical values, encouraging critical and creative thinking, and fostering moral character and personal discipline among Filipino youth. Through this legislation, various programs and projects are mandated to enhance the journalistic skills of student writers and promote responsible press freedom. Specifically, the Act seeks to regulate the practice of student journalism, protect campus press freedom, and develop structured journalism programs across both public and private institutions.

To operationalize these statutory provisions, the Department of Education, Culture and Sports issued DECS Order No. 94, s. 1992, which serves as the official Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) governing school-level compliance. This mandate legally requires secondary schools to sustain functional student publications while balancing the operational parameters of editorial autonomy, managed publication funds, staff selection, and organized press conferences.

Despite this clear legal framework, local empirical studies indicate that the ground-level implementation of RA 7079 remains highly diverse and uneven across divisions in the Philippines. Modern research assessing the law's operational indicators reveals a distinct structural divide: while variables like publication advising and basic journalism training are frequently rated as highly implemented, critical indicators such as student-led publication management, budget transparency, and actual stakeholder involvement consistently lag behind (Suyman & Ngilangil, 2025). Studies across various regions confirm that school paper advisers frequently manage heavy parallel workloads and limited resource access, forcing them to balance editorial autonomy against cautious administrative expectations (Advincula & Adtoon, 2024). This inconsistent policy enforcement implies that while schools conceptually value campus journalism, systemic challenges in budget execution and structural autonomy persist.

To systematically evaluate these operational realities, contemporary researchers have deconstructed the broad mandate of RA 7079 into distinct, measurable institutional variables. The foundational framework begins with editorial board organization and structural policies, which monitor how student editors are selected and whether they can exercise full editorial autonomy without administrative interference (Driz & Aguisando, 2025).

However, structural autonomy is heavily dependent on funding and budget transparency. Recent data from Suyman and Ngilangil (2025) demonstrate that while school-level mechanisms for collecting journalism fees are generally highly functional, the actual, unrestricted release of these funds to student editors remains an operational bottleneck. These financial constraints directly shape the roles, workloads, and competencies of school paper advisers, who find themselves balancing complex pedagogical mentoring with heavy administrative burdens (Advincula & Adtoon, 2024).

Ultimately, the intersection of these institutional, budgetary, and instructional elements determines school-level preparedness for press conferences and journalism-related training. According to Docallas (2025), schools with transparent funding and well-supported advisers routinely offer superior, equitable training options for student journalists preparing for division, regional, and national contests. By linking these four basic indicators—editorial autonomy, financial management, adviser support, and organized training—the present literature proves that campus journalism cannot survive solely on student talent; it must be sustained by a cohesive, well-funded institutional framework.

While existing literature provides valuable insights into the execution of the law in parts of Luzon and the southern regions of the Philippines, a definitive contextual and empirical gap remains within the Division of Bacolod City, Negros Island Region. Most existing data concentrates on higher education institutions or distant geographic divisions, leaving local education supervisors with limited empirical visibility into how secondary schools in Bacolod City handle these mandates. Furthermore, prior studies frequently examine these variables in isolation—focusing exclusively on the narrative challenges of advisers or the technical writing skills of student journalists. Consequently, there is a lack of comprehensive, localized research that simultaneously evaluates the complete framework of implementation across all six legal indicators: editorial board organization, editorial policies, publication funding, publication management, roles of publication advisers, and participation in journalism-related trainings. A localized investigation is therefore necessary to determine exactly how secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City implement the specific provisions of Republic Act No. 7079.

At present, RA 7079 must continue to guide student publications amid rapidly changing educational, technological, and socio-economic conditions. Within the Division of Bacolod City, campus journalism continues to be a vital co-curricular activity that drives student engagement, media literacy, and ethical communication. While local secondary schools regularly send delegations to division, regional, and national schools press conferences, disparities in available school funds, administrative backing, and adviser training may create unequal opportunities for local student journalists. Analyzing the comprehensive baseline implementation of the law within this local educational ecosystem is necessary to uncover operational bottlenecks, support vulnerable programs, and ensure equitable access to quality journalistic training.

Consequent to these needs, the primary purpose of this study is to determine the extent of institutional implementation of Republic Act No. 7079 among secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City. Specifically, the study seeks to assess the implementation of the provisions of the Campus Journalism Act in terms of editorial board organization, editorial policies, funding of student publications, publication management, roles of publication advisers, and the conduct of press conferences and journalism-related trainings. The findings of this study may serve as an empirical basis for policy enhancement, program development, and targeted strategic interventions designed to strengthen campus journalism execution in secondary schools.

As a researcher, the motivation for conducting this study stems from a firm commitment to campus journalism as a vital incubator for student empowerment and democratic engagement within educational institutions. Having observed the varying practices and institutional challenges encountered by student publications on the

ground, the researcher recognizes the critical need to systematically examine how Republic Act No. 7079 is being enforced locally. Because this study is structured to systematically address local implementation gaps, promote awareness of press freedom rights, and advocate for stronger institutional safeguards for ethical student media, it stands as one of the few localized empirical evaluations conducted specifically within the Division of Bacolod City.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Research Design

To systematically evaluate the operational realities and compliance metrics of Republic Act No. 7079 across secondary educational institutions within the Division of Bacolod City, this study utilized a quantitative, non-experimental descriptive research design. This methodological framework was uniquely suited for the empirical objectives of the investigation, as it facilitated the objective, standardized measurement and numerical representation of ground-level policy adherence. By structuring the inquiry around the statutory parameters established by the Campus Journalism Act of 1991, the design ensured a structurally sound and replicable assessment of institutional compliance.

The descriptive component of this design was specifically deployed to construct a baseline profile of the respondent student-journalists and to systematically quantify their psychometric evaluations regarding school-level policies, localized campus journalism practices, and institutional support mechanisms. Through the gathering of primary numerical data across 40 specific, multi-dimensional Likert-scale items, this approach allowed the researcher to capture a high-fidelity, statistical cross-section of how the provisions of national mandates were localized and maintained on the ground.

Consistent with the axioms of descriptive quantitative inquiry, the researcher did not manipulate independent variables, introduce experimental stimuli, or establish definitive causal linkages. Instead, the focus remained strictly on identifying and mapping "what is"—thereby isolating which operational dimensions, such as administrative fiscal management under Section 5 or technical-pedagogical advisory guidance under Section 6, functioned optimally, and which manifested as critical compliance bottlenecks. Ultimately, this quantitative framework yielded the empirical precision, standardization, and statistical clarity necessary to diagnose systemic vulnerabilities within the local educational ecosystem, providing an unbiased, data-driven foundation for the formulation of the proposed Policy and Program Enhancement Plan.

Locale of the Study

The locale of this study was the Division of Bacolod City, a major urban center located in the province of Negros Occidental, Philippines. Bacolod City is recognized as a hub of education in Negros Island Region, with a diverse network of private and public secondary schools under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education (DepEd) Division of Bacolod City. The division comprises a mix of large urban schools and smaller community-based institutions, each with varying levels of resources, student populations, and program offerings. These schools serve a broad demographic, reflecting the city's socio-economic diversity and dynamic educational landscape. This setting provides an ideal context for examining the implementation of campus journalism programs and the competencies of student journalists. The Division of Bacolod City is known for its active participation in regional and national campus journalism activities, such as the Schools Press Conferences, and for its efforts to promote media literacy and student engagement. By focusing on this locale, the study captures a range of institutional practices and challenges, offering insights relevant to both local stakeholders and broader educational policy discussions in the Philippine context. The findings from Bacolod City can inform similar initiatives in other urban divisions across the country.

Respondents of the Study

The target population of this study comprised a total of 1,398 active student-journalists officially enrolled in public and private secondary schools across the Division of Bacolod City during the School Year 2025–2026. From this population, a sample size of 302 respondents was determined. This sample size is statistically

justified as it meets the minimum threshold required to achieve a 95% confidence level with an acceptable 5% margin of error using standard sample size determination formulas (such as Slovin's formula). These student-journalists were specifically targeted because of their direct, front-line involvement in the production, layout, and editorial management of their respective school publications, making them uniquely qualified to provide first-hand insights into the practical execution and institutional challenges of Republic Act No. 7079.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

To select the 302 respondents from the total population, a multi-stage sampling design combining stratified random sampling and purposive sampling criteria was implemented to ensure structural representation and data credibility.

First, stratified sampling was applied to proportionally distribute the 302 respondents across the division's secondary school contexts to reflect the actual population baseline. This stratification resulted in a sample comprising 184 respondents from the Junior High School (JHS) level and 118 from the Senior High School (SHS) level, capturing perspectives from both public national high schools and private educational institutions.

Second, within each school stratum, explicit purposive sampling criteria were enforced to select the individual participants. To be included in the study, a respondent had to satisfy three strict inclusion criteria:

1. They must be an officially designated member of the school publication's editorial board or staff;
2. They must have at least one full academic year of continuous active involvement in writing, editing, or layout operations; and
3. They must have participated in at least one school-level, division-level, or regional-level journalism training or press conference.

By utilizing this dual-layered sampling approach, the study eliminated arbitrary participant selection, ensured that the sample accurately mirrors the institutional distribution of the division, and gathered data exclusively from highly qualified key informants who interact directly with the law's indicators.

Research Instrument

The primary data collection tool utilized in this study was a researcher-developed, expert-validated, and pilot-tested Campus Journalism Survey Questionnaire, which was specifically engineered to evaluate the extent of institutional implementation of Republic Act No. 7079 across secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City. The development of this tool was directly mapped against the statutory provisions of the Campus Journalism Act of 1991 and its corresponding Implementing Rules and Regulations, specifically DECS Order No. 94, s. 1992, to guarantee strict alignment with the research objectives.

To provide a clear overview of the instrument's structural distribution, a detailed Table of Specifications (TOS) is presented below:

Table 1. Table of Specifications for the Research Instrument

Part / Section	Measured Construct	No. of Items	Sample Item	Statutory Alignment (RA 7079)
Part I	Student-Journalist Profile	N/A	Grade level, role, school paper medium, and years of involvement.	Demographic Baseline

Part II	School Policies on Campus Journalism	10	"In our school, rules about campus journalism are clearly explained to student-journalists as stated in our school paper and constitution and bylaws."	Section 3 (Editorial Policies)
Part III	Campus Journalism Practices	10	"In our school, we regularly publish a school paper."	Section 4 (Student Publication)
Part IV	School Support for Campus Journalism and Institutional Implementation (Funding)	10	"In our school, funds are provided for campus journalism activities."	Section 5 (Funding of Student Publication)
Part V	Policy and Program Enhancement	10	"Our school needs to strengthen the role of school paper advisers through continuous mentoring, guidance, and professional development training."	Section 6 (Publication Adviser)
Total Items		40		

Structurally, the instrument was divided into five distinct sections. Part I collected the demographic profile of the respondent student-journalists, capturing vital baseline context such as their school's name and type of school, specific grade level track (Junior or Senior High School), publication medium (English or Filipino), campus journalism role, and length of service as campus journalist. Part II consisted of 10 items assessing school policies on campus journalism, focusing on the publication standard and management, editorial freedom and rights protection, and institutional culture and ethical treatment of campus journalists. Part III contained 10 items focusing on campus journalism practices, highlighting the skills development, publication activities, participation, editorial independence and learning environment. Part IV comprised 10 items measuring the school support for campus journalism and institutional implementation, specifically on the institutional support and promotion of campus journalism, resource provision and institutional capacity building, time allotment and school paper adviser guidance. Part V contained a 10-item tracking policy and program enhancement focusing on the governance of campus journalism and institutional support, student-journalists' skills enhancement and training, school paper adviser development and professional mentorship, resource provision, and institutional capacity building.

To quantify the responses systematically, the instrument utilized a five-point Likert scale. The statistical limits, descriptive scales, and operational meanings for the scoring matrix were structured as follows: 4.20 – 5.00 : Very High Extent (The provision is fully and consistently implemented without operational bottlenecks), 3.40 – 4.19 : High Extent (The provision is implemented frequently, with minor operational delays), 2.60 – 3.39 :

Moderate Extent (The provision is implemented inconsistently, showing clear compliance gaps), 1.80 – 2.59 : Low Extent (The provision is rarely implemented, indicating a severe lack of institutional support), and 1.00 – 1.79 : Very Low Extent (The provision is completely unacted upon or actively suppressed).

Before field deployment, the initial draft of the questionnaire underwent a rigorous validation and pilot-testing process to ensure psychometric soundness. Content validity, structural clarity, and item alignment were evaluated by a panel of fifteen (15) purposively selected external experts. This panel comprised an educational research methodologist, a division education supervisor, a division campus journalism focal person, a veteran campus journalism consultant, and experienced school paper advisers. The validators systematically reviewed the items to ensure structural clarity, vocabulary accessibility for minor student-journalists, and strict conceptual mapping against the statutory variables of Republic Act No. 7079.

Following the integration of the experts' recommendations, the refined instrument was pilot-tested among thirty (30) JHS and SHS student-journalists from the Division of Bacolod City who met the inclusion criteria but were excluded from the final analytical sample. The pilot-test data yielded a global Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89 across all subscales. This indicates high internal consistency and reliability, exceeding the standard 0.70 academic threshold for research instruments. The final, optimized version of the questionnaire was prepared for dual-modality deployment via printed forms or secure, encrypted digital survey links, adapting to the logistical preferences and infrastructure of each participating school.

Data Gathering Procedure

The collection of data for this quantitative study was executed systematically through a structured, multi-phase procedure designed to maintain strict accuracy, administrative alignment, and procedural integrity.

The process was initiated by drafting and submitting a formal request letter to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Bacolod City. This letter explicitly detailed the study's research objectives, the targeted sample of student-journalists, and copies of the expert-validated instruments. Upon receiving official endorsement and written clearance from the Schools Division Office, the researcher formally transmitted individual transmittal letters and copies of the division approval to the respective School Heads and Principal Offices of the participating public and private secondary schools within the division.

Once institutional permissions were secured from the school heads, the researcher directly coordinated with the division campus journalism focal person and respective school paper advisers. This coordination was essential to map out the total publication rosters, verify candidate profiles against the established purposive sampling inclusion criteria, and finalize the listing of eligible student-journalist respondents across the Junior and Senior High School levels for the School Year 2025–2026.

The actual administration of the finalized 40-item Campus Journalism Survey Questionnaire was carried out through digital administration, wherein a secure, encrypted link to the survey was distributed under the monitoring of the respective school paper advisers. To optimize the return rate, the researcher maintained a structured data tracking log to monitor questionnaire submissions.

Upon collection, all individual response forms were meticulously reviewed for completeness and missing values. Data from fully completed questionnaires were subsequently coded, organized, and tabulated into a master matrix spreadsheet, preparing the dataset for seamless deployment into statistical software for analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

To systematically analyze the quantitative data gathered from the structured survey instrument, a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical tools was employed at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. First, frequency and percentage distributions were computed to summarize the demographic profile of the respondent student-journalists, capturing baseline context such as their school type, grade level track, publication medium, campus journalism role, and length of service. Next, weighted means and standard deviations were calculated to assess the extent of implementation across the study's core dimensions—namely

school policies, journalism practices, institutional support, and program enhancement. These mean scores were interpreted using a five-point Likert scale matrix, where scores from 4.20 to 5.00 represent a "Very High Extent" (full and consistent implementation), 3.40 to 4.19 a "High Extent" (frequent implementation with minor delays), 2.60 to 3.39 a "Moderate Extent" (inconsistent implementation with compliance gaps), 1.80 to 2.59 a "Low Extent" (rare implementation indicating a severe lack of support), and 1.00 to 1.79 a "Very Low Extent" (completely unacted upon or actively suppressed). To explore the relationships and differences among variables, inferential statistical analyses were conducted: independent samples t-tests were utilized to compare the means between two distinct groups, such as Junior and Senior High School levels, while Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was computed to determine the strength and direction of the relationships among policies, practices, support systems, and program enhancement, providing a robust mathematical foundation to understand how institutional structures shape the quality of campus journalism within the division.

Ethical Considerations

The data collection process adhered to strict ethical research protocols. Prior to data gathering, an ethical clearance phase was initiated. To ensure absolute compliance with ethical standards for research involving minors, a written student assent form was provided to the minor respondents, ensuring they understood the study's voluntary nature and giving them the clear option to participate or withdraw at any point without academic penalty or administrative prejudice. For respondents requiring parental consent, appropriate parental consent forms were acquired prior to instrument deployment.

In strict compliance with Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the **Data Privacy Act of 2012**, stringent data security measures were enforced to protect the respondents' privacy and confidentiality. Participants were informed in detail about the purpose, scope, and institutional significance of the research, receiving explicit assurances that all gathered data would be used solely for academic purposes.

To prevent the identification of individual respondents or specific school paper setups, all quantitative metrics were processed, analyzed, and reported exclusively in aggregate form. Raw digital data and survey forms were stored in password-protected, encrypted drives accessible only to the primary researcher, while physical documents, if any, were kept in locked filing cabinets. All collected data will be permanently destroyed through secure digital shredding and physical cross-shredding methods after the institutional timeline for data retention expires. Finally, the research design, instruments, and field data collection protocols were submitted to and approved by the appropriate institutional research review board, ensuring that the entire study maintained the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and institutional accountability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sample Results and Discussion

Table 2. The Extent of Implementation of School Policies on Campus Journalism (SPCJ) under Republic Act No. 7079 as Evaluated by Secondary Student-Journalists in Bacolod City

Variable Label/Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Verbal Interpretation
SPCJ-PSM	4.39	0.670	5.00	Very High Extent
SPCJ-EFRP	4.40	0.642	5.00	Very High Extent
SPCJ-ICET	4.59	0.572	5.00	Very High Extent
SPCJ-ALL	4.45	0.531	5.00	Very High Extent

Note. N = 302

Scale Legend / Evaluation Reference Grid:

- 4.20 – 5.00: Very High Extent (The policy is fully, consistently, and transparently operationalized)
- 3.40 – 4.19: High Extent (The policy is implemented frequently, with minor operational delays)
- 2.60 – 3.39: Moderate Extent (The policy is implemented inconsistently, showing clear compliance gaps)
- 1.80 – 2.59: Low Extent (The policy is rarely implemented, indicating a severe lack of institutional support)
- 1.00 – 1.79: Very Low Extent (The policy is completely unacted upon or actively suppressed)

Data in Table 2 reveal that the baseline assessment of School Policies on Campus Journalism (SPCJ) achieved an overall composite mean of 4.45 (SD = 0.531), placing it within the descriptive threshold of a Very High Extent. This statistical trend indicated that, from the collective perspective of the 302 sampled student-journalists, the secondary schools within the Division of Bacolod City have successfully established highly functional, legally aligned administrative guidelines that mirror the foundational intents of Republic Act No. 7079. Structurally, this high level of compliance suggests that the local school environments foster a supportive institutional culture and ensure the ethical treatment of campus journalists, allowing them to practice their craft with clear guidance and structural protection.

The findings of the present study were consistent with existing literature on the implementation of Republic Act No. 7079 and campus journalism programs in Philippine schools. Cubillas and Cubillas (2021) found that higher levels of awareness and understanding of the Campus Journalism Act are associated with stronger compliance and more effective implementation of campus journalism initiatives, highlighting the importance of institutional commitment in achieving the objectives of the law. Similarly, Suyman and Ngilangil (2025) reported that secondary schools generally demonstrate substantial implementation of RA 7079, particularly in areas related to publication management, adviser support, and student participation, although certain aspects of implementation still require continuous enhancement.

Furthermore, Duran (2026) emphasized that the successful implementation of campus journalism programs depends largely on adequate institutional support, sufficient funding, and sustained capacity-building opportunities for both student-journalists and publication advisers. In the same manner, Espadero (2022) observed that schools with strong administrative backing and systematic adherence to the provisions of RA 7079 tend to exhibit more effective and sustainable campus journalism programs despite challenges associated with resources and organizational structures. Moreover, the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 7079 affirm the responsibility of educational institutions to promote campus journalism as a means of fostering critical thinking, ethical values, responsible communication, and democratic participation among learners. These perspectives collectively support the present findings, which indicate a high level of institutional implementation of RA 7079 among secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City.

Sample Results and Discussion

Table 3. Comparative Assessment of the Extent of Implementation of School Policies on Campus Journalism (SPCJ) under Republic Act 7079 as Evaluated by Student-Journalists:

A Disaggregation by Academic Level (Junior High School vs. Senior High School)

Variable Label/Indicator	Grade Level	Mean	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Verbal Interpretation
SPCJ-PSM	JHS	4.40	0.697	5.0	Very High Extent

	SHS	4.38	0.644	5.0	Very High Extent
SPCJ-EFRP	JHS	4.42	0.636	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	4.38	0.649	5.0	Very High Extent
SPCJ-ICET	JHS	4.54	0.639	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	4.64	0.492	5.0	Very High Extent
SPCJ-ALL	JHS	4.45	0.574	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	4.46	0.486	5.0	Very High Extent

Note. Total N = 302 (Junior High School, n = 184; Senior High School, n = 118).

Scale Legend / Evaluation Reference Grid:

- **4.20 – 5.00:** Very High Extent (The policy is fully, consistently, and transparently operationalized)
- **– 4.19:** High Extent (The policy is implemented frequently, with minor operational delays)
- **2.60 – 3.39:** Moderate Extent (The policy is implemented inconsistently, showing clear compliance gaps)
- **1.80 – 2.59:** Low Extent (The policy is rarely implemented, indicating a severe lack of institutional support)
- **– 1.79:** Very Low Extent (The policy is completely unacted upon or actively suppressed)

The results indicated that the extent of institutional implementation of Republic Act No. 7079 was consistently very high across both the Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) levels in the Division of Bacolod City.

While slight numerical variations existed between the two groups, both educational tiers demonstrated similarly favorable perceptions regarding the implementation of Student Publication Management, Editorial Freedom and Rights, and the Institutional Culture and Ethical Treatment of Campus Journalists. Notably, these comparative ratings suggested that secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City, regardless of level or curricular structure, have successfully institutionalized the core statutory provisions of the Campus Journalism Act.

The present findings were supported by existing literature emphasizing the importance of administrative alignment in the effective execution of RA 7079. Cubillas and Cubillas (2021) found that schools with higher levels of awareness and structural compliance with the Campus Journalism Act demonstrated stronger implementation of campus journalism programs and greater operational support for student publications. Similarly, Suyman and Ngilangil (2025) reported that secondary schools generally exhibit substantial implementation of RA 7079, particularly when school leaders and publication advisers actively champion journalism activities and enforce policy compliance.

Furthermore, the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 7079 emphasize that educational institutions are legally mandated to uphold campus press freedom, develop students' journalistic skills, and provide continuous organizational support for student publications, highlighting the critical role of institutional environments in sustaining these programs.

Likewise, the Campus Journalism Act of 1991 itself underscores that campus journalism serves as a vital vehicle for strengthening ethical values, critical thinking, creativity, and responsible citizenship among learners—outcomes that are actively facilitated by the high level of structural implementation observed across both the JHS and SHS contexts in this study.

Sample Results and Discussion

Table 4. The Extent of Implementation of Campus Journalism Practices (CJP) under Republic Act No. 7079 as Evaluated by Secondary Student-Journalists in Bacolod City

Variable Label/Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Verbal Interpretation
CJP-PAP	4.47	0.581	5.0	Very High Extent
CJP- EILE	4.66	0.553	5.0	Very High Extent
CJP-SD	4.60	0.520	5.0	Very High Extent
CJP-ALL	4.58	0.494	5.0	Very High Extent

Note. N = 302

Scale Legend / Evaluation Reference Grid:

- **4.20 – 5.00:** Very High Extent (The journalism practice is fully, consistently, and transparently operationalized)
- **– 4.19:** High Extent (The journalism practice is executed frequently, with minor operational delays)
- **2.60 – 3.39:** Moderate Extent (The journalism practice is executed inconsistently, showing clear gaps)
- **1.80 – 2.59:** Low Extent (The journalism practice is rarely observed, indicating a severe lack of active involvement)
- **– 1.79:** Very Low Extent (The journalism practice is completely absent or non-operational)

The findings indicated that campus journalism practices under Republic Act No. 7079 were fully functional and highly evident across secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City. Among the dimensions assessed, the component related to editorial independence and learner empowerment emerged as the strongest aspect of implementation, while publication administration and policy support, although still rated very highly, obtained comparatively lower mean scores. Overall, the results demonstrated that schools have established robust mechanisms for supporting campus journalism and have generally succeeded in institutionalizing the core provisions of the Campus Journalism Act. The low variability in responses further suggested that the respondents shared relatively consistent perceptions regarding the execution of these campus journalism practices across the different schools.

These findings implied that secondary schools in Bacolod City have created an environment that supports both the operational and developmental aspects of campus journalism. The strong ratings across all dimensions suggested that school administrators, publication advisers, and student-journalists were actively engaged in implementing the principles of RA 7079. The particularly favorable assessment of editorial independence and learner empowerment indicated that students were being provided genuine opportunities to express ideas, participate in professional-level journalistic activities, and exercise responsible freedom of expression. Such conditions are essential in fostering critical thinking, media literacy, leadership, and civic engagement among learners. Moreover, the consistently high ratings implied that campus journalism programs have become integral components of the local school culture and student development initiatives.

The results of the present study align strongly with existing literature emphasizing the pivotal role of institutional commitment in sustaining effective campus journalism programs. For instance, Cubillas and Cubillas (2021) demonstrated that schools with high compliance rates regarding the Campus Journalism Act are significantly more likely to provide meaningful avenues for student participation and publication development. This structural readiness is further supported by Suyman and Ngilangil (2025), who reported

that secondary schools with established journalism frameworks tend to exhibit greater overall compliance with Republic Act (RA) 7079 and offer superior institutional backing for student editors.

Collectively, these studies affirm that robust institutional implementation of RA 7079 not only sharpens students' journalistic competencies but also fosters responsible press freedom and deepens democratic participation within the school community.

Sample Results and Discussion

Table 5. Comparative Assessment of the Extent of Implementation of Campus Journalism Practices (CJP) under Republic Act No. 7079 as Evaluated by Student-Journalists: A Disaggregation by Academic Level (Junior High School vs. Senior High School)

Variables	Grade Level	Mean (Arithmetic)	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Verbal Interpretation
CJP-PAP	JHS	4.44	0.626	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	4.50	0.533	5.0	Very High Extent
CJP- EILE	JHS	4.65	0.610	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	4.66	0.492	5.0	Very High Extent
CJP-SD	JHS	4.62	0.546	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	4.59	0.494	5.0	Very High Extent
CJP-ALL	JHS	4.57	0.547	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	4.58	0.437	5.0	Very High Extent

Note. N = 302

Scale Legend / Evaluation Reference Grid:

- **4.20 – 5.00:** Very High Extent (The journalism practice is fully, consistently, and transparently operationalized)
- **– 4.19:** High Extent (The journalism practice is executed frequently, with minor operational delays)
- **2.60 – 3.39:** Moderate Extent (The journalism practice is executed inconsistently, showing clear gaps)
- **1.80 – 2.59:** Low Extent (The journalism practice is rarely observed, indicating a severe lack of active involvement)
- **– 1.79:** Very Low Extent (The journalism practice is completely absent or non-operational)

The findings showed that the assessment of Campus Journalism Practices (CJP) was consistently very high among both the Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) respondents. Across the assessed dimensions, respondents from both curricular tiers exhibited highly favorable perceptions of publication administration and policies, editorial independence and learner empowerment, and active student participation. While slight numerical differences were observed between the JHS and SHS mean ratings, these variations were minimal, indicating a shared, division-wide perception of robust campus journalism implementation regardless of grade level. Notably, editorial independence and learner empowerment emerged as the most highly rated aspect among both groups, suggesting that these secondary schools effectively foster an institutional environment where student-journalists are encouraged to exercise responsible freedom of expression and actively participate in journalistic endeavors. Furthermore, the relatively low standard

deviations indicated strong consistency in responses within each respondent group, pointing to a unified organizational experience across the division.

These data confirmed that the Division of Bacolod City has successfully integrated campus journalism practices into the operational cultures of both its junior and senior high school programs. The striking similarity in ratings between the two educational levels suggested that local schools provide equitable opportunities, resources, and administrative support systems for campus journalism activities. The strong assessment of editorial independence and learner empowerment reflected a systemic commitment to nurturing critical thinking, advanced communication skills, and democratic participation among the learners. Additionally, the positive ratings for publication administration and student participation indicated that these secondary schools have established stable functional structures and mechanisms that enable student publications to operate effectively. Such conditions directly contribute to the development of media-literate learners who are capable of responsible reporting, ethical decision-making, and active civic engagement. Ultimately, these findings suggested that the localized implementation of RA 7079 is not confined to a single grade level or resource-rich pocket, but is instead embedded comprehensively throughout the broader secondary education system.

This data trend reinforces the findings of multiple past studies that examined how campus journalism policies are actualized in Philippine secondary schools. Cubillas and Cubillas (2021) reported that schools with stronger compliance with the Campus Journalism Act demonstrate more effective student publication programs and greater participation rates among student-journalists.. Similarly, Suyman and Ngilangil (2025) found that secondary schools generally exhibit high levels of compliance with RA 7079 when localized policies promoting student participation and editorial independence are consistently maintained. Espadero (2022) likewise concluded that effective campus journalism programs are structurally characterized by strong organizational support, continuous capacity-building activities, and active student engagement. Furthermore, the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 7079 underscore the explicit responsibility of schools to uphold press freedom, encourage student participation, and provide opportunities for journalistic development—all of which were reflected in the uniformly high assessments obtained in the present study. Collectively, these studies affirm that sustained institutional support is essential for cultivating vibrant campus journalism programs that contribute significantly to learners’ intellectual, social, and civic development.

Sample Results and Discussion

Table 6. The Extent of School Support and Policy Implementation (SSPI) for Campus Journalism under Republic Act No. 7079 as Evaluated by Secondary Student-Journalists in Bacolod City

Variable Label/Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Verbal Interpretation
SSPI- ISPCJ	4.34	0.753	5.0	Very High Extent
SSPI - TASAG	4.50	0.596	5.0	Very High Extent
SSPI - RPICB	4.17	0.846	5.0	High Extent
SSPI -ALL	4.34	0.647	5.0	Very High Extent

Note. N = 302

Scale Legend / Evaluation Reference Grid:

- **4.20 – 5.00:** Very High Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **consistently practiced, highly visible, and comprehensively implemented** without noticeable gaps.)
- **– 4.19:** High Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **frequently practiced and clearly active**, though minor gaps in consistency or coverage may exist.)

- **2.60 – 3.39:** Moderate Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **seasonally or occasionally evident**, demonstrating an inconsistent application across institutions.)
- **1.80 – 2.59:** Low Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **rarely practiced or weak**, pointing to significant structural deficiencies.)
- **– 1.79:** Very Low Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **entirely absent or unpracticed**, indicating a total lack of policy translation.)

The findings indicated that the overall level of School Support and Policy Implementation (SSPI) for Campus Journalism among secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City was very high. Among the dimensions assessed, technical assistance emerged as the strongest area of support, suggesting that schools actively provided guidance, mentoring, and localized capacity-building opportunities for both campus journalists and publication advisers.

Institutional support also received a highly favorable assessment, reflecting the presence of sustained administrative commitment and formal organizational mechanisms that facilitated campus journalism activities. In contrast, resource provision obtained the lowest rating among the dimensions, although it remained safely within the high implementation range. This statistical pattern suggested that while schools generally supported campus journalism programs, operational challenges related to financial, material, or logistical resources still existed on the ground. Furthermore, the relatively moderate standard deviations indicated a reasonable level of consensus among the respondents regarding the support structures provided by their respective schools.

These results implied that secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City recognized the fundamental importance of campus journalism as a vehicle for student development and democratic participation. The strong empirical rating for technical assistance highlighted the significant role that school leaders, publication advisers, and education supervisors played in sustaining journalism programs through professional mentorship.

However, the comparatively lower rating for resource provision suggested a critical need for schools to strengthen localized funding mechanisms, provide modern journalistic equipment, and allocate sufficient materials to support publication operations.

Addressing these specific operational concerns may further enhance the overall effectiveness of campus journalism programs and ensure that student-journalists can fully exercise the rights and opportunities guaranteed under Republic Act No. 7079. Structurally, the findings demonstrated that institutional support frameworks were largely in place, creating an enabling environment for student publications to flourish and contribute to the development of critical thinking, communication skills, and civic engagement among the learners.

The findings of the present study align strongly with previous literature emphasizing the critical role of institutional commitment in sustaining effective campus journalism programs. For instance, Natividad and Gapasin (2021) demonstrated that administrative commitment, adviser competence, and the systematic provision of technical support significantly drive the efficacy of campus journalism initiatives.

Beyond structural backing, operational resources are equally vital; Espadero (2022) emphasized that adequate funding, leadership support, and continuous training opportunities are fundamental to sustaining vibrant, long-term programs.

Crucially, these empirical findings are anchored in the statutory provisions of RA 7079 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), which legally mandate schools to provide the necessary support, facilities, and opportunities for student publications to operate effectively while safeguarding responsible press freedom (Department of Education, 1992). Collectively, these studies and legal mandates affirm that institutional support is not merely supplementary, but a foundational requirement for ensuring the success and sustainability of campus journalism across Philippine schools.

Sample Results and Discussion

Table 7. Comparative Assessment of the Extent of School Support and Policy Implementation (SSPI) under Republic Act No. 7079 as Evaluated by Student-Journalists: A Disaggregation by Academic Level (Junior High School vs. Senior High School)

Variables	Grade Level	Mean	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Verbal Interpretation
SSPI- ISPCJ	JHS	4.42	0.722	5.0	Very High
	SHS	4.26	0.779	5.0	Very High
SSPI - TASAG	JHS	4.53	0.607	5.0	Very High
	SHS	4.47	0.586	5.0	Very High
SSPI - RPICB	JHS	4.27	0.773	5.0	Very High
	SHS	4.08	0.907	5.0	High Extent
SSPI - ALL	JHS	4.40	0.629	5.0	Very High
	SHS	4.27	0.660	5.0	Very High

Note. N = 302

Scale Legend / Evaluation Reference Grid:

- **4.20 – 5.00:** Very High Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **consistently practiced, highly visible, and comprehensively implemented** without noticeable gaps.)
- **– 4.19:** High Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **frequently practiced and clearly active**, though minor gaps in consistency or coverage may exist.)
- **2.60 – 3.39:** Moderate Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **seasonally or occasionally evident**, demonstrating an inconsistent application across institutions.)
- **1.80 – 2.59:** Low Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **rarely practiced or weak**, pointing to significant structural deficiencies.)
- **– 1.79:** Very Low Extent (The policy indicator or institutional support mechanism is **absent or unpracticed**, indicating a total lack of policy translation.)

The results revealed that both the Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) respondents perceived the level of School Support and Policy Implementation (SSPI) for Campus Journalism to be very high, indicating that schools across both grade levels provided substantial organizational backing for campus journalism initiatives. A close comparison of the two groups showed that JHS respondents consistently reported slightly more favorable assessments across all assessed dimensions of support. At both curricular levels, technical assistance emerged as the strongest dimension, reflecting the active role of school administrators, publication advisers, and other institutional stakeholders in mentoring and guiding student-journalists. Conversely, resource provision received the comparatively lowest ratings from both cohorts, suggesting that while structural support mechanisms were generally present, concerns regarding the adequacy of financial, material, and logistical resources remained evident. Furthermore, the relatively low standard deviations indicated a high degree of consistency in the respondents' perceptions within their respective grade levels.

These findings implied that secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City have established supportive operational environments that facilitate the implementation of Republic Act No. 7079 and the continuous

running of campus journalism programs. The slightly higher ratings observed among the JHS respondents may indicate that support systems were more visible, mature, or directly accessible at the junior high school level, although these differences were not substantial enough to suggest major institutional disparities. The strong ratings for technical assistance demonstrated the immense value of continuous mentoring, specialized training, and administrative guidance in sustaining student publications and localized journalism activities. However, the lower evaluation of resource provision pointed directly to a division-wide need for enhanced investments in physical publication facilities, modern digital equipment, dedicated training funds, and technological resources. Strengthening these specific infrastructural areas can improve the quality and sustainability of campus journalism programs, ensuring that student-journalists are provided with adequate opportunities to develop their competencies and exercise responsible press freedom. Overall, the findings underscore the crucial role that institutional support plays in fostering a vibrant, multi-level campus journalism culture.

The outcomes of this study are strongly aligned with existing literature emphasizing institutional support as a critical determinant of effective campus journalism implementation. For instance, Natividad and Gapasin (2021) demonstrated that administrative commitment, adviser expertise, and sustained technical assistance significantly drive the success of student publication programs. This is mirrored by Cubillas and Cubillas (2021), who reported that schools with stricter compliance with the Campus Journalism Act tend to provide more comprehensive support mechanisms, ultimately yielding more robust journalistic practices.

However, infrastructure alone does not guarantee seamless operation. Espadero (2022) noted that while many institutions demonstrate strong administrative goodwill, persistent deficiencies in funding and resource allocation remain significant barriers to long-term program enhancement. This critical need for material backing is institutionalized by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 7079, which legally mandate schools to provide structural, technical, and material support to student publications (Department of Education, 1992). Collectively, these corroborating studies reinforce the present findings, highlighting that sustained, equitable institutional support is paramount to fortifying campus journalism programs and, by extension, cultivating students' journalistic, leadership, and civic competencies.

Sample Results and Discussion

Table 8. The Extent of Institutional Readiness Regarding the Proposed Campus Journalism Program and Policy Enhancement Plan (PPEP) across Secondary Schools in Bacolod City

Variable Label/Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Verbal Interpretation
PPEP-GCJIS	4.40	0.726	5.0	Very High Extent
PPEP-SETDPM	4.57	0.669	5.0	Very High Extent
PPEP-RPICB	4.48	0.854	5.0	Very High Extent
PPEP-ALL	4.48	0.684	5.0	Very High Extent

Note. N = 302

Scale Legend / Evaluation Reference Grid:

- **4.20 – 5.00:** Very High Extent (The institution is **fully equipped and prepared** for immediate rollout, demonstrating unanimous, proactive enthusiasm and commitment to the PPE.)
- **– 4.19:** High Extent (The institution is **adequately prepared** with minor logistical or systemic gaps; supports and agrees with the plan's strategic directives.)
- **2.60 – 3.39:** Moderate Extent (The institution shows **partial readiness**, requiring targeted capacity building; expresses cautious optimism or neutral support, awaiting further clarity.)

- **1.80 – 2.59:** Low Extent (The institution faces **severe deficits** in resources or administrative framework; exhibits noticeable hesitation, skepticism, or resistance to the PPE.)
- **– 1.79:** Very Low Extent (The institution is **entirely unready**, lacking basic infrastructure; fundamentally rejects the proposed program enhancements.)

The findings indicated that the overall assessment of the Campus Journalism Program and Policy Enhancement Plan (PPEP) among secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City was very high. Among the dimensions evaluated, journalism support initiatives emerged as the most highly rated aspect, reflecting the respondents' strong recognition of institutional efforts aimed at developing student-journalists and strengthening journalism-related activities. Resource provision, alongside program governance and coordination, also received highly favorable assessments, demonstrating that schools generally maintained supportive structural frameworks and policies for campus journalism.

Although minor numerical variations existed among the evaluated dimensions, all indicators fell safely within the high to very high implementation range, suggesting that the respondents perceived campus journalism enhancement efforts as both effective and well-established. Furthermore, the moderate standard deviations indicated a relatively consistent assessment among the respondents regarding the execution of these enhancement initiatives across the division.

These findings implied that secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City were proactive in strengthening campus journalism programs beyond basic compliance with Republic Act No. 7079. The strong assessment of journalism support initiatives suggested that schools prioritized localized activities that enhanced students' journalistic competencies, leadership skills, and engagement in school publications.

Likewise, the favorable ratings for governance, coordination, and resource provision indicated that schools recognized the explicit need for structured policies and institutional backing to sustain their journalism programs over time. Such efforts directly contribute to the development of responsible, informed, and media-literate learners who can effectively participate in democratic discourse.

However, the results also suggested that continuous improvement in resource allocation and policy implementation remains important to ensure the long-term sustainability and responsiveness of campus journalism programs to emerging educational and technological demands.

The findings of the present study were strongly supported by existing literature emphasizing the importance of policy enhancement and structural backing in campus journalism development. Natividad and Gapasin (2021) highlighted that effective campus journalism programs require sustained administrative support, policy reinforcement, and continuous professional development opportunities for both advisers and student-journalists.

Similarly, Cubillas and Cubillas (2021) found that schools demonstrating stronger compliance with the Campus Journalism Act tend to implement more comprehensive journalism programs and capacity-building initiatives.

Suyman and Ngilangil (2025) reported that enhancement efforts, such as targeted training programs, technical assistance, and continuous policy support, significantly contribute to the overall effectiveness of campus journalism implementation in secondary schools. Furthermore, Espadero (2022) emphasized that continuous program evaluation, resource allocation, and stakeholder collaboration are necessary for maintaining the quality and relevance of student publications.

These findings were likewise aligned with the provisions of Republic Act No. 7079, which encourages schools to create conditions that promote the growth and development of campus journalism through institutional support, training opportunities, and policies that uphold responsible press freedom. Collectively, these studies affirm that program and policy enhancement initiatives are essential in sustaining vibrant campus journalism programs and fostering students' communication, critical thinking, and civic engagement skills.

Sample Results and Discussion

Table 9. Comparative Assessment of the Extent of Institutional Readiness Regarding the Proposed Campus Journalism Program and Policy Enhancement Plan (PPEP) when Disaggregated by Respondents' Academic Level (Junior High School vs. Senior High School)

Variables	Grade Level	N	Mean (Arithmetic)	Standard Deviation	Maximum Score	Verbal Interpretation
PPEP-GCJIS	JHS	184	4.40	0.709	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	118	4.40	0.745	5.0	Very High Extent
PPEP-SETDPM	JHS	184	4.57	0.670	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	118	4.58	0.669	5.0	Very High Extent
PPEP-RPICB	JHS	184	4.47	0.831	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	118	4.48	0.879	5.0	Very High Extent
PPEP-ALL	JHS	184	4.48	0.672	5.0	Very High Extent
	SHS	118	4.49	0.698	5.0	Very High Extent

Note. N = 302

Scale Legend / Evaluation Reference Grid:

- **4.20 – 5.00:** Very High Extent (The institution is **fully equipped and prepared** for immediate rollout, demonstrating unanimous, proactive enthusiasm and commitment to the PPE.)
- **– 4.19:** High Extent (The institution is **adequately prepared** with minor logistical or systemic gaps; supports and agrees with the plan's strategic directives.)
- **2.60 – 3.39:** Moderate Extent (The institution shows **partial readiness**, requiring targeted capacity building; expresses cautious optimism or neutral support, awaiting further clarity.)
- **1.80 – 2.59:** Low Extent (The institution faces **severe deficits** in resources or administrative framework; exhibits noticeable hesitation, skepticism, or resistance to the PPE.)
- **– 1.79:** Very Low Extent (The institution is **entirely unready**, lacking basic infrastructure; fundamentally rejects the proposed program enhancements.)

The data presented in Table 8 reflect a remarkably consistent perception of Campus Journalism Program and Policy Enhancement Plan (PPEP) across both the Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) levels. The findings indicated that both JHS and SHS respondents assessed the policy and program enhancement initiatives related to campus journalism very positively. The overall ratings of the two groups were structurally congruent, demonstrating a shared, division-wide consensus that enhancement programs and strategic policy initiatives were effectively implemented across the secondary schools in the Division of Bacolod City. Among the dimensions assessed, journalism support initiatives consistently emerged as the strongest aspect for both groups. Meanwhile, governance, coordination, and resource provision also received favorable evaluations. The close mean scores and comparable standard deviations between the JHS and SHS cohorts further verified a high degree of uniformity in how these enhancement efforts were experienced on the ground.

A deeper analysis of the individual subscales reveals why journalism support initiatives functioned as the primary driver of this high evaluation. This dimension captures visible, direct student-level investments, such

as press conferences, division-wide training clinics, and editorial workshops. Because these capacity-building events are structured annually by the division, both JHS and SHS student-journalists directly benefited from a standardized framework of skill development. Conversely, the components of program governance and resource provision garnered comparatively lower mean scores. This internal variation suggested that while the pedagogical and instructional enhancements were highly visible and successful, the structural backend—specifically the long-term stabilization of editorial funding and the administrative coordination within complex senior high school schedules—remained more challenging to streamline.

These findings implied that program and policy enhancement initiatives for campus journalism were deployed equitably throughout the secondary education sector in Bacolod City. The absence of substantial differences between the JHS and SHS assessments suggested that local schools provided comparable opportunities, support systems, and developmental programs regardless of grade level. This structural balance has dual implications for the division. First, the data indicated that local educational institutions have achieved an operational equilibrium in basic policy implementation; the uniform understanding across both tiers suggests that future research should shift focus from checking baseline compliance to designing longitudinal sustainability frameworks that prevent program stagnation. Second, the slightly greater variance observed in the SHS responses highlights an emerging structural tension. Although a uniform divisional approach is effective at present, the distinct academic demands and compressed timelines of the Senior High School curriculum may eventually necessitate more tailored, level-specific enhancements to sustain high stakeholder approval without causing student burnout.

The comparative outcomes of the present inquiry align closely with several local studies emphasizing the critical role of strategic policy enhancement in fortifying campus journalism. Castillo and Velasco (2025) underscored the structural shortcomings in the enforcement of Republic Act 7079, advocating for robust administrative support, localized training, and clearer institutional protections for school paper advisers. The value of such regulatory adherence is demonstrated by Cubillas and Cubillas (2021), who found that schools with higher compliance with the Campus Journalism Act consistently implement more comprehensive programs, thereby driving stronger student participation and publication performance. Similarly, long-term program sustainability relies heavily on consistent policy enforcement, active administrative commitment, and continuous adviser development.

Building on this need for professional growth, Advincula and Adtoon (2024) emphasized that post-pandemic school paper advisers must urgently upgrade their digital literacy and technical journalism skills to bridge the competency gaps left by years of remote learning. This demand for institutional reinforcement is echoed by Espadero (2022), who highlighted that continuous program evaluation, stakeholder collaboration, and administrative backing are essential to maintaining a publication's societal relevance. Ultimately, as Suyman and Ngilangil (2025) observed, providing targeted training opportunities, technical assistance, and structured program enhancements directly drives the successful local implementation of RA 7079. Because Republic Act No. 7079 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations explicitly mandate that schools foster journalistic growth while protecting responsible press freedom, these combined literatures validate the present findings: sustained policy and program enhancements are indispensable for cultivating vibrant, inclusive, and future-ready campus journalism across secondary schools.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The campus journalism program within the secondary schools of the Division of Bacolod City is highly structured, well-supported, and consistently implemented across both Junior and Senior High School levels. The study's main findings reveal a strong alignment between clear policies, active journalism practices, and robust instructional mentorship, which effectively fosters student competence, editorial independence, and civic awareness. However, a critical gap exists regarding the uneven availability of material, physical, and logistical resources. Ultimately, while the program successfully serves as a powerful educational platform for

student development and voice, its long-term optimization and capacity to produce industry-ready student journalists depend heavily on addressing these persistent infrastructure and equipment deficits.

To address these findings, targeted actions are recommended for key stakeholders to bridge the resource gap and sustain the program's high standards. It is recommended that the Department of Education (DepEd) formulate policy guidelines for a minimum resource framework and provide continuous professional development for school paper advisers. Locally, the Division Focal Person should establish a resource-sharing network and implement a localized annual evaluation tool, while School Heads should allocate dedicated funding (such as Special Education Funds) to set up physical newsrooms. School Paper Advisers are encouraged to leverage digital tools and advocate for itemized resource needs, while Student Journalists should implement peer mentorship programs and adopt digital-first publishing strategies. Finally, local media and the community should forge partnerships to donate equipment, and future researchers should employ mixed-methods approaches to explore the program's long-term impacts.

Despite these insights, several limitations constrain the study's overall generalizability and depth. Because the research focused exclusively on selected schools within the specific division of Bacolod City, the findings may not represent the state of campus journalism in other regions or divisions. Additionally, the study relied heavily on self-reported perceptions, which introduces a degree of subjectivity into the evaluation of the program's effectiveness. Lastly, the predominantly quantitative focus of the study highlights the need for qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus group discussions, to more deeply capture the lived experiences and nuanced realities of the participants.

Compliance with ethical standards

In the conduct of this study, strict adherence to institutional ethical standards was maintained to ensure the integrity of the research and the protection of all participants. Before data collection, formal ethical approval was secured from the appropriate institutional review board, and all research protocols were aligned with established ethical guidelines for educational research. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, with all student journalists, school paper advisers, and school administrators receiving comprehensive information regarding the study's purpose, risks, and benefits before providing written informed consent alongside their individual assent. To safeguard the privacy of those involved, the confidentiality of all collected information was rigorously maintained through the anonymization of data and the secure storage of research files, ensuring that no individual or specific school could be personally identified in any published report. The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, that could have influenced the objectivity or outcomes of this research. Proper credit has been given to all contributors through appropriate authorship attribution and the acknowledgement of institutional support, and the researcher maintains a clear agreement regarding copyright ownership in compliance with academic and institutional publishing standards.

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