

Competencies and Work Performance of School Paper Advisers in Public Schools

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Publication history:

Received: July 16, 2026

Revised: August 14, 2026

Accepted: August 18, 2026

Published: August 19, 2026

International Journal of Sustainable and Integrated Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 238-244, August 2026.

Abstract

This study determined the extent of competencies and work performance of school paper advisers in selected upland schools in Tanay District, Division of Rizal, during School Year 2025–2026. It employed a descriptive survey research design and documentary analysis. The respondents were 54 school paper advisers and 163 campus journalists from 26 public schools. A researcher-made questionnaire checklist was used to assess the competencies of school paper advisers in terms of journalistic and teaching proficiency, mentorship and coaching, contextual intelligence and institutional navigation, and ethical and legal gatekeeping. Documentary analysis was conducted using the advisers' Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) ratings as the basis for determining their level of work performance. Findings revealed that most school paper advisers were 31–40 years old, female, married, holders of master's degrees, with more than 10 years of teaching experience, and had attended in-service trainings ranging from division to international levels. Most campus journalists were 14–16 years old, female, second- or third-born children, and belonged to average-income families. School paper advisers rated themselves as much competent, whereas campus journalists perceived them as moderately competent. A significant difference was found between the perceptions of the two groups regarding the advisers' competencies across the identified dimensions. However, the personal attributes of both school paper advisers and campus journalists were not significantly associated with their perceptions of advisers' competencies. The advisers demonstrated very satisfactory work performance based on their IPCR ratings, and a significant relationship was found between their perceived competencies and work performance. The study concluded that strengthening professional competencies may contribute to improved work performance among school paper advisers. It recommended the conduct of seminars, workshops, conferences, and specialized training in campus journalism, leadership, communication, ethics, and legal responsibilities, as well as the establishment of a professional network for school paper advisers. The proposed action plan was recommended for implementation, while parallel studies may be undertaken using additional variables and broader settings.

Keywords: School Paper Advisers, Competencies, Work Performance, Campus Journalism, Journalistic Proficiency, Mentorship and Coaching, Ethical And Legal Gatekeeping

1. Introduction

School paper advisers play a significant role in the development of campus journalism in public schools. Their responsibilities extend beyond supervising the production of school publications because they are also expected to teach journalistic skills, mentor campus journalists, manage editorial activities, and ensure that student publications observe ethical and responsible practices. Campus journalism provides learners with opportunities to develop writing, communication, critical thinking, leadership, and information-management skills. The continuing implementation of campus journalism in Philippine schools demonstrates the importance of providing learners with meaningful opportunities to practice journalism while developing responsible communication and critical engagement with information (Department of Education [DepEd], 2024).

The changing nature of journalism has made the responsibilities of school paper advisers increasingly complex. The growth of digital platforms requires teachers to guide students not only in traditional writing and editing but also in digital content creation, information evaluation, research, and responsible online communication. Lagos and Nabos (2023) found that digital competence among public school teachers encompasses information and digital literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, online safety, and problem-solving. These competencies are relevant to school paper advisers because contemporary campus journalism increasingly involves both print and digital forms of publication.

Recent studies specifically examining school paper advisers have identified important competency and professional challenges. Cainong (2024) found varying levels of journalistic writing competence among school paper advisers and reported concerns related to inadequate training, limited resources, and other challenges affecting the implementation of school publication activities. The findings suggest that school paper advisers require continuous professional development to strengthen their journalistic and management competencies. Rosario and Ibojo (2024) likewise emphasized the importance of effective practices among experienced school paper advisers in selecting writers, conducting training, and managing school publication activities. Their study indicates that effective advising requires a combination of journalistic expertise, organizational skills, and learner support.

Mentorship is another essential responsibility of school paper advisers. Sabio and Gumanoy (2025) found that outstanding school paper advisers demonstrated mentoring, leadership, professional development, and sustained support in developing student journalists. Similarly, Calumaya and Ambayon (2025) reported that effective campus journalism coaches used technical expertise, personalized guidance, differentiated instruction, and practical applications in coaching student journalists. These findings demonstrate that school paper advisers function not merely as publication supervisors but also as mentors who help learners develop journalistic competence, confidence, and responsible communication practices.

School paper advisers also encounter challenges in balancing their journalism-related responsibilities with their regular teaching duties. Castillo and Velasco (2025) documented the lived experiences of school paper teacher-advisers and highlighted the demands associated with performing classroom and journalism responsibilities simultaneously. Padillos (2025) likewise identified challenges involving role management and technological demands among public school paper advisers. These studies indicate that effective advising requires not only journalistic proficiency but also contextual intelligence, adaptability, institutional coordination, and the ability to respond to emerging technological and organizational demands.

The professional competence of teachers has also been examined in relation to their work performance. Aralar (2025) investigated competencies and work performance among public secondary school teachers in Binangonan District, Rizal, while using documented performance ratings as an indicator of teachers' work performance. The study provides a relevant local basis for examining whether professional competencies are associated with actual performance in Philippine public schools. However, such studies generally focus on teachers as a broad professional group rather than school paper advisers who perform specialized journalism and mentoring functions.

Despite limited research has examined school paper advisers specifically in upland public schools in Tanay District, Division of Rizal, where contextual conditions may influence access to training, resources, technology, and institutional support. Second, existing studies have generally examined individual aspects of adviser competence rather than integrating journalistic and teaching proficiency, mentorship and coaching, contextual intelligence and institutional navigation, and ethical and legal gatekeeping into one framework. Third, most studies have focused on the experiences or self-perceptions of school paper advisers, with limited comparison between advisers' perceptions and those of the campus journalists whom they directly teach and mentor. Finally, although recent research has examined teacher competencies and work performance, limited evidence exists on the relationship between the specific competencies of school paper advisers and their documented Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) ratings.

The present study addresses these gaps by examining the competencies and work performance of school paper advisers in selected upland public schools in Tanay District, comparing the perceptions of advisers and campus journalists, and determining whether adviser competencies are significantly related to their level of work performance.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design and documentary analysis to determine the competencies and work performance of school paper advisers in selected upland public schools in Tanay District, Division of Rizal, during School Year 2025–2026.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in 26 selected upland public schools in Tanay District, Division of Rizal, namely Aguho Elementary School, Alas-Asin Elementary School, Camp Mateo Capinpin Elementary School, Cayabu Elementary School, Cayabu Integrated School, Cuyambay Elementary School, Cuyambay National High School, Daraetan Elementary School, Daraetan Integrated School, Laiban Elementary School, Laiban Integrated School, Madilay-Dilay Elementary School, Magata-Manggahan Elementary School, Mamuyao Elementary School, Monte de Tanay Elementary School, Nayon Elementary School, Pinagsabiran Elementary School, Rizal Sports Academy, Sampaloc Elementary School, San Andres Elementary School, Sta. Ines Elementary School, Sta. Ines Integrated High School, Sto. Niño Integrated School, Tablon Elementary School, Tanay-Sampaloc Integrated National High School, and Tinucan Elementary School.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents were 54 school paper advisers and 163 campus journalists from the selected schools, with the advisers described according to their demographic and professional characteristics and the campus journalists according to their selected personal and family characteristics.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study used total enumeration for the school paper advisers and campus journalists who met the study criteria, resulting in a total of 217 respondents, consisting of 54 school paper advisers and 163 campus journalists..

2.5 Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire checklist that assessed the extent of competencies of school paper advisers in terms of journalistic and teaching proficiency, mentorship and coaching, contextual intelligence and institutional navigation, and ethical and legal gatekeeping.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

After securing the necessary permissions from the concerned authorities, the researcher administered the questionnaire to the identified respondents and obtained the latest Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) ratings of the school paper advisers through documentary analysis as the basis for determining their level of work performance.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The gathered data were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to determine the respondents' profiles, level of adviser competencies and work performance, differences in perceptions between school paper advisers and campus journalists, and the significant relationship between adviser competencies and work performance.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical principles in conducting research involving human participants. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the respondents were informed about the purpose of the research before answering the questionnaire. The information gathered from the respondents was used solely for academic purposes and was treated with confidentiality. The researcher ensured that the respondents' identities and personal information were protected throughout the research process. The collected data were analyzed and reported objectively to maintain the integrity and credibility of the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Profile of the Two Groups of Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables

The findings showed that among the 54 school paper advisers, the largest group was 31–40 years old (44.5%), followed by those aged 41–50 (22.2%), 51–60 (18.5%), and 21–30 (14.8%). Females comprised the majority (59.3%), while 63.0% were married. In terms of educational attainment, 44.4% held a master's degree, 25.9% had a bachelor's degree, 16.7% had completed bachelor's degrees with master's units, and 13.0% had master's degrees with doctoral units. Regarding length of service, the largest group had 15–19 years of experience (27.8%), followed by 5–9 years (25.9%), 10–14 years (18.5%), below five years (16.7%), and 20–24 years (11.1%). Most were Teacher I (48.2%), followed by Teacher III (25.9%), Teacher II (22.2%), and Master Teacher I (3.7%). In terms of in-service training, the largest proportion had attended division-level training (29.6%), followed by district-level (25.9%), regional (18.5%), national (16.7%), and international training (9.3%).

Among the 163 campus journalists, most were 14–16 years old (73.6%), followed by those aged 11–13 (12.3%), 8–10 (10.4%), and 17 years old and above (3.7%). Male respondents comprised 56.4%, while females accounted for 43.6%. In terms of sibling position, second-born children constituted the largest group (43.0%), followed by third-born (24.5%), first-born (20.8%), and fourth-born or later (11.7%). Most belonged to families with three

children (45.4%), followed by families with two children (39.3%), four or more children (9.2%), and one child (6.1%). Regarding monthly family income, 41.7% belonged to families earning ₱20,000–₱29,999, while 21.5% reported ₱10,000–₱19,999, 18.4% ₱30,000–₱39,999, 12.3% ₱40,000 and above, and 6.1% below ₱10,000. Most fathers (36.8%) and mothers (41.1%) were college graduates, followed by college undergraduates at 32.5% and 28.9%, respectively. In terms of occupation, government employment was most common among fathers (47.2%), while private company employment was most common among mothers (36.8%). These findings indicate that the respondents represented generally experienced school paper advisers and predominantly adolescent campus journalists from families with moderate income and parents with college-level educational backgrounds.

3.2 Extent of Competencies of School Paper Advisers as Perceived by the Two Groups of Respondents With Respect to the Different Aspects

The findings revealed a clear difference in the perceptions of the two groups regarding the competencies of school paper advisers. The school paper advisers rated themselves as Much Competent, with a composite weighted mean of 4.18, while the campus journalists rated them as Moderately Competent, with a composite weighted mean of 3.46. Among the school paper advisers, Journalistic and Teaching Proficiency obtained the highest rating (WM = 4.49), followed by Ethical and Legal Gatekeeping (WM = 4.39) and Mentorship and Coaching (WM = 4.38), all interpreted as Much Competent. Contextual Intelligence and Institutional Navigation ranked last (WM = 3.44) and was interpreted as Moderately Competent. Among the campus journalists, Ethical and Legal Gatekeeping ranked first (WM = 3.72) and was interpreted as Much Competent, while Journalistic and Teaching Proficiency (WM = 3.46), Mentorship and Coaching (WM = 3.45), and Contextual Intelligence and Institutional Navigation (WM = 3.22) were interpreted as Moderately Competent.

The findings further indicate that both groups recognized the advisers' strengths in journalistic knowledge, ethical guidance, and professional mentoring, although the advisers generally rated their competencies higher than the campus journalists did. The relatively low ratings for Contextual Intelligence and Institutional Navigation from both groups suggest areas requiring further improvement, particularly in publication management, layout and dummyping, editing, production workflows, resource management, and coordination of journalism activities. The difference in perceptions may indicate that advisers are more confident in their technical and ethical capabilities, whereas campus journalists have more direct experiences with the practical and organizational aspects of publication work. These findings highlight the need for targeted capacity-building programs that strengthen not only journalistic and pedagogical competencies but also administrative, digital, organizational, and production-management skills. The results are consistent with Basilan and Padilla (2022), who reported that school paper advisers generally demonstrated competence in technical management but showed varying levels of proficiency in journalistic writing, emphasizing the need for specialized training and continuous professional development.

3.3 Significant Difference Between the Perception of the Two Groups of Respondents on the Extent of Competencies of School Paper Advisers With Respect to the Different Aspects

The findings revealed a significant difference between the perceptions of school paper advisers and campus journalists across all four competency aspects, as indicated by the obtained p-values, which were all below the 0.05 level of significance. Specifically, significant differences were found in Journalistic and Teaching Proficiency ($t = 8.65$, $p = .005$), Mentorship and Coaching ($t = 11.32$, $p = .023$), Contextual Intelligence and Institutional Navigation ($t = 9.43$, $p = .013$), and Ethical and Legal Gatekeeping ($t = 8.99$, $p = .009$). Thus, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of the two groups was rejected for all four aspects.

The findings indicate that school paper advisers generally rated their competencies higher than did the campus journalists, suggesting a consistent perception gap between the two groups. The largest difference was observed in Mentorship and Coaching, indicating that advisers and students differed most in their assessment of the quality, responsiveness, and effectiveness of coaching and mentoring provided. The smallest difference was found in Ethical and Legal Gatekeeping, although the difference remained statistically significant. The results further suggest that while both groups recognized areas of strength in journalistic and ethical practices, campus journalists perceived greater room for improvement in the advisers' competencies, particularly in providing personalized guidance and creating a consistently supportive mentoring environment. This finding is consistent with Quillotes (2025), who emphasized that school paper advisers have the responsibility to guide student journalists in writing, editing, layout, accuracy, ethics, and responsible reporting while avoiding excessive control over student publications. Therefore, strengthening communication, feedback mechanisms, mentoring practices, and student-centered coaching may help reduce the perception gap and make advisers' competencies more evident in the actual experiences of campus journalists.

3.4 Significant Difference on the Perception of the Two Groups of Respondents on the Extent of Competencies of School Paper Advisers With Respect to the Different Aspects in Terms of Their Profile

Findings revealed that none of the personal and professional characteristics of the 54 school paper advisers significantly influenced their perceptions of their competencies across the four aspects. All obtained p-values were greater than the 0.05 level of significance for age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, length of service,

position title, and in-service trainings attended. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted in all cases. The findings indicate that school paper advisers generally assessed their competencies similarly regardless of their age, sex, marital status, educational background, years of service, position, or extent of training. This suggests that their self-perceived competencies are not substantially differentiated by their personal or professional profiles. The findings further indicate that the advisers' journalistic and teaching proficiency, mentorship and coaching, contextual intelligence and institutional navigation, and ethical and legal gatekeeping are perceived consistently across the different profile groups. This finding is consistent with Cainong (2024), who reported that school paper advisers' profiles had no significant relationship with their level of journalistic writing competence.

It is likewise showed that none of the selected personal and family characteristics of the 163 campus journalists significantly affected their perceptions of school paper advisers' competencies. All p-values for age, sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income, fathers' and mothers' educational attainment, and fathers' and mothers' occupation were greater than 0.05 across all four competency aspects. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. The findings indicate that campus journalists generally shared similar perceptions of their advisers' competencies regardless of their individual age, sex, family composition, socioeconomic background, or parents' educational and occupational characteristics. This suggests that the differences in students' ratings are not attributable to their personal or family backgrounds but may instead reflect their common experiences in working with their school paper advisers. Consequently, improvement efforts should focus primarily on adviser practices, particularly in mentoring, communication, publication management, and the application of journalistic and ethical skills, rather than on differences among student characteristics. This finding supports Ripatti-Torniainen and Mikkola (2022), who emphasized the importance of students' actual engagement and experiences in developing journalistic knowledge and applying ethical research practices.

3.5 Level of Work Performance of the School Paper Advisers as Revealed in the Results of Their Individual Performance Commitment and Review

The findings revealed that the 54 school paper advisers demonstrated a Very Satisfactory level of work performance, as reflected in their Individual Performance Commitment and Review (IPCR) ratings. The overall mean rating was 4.31, interpreted as Very Satisfactory, with a standard deviation of 0.291, indicating relatively consistent and homogeneous performance among the respondents. Specifically, 38 advisers (70.4%) obtained Very Satisfactory ratings ranging from 3.50 to 4.49, while 16 advisers (29.6%) received Outstanding ratings ranging from 4.50 to 5.00. No adviser obtained a rating within the Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, or Poor categories. The highest recorded rating was 4.74, while the lowest was 3.78, showing that even the lowest individual rating remained within the Very Satisfactory category.

These findings indicate that school paper advisers consistently performed their assigned duties at a high level based on the formal performance evaluation reflected in their IPCR ratings. The absence of ratings below the Very Satisfactory level suggests that the advisers were able to meet established performance expectations despite their additional responsibilities in managing school publications and mentoring campus journalists. The relatively low standard deviation further demonstrates that the advisers' performance ratings were closely grouped, indicating no substantial variation in their documented work performance. Overall, the findings suggest that school paper advisers demonstrated diligence, competence, and consistent fulfillment of their professional responsibilities, with the majority meeting and a considerable proportion exceeding the expected performance standards.

3.6. Significant Relationship Between the Extent of Competencies of the School Paper Advisers and Their Level of Work Performance

The findings revealed a significant and strong positive relationship between the competencies of school paper advisers and their level of work performance across all four aspects. Journalistic and Teaching Proficiency obtained an r-value of 0.795 ($p = .009$), Mentorship and Coaching obtained 0.812 ($p = .003$), Contextual Intelligence and Institutional Navigation obtained 0.761 ($p = .046$), and Ethical and Legal Gatekeeping obtained the highest r-value of 0.817 ($p = .008$). Since all p-values were below the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between the extent of competencies of school paper advisers and their work performance was rejected. Among the four aspects, Ethical and Legal Gatekeeping and Mentorship and Coaching demonstrated the strongest relationships with work performance, while Contextual Intelligence and Institutional Navigation, although lowest, still showed a strong and statistically significant relationship.

The findings indicate that higher levels of perceived competency among school paper advisers are associated with higher work performance, as reflected in their IPCR ratings. The results suggest that professional competence in journalism, teaching, mentoring, institutional coordination, and ethical and legal practices contributes to the effective performance of advisers in their professional responsibilities. In particular, the strong relationships involving Ethical and Legal Gatekeeping and Mentorship and Coaching emphasize the importance of responsible journalism, effective guidance, and student-centered support in adviser performance. These findings suggest that strengthening the competencies of school paper advisers through targeted professional development, mentoring programs, and continuous training may contribute to improved work performance. However, the result differs

from Tubillo (2024), who found no significant relationship between the assessed competence of newspaper advisers and the school performance of public elementary schools, suggesting that the relationship between adviser competence and performance may vary depending on the specific performance indicators and context examined.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that school paper advisers in the selected upland public schools in Tanay District, Division of Rizal are generally experienced and professionally qualified teachers who demonstrate Much Competent levels of competency based on their self-assessment, while campus journalists perceive them as Moderately Competent. The findings showed significant differences between the perceptions of the two groups across all competency areas, indicating a perception gap that is particularly evident in mentorship and coaching. However, the personal and professional profiles of the school paper advisers, as well as the personal and family profiles of the campus journalists, did not significantly influence their perceptions of adviser competencies. The advisers demonstrated Very Satisfactory work performance based on their IPCR ratings, with no respondent receiving a rating below Very Satisfactory. More importantly, all four competency areas demonstrated significant and strong positive relationships with work performance, confirming that higher competency levels are associated with better documented work performance.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that school administrators provide continuous and targeted professional development for school paper advisers, particularly in contextual intelligence and institutional navigation, publication management, digital journalism, editing, layout, production workflow, and student-centered mentorship. Training programs should also strengthen ethical and legal practices in campus journalism while providing advisers with adequate institutional resources, time, and administrative support. School paper advisers are encouraged to establish regular feedback mechanisms with campus journalists to address the perception gap and improve the quality of coaching and mentoring. A network or learning community of school paper advisers may also be established to facilitate the sharing of effective practices, resources, and solutions to common publication challenges. The proposed action plan may be implemented to strengthen adviser competencies and sustain their high level of work performance, while future researchers may conduct similar studies in other districts and include additional variables, schools, and performance indicators to further validate the findings.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The author affirms that no conflicts of interest exist in relation to this study. The research was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical principles for human-participant research, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, allowing participants to withdraw at any stage without consequence, and protecting participant confidentiality through anonymous, secure, and aggregated data management. Because the study examined psychological well-being, all research procedures were non-invasive and implemented with appropriate measures to reduce the risk of discomfort. Participants were informed of available support services should the need arise. Furthermore, the necessary institutional approvals were obtained for the administration of the research instruments and access to relevant academic records.

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