EVALUATION OF VOYAGE:
THE OFFICIAL STUDENT PUBLICATION
OF LYCEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES UNIVERSITY–LAGUNA

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Abstract

This study is about the students' evaluation of Voyage. In this study, the researchers aimed to evaluate the paper in terms of attractiveness, comprehensibility, acceptability, self-involvement, and call to action to find out the readability level of the articles in the school paper and solicit feedback from experts, so as to relay the results to the editorial board of the school paper. The demographic profile of the students was gathered. The researchers categorized the elements of the school publication according to the terms to be evaluated. The students agreed that the publication is attractive; however, some improvements need to be considered. In terms of comprehensibility, the test results shows that the articles in the school publication can be understood by most of the students, and an average grade level between 6th to 10th is required for the readers to understand the content of the school publication. The students also agreed that the school publication contains things that are confusing and offensive. They also said that they are not convinced that the school paper is intended for students like them. This statement was validated through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and was supported by the survey results and feedback from experts. The students also said that the placement of the articles were complicated. They also agreed that the publication contains things contrary to their belief and that the school publication does not call for any action from the students. In summary, the students want Voyage to publish news about the school and not about information they already see in television, the Internet, other print media, and can be heard over the radio. All these statements from the students were supported by an FGD, validated by a survey questionnaire, and were verified by experts.

INTRODUCTION

Communication can be defined in different ways. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, communication "is the act or process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feelings, and the like to someone else." Ongkiko and Flor (2003) define communication as "a process by which a source sends a message to a receiver by means of some channel to produce a response from the receiver in accordance with the intention of the source."

There are different kinds of communication, one of which is the mass communication. This type of communication is highly structured and is received by a large number of audiences. The content of this type of communication is created by many people. Example is a newspaper; there will be editors, feature writers, layout artists, photographers and contributors. All of these parts will influence the totality of the output as a whole and each of their ideas, thoughts and opinions will influence the newspaper.

Mass communication is different from public communication in terms of its feedbacks. There is a small interaction between the sender and the receiver of the message, and that little reaction is delayed such as writing to the editor. This lack of feedback affects the message. In order for the mass audience to understand it, mass communication should be kept simple (Hybels and Weaver II, 2001).

According to Snavely (2001), mass communication is a transaction. It involves three principles: first, people engaged in communication sending messages continuously and simultaneously; second, communication events have a past, a present, and a future; and third, participants in a communication play certain roles. Feedbacks may be interpreted by different

people differently; these different perceptions affect the communication results.

Feedbacks are the final component in the verbal-nonverbal communication process in response to the receiver which may involve either reciprocity or compensation. The behavioral display and the pre-attuned reception is an advantage to the species only if the response to the situation tends to be adaptive (Buck and VanLear, 2002).

Part of mass communication is the production of materials that disseminate information in forms of writing and print such as magazines, newspapers, journals, and folios. Student publications are part of this category of mass communication. Production of student publications is of no joke. This requires good writing skills for writers, good analytical skills for editors, and good taste for images, colors, and design for photographers and graphic artists.

According to Anderson (2002), anything that is lightweight, portable, and disposable is considered print media. Publications printed on paper and circulated as physical copies in forms were called books, newspapers, magazines, and newsletters. They hold informative and entertaining content that is of general or special interest. They are published once or daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, bimonthly or quarterly. Their competitors include electronic, broadcast, and Internet media. Today, many books, newspapers, magazines and newsletters publish digital electronic editions on the Internet.

Student publications are newspapers produced by students of an educational institution. Traditionally, this covers local and university news. Also, it may be considered as an extracurricular activity, but most of the time, it is offered in journalism classes (Cass, 2002).

Lyceum of the Philippines University–Laguna (LPU-L) also takes pride in producing winning student publication. *Voyage* is the university's official student publication. It has been up for roughly 12 years. According to Ms. Felisse Marianne San Juan, the adviser of *Voyage*, they are so proud of the school newspaper because it is the first ever UNESCO-accredited student publication in the Philippines. Also, they are part of the Association of Tertiary Press Adviser of Southern Tagalog, Association of Luzonwide Tertiary Press Adviser. Ms. San Juan also added that they joined and won in competitions like the Philippine Luzonwide Higher Education Press Conference and the Regional Higher Education Press Conference. As to date, *Voyage* houses 16 editorial staff and is already producing five major publications in one year, namely broadsheets, tabloids, newspapers, magazines, and folios. She also said that *Voyage* is part of the school's marketing strategy wherein articles written attract students from outside LPU-L to be part of the Lyceum system.

Voyage was first released in 2002, and since then, according to Ms. Gerby Muya, the former adviser of *Voyage*, it has not been evaluated to determine its effectiveness among its primary audience which is composed of the students in Lyceum of the Philippines University–Laguna. Evaluation of the student publication will ensure that the content of the produced materials will suit the stakeholders group. It will tell the editorial board how to improve preliminary versions of messages and materials.

The researchers came up with this study to know the satisfaction of the students in *Voyage*, the official student publication of Lyceum of the Philippines University–Laguna. It is important to know if the paper gratifies the needs of the clients, and if not, there will have some recommendations for the publication to be improved or changed.

These statements are with significant relation to this study that attempts to evaluate *Voyage* in terms of acceptability, comprehensibility, attractiveness, self-involvement, and call to action.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

According to a study by Mangalino et al. (2011) entitled "Design and Assessment of Communication Campaign Materials on Plagiarism Among the Selected Students of Lyceum of the Philippines–Laguna", there are five components of effectiveness. These are attractiveness, comprehensibility, acceptability, self-involvement, and call to action. Attractiveness measures the level of interest of the audience. It answers what the audience liked in the material and their preferences. Comprehensibility, on the other hand, determines whether the content of the material is understood by the audience. It is the determinant that dictates whether the material is suitable for the audience or not. Acceptability is the measure by which audiences decide whether the material has something false or offensive that they perceive. The fourth component which is self-involvement tells if the audiences feel that the material is intended and made for them, and lastly, call to action or persuasion determines if the material can pursue its audience to do what it is asking them to do.

In pretesting, the acceptability of the material is earned if it scores 60 percent or above in each given component. The material needs modification if some components earned 60 percent and some did not and the material should be rejected if it does not earn the 60 percent acceptability score. It is also assumed true for evaluation and assessment of different communication materials.

Communication evaluation is a research procedure that measures the effectiveness of the conceptualization, design, implementation, and

overall components of the communication material. It is a valid basis for modifications and revisions claims to improve the material evaluated.

According to Sen (2001), a student publication is vital, though not necessary for the growth of an educational institution for several reasons. It improves communication between all groups in the institution giving both students and faculty the knowledge and understanding of school issues not otherwise available. It can also do the same for parents who read copies brought home. Aside from that, it conveys an image of the school to the community and helps silence rumors that often arise in absence of information. School publications also help in interpreting school rules and regulations, and providing feedbacks on student reactions. It is also an effective way of checking the student council and maintaining order by reporting violations of school rules and regulations. Another purpose of a school publication is that it facilitates the educational process through stories on academic subjects and courses. It also helps aspiring student-writers to cultivate their skills in writing and improves students' reading habits.

A good newspaper includes accurate information and facts to the readers based on their wants and needs. Journalists on staff or freelance writers use simple, easy, and non-technical language in writing articles intended for the general public. McQuail (2001) explained the importance of newspaper as provision of information about events and conditions in society and the world. He indicates the relations of power, facilitating innovation, adaptation, and progress. He also said that it is a correlation because it includes explaining, interpreting, and commenting on the meaning of events and information, providing support for established authority and norms, and also socializing. It also provides entertainment and is used as a mobilization tool for campaigning societal objectives in different spheres.

The material to be evaluated must be produced before the conduct

of the pretesting or evaluation proper then be able to choose the appropriate type(s) of respondents through a sampling method and secure their significant number. After so, draft test instruments (discussion guides, questionnaires) and determine the variables to be measured. If determining the stock knowledge of respondents plays importance to the study, a pretest could be conducted. In case more interviewers are needed, recruitment and appropriate training should also be included in the program. There are cases when researchers should expose the respondents to the printed materials (10 minutes for posters and book covers, 20 to 25 minutes for pamphlets and brochures, and days for booklets and books). As an alternative approach, exposure to materials could be done in two separate environments—natural and arranged; hence, separate set of respondents could be organized for each. Also, in case of two or more versions of printed material are to be pretested, respondents would be asked to make comparisons (paired comparison) and indicate their preferences (rank order). If a pretest has been conducted, a posttest could also be self-administered (after exposure to the material) through a questionnaire or interview then conduct a focused group discussion about the material for comprehensibility.   Lastly, conduct knowledge retention test through self-administered questionnaire, if still seen necessary (Johnson, 2002).

Evaluation should be done after the participants have been exposed to the material. This will determine the behavior of the audience towards the material and it will be the root of deciding on its acceptability, visuals, and strategies. Evaluation is successful when surveyed participants show that the material is comprehensible and accepted by its intended audience (Larivee, 2002).

Surveys assume that people know how they feel. But sometimes, they really do not. Sometimes, it takes listening to the opinions of others in a

small and safe group setting before they form thoughts and opinions. Focus groups are well suited for those situations. Focus groups can reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight. When well executed, a focus group creates an accepting environment that puts participants at ease, allowing then to thoughtfully answer questions in their own words and add meaning to their answers. Surveys are good for collecting information about people's attributes and attitudes, but if one needs to understand things at a deeper level, then use a focus group.

According to Elliot (2005), a focus group is a small group of six to 10 people led through an open discussion by a skilled moderator. She said that a group needs to be large enough to generate rich discussion but not so large that some participants are left out. The ideal amount of time to set aside for a focus group is anywhere from 45 to 90 minutes. Beyond that, most groups are not productive and it becomes an imposition on participant time. Focus groups are structured around a set of carefully predetermined questions, usually no more than 10; but the discussion is free-flowing. Ideally, participant comments will stimulate and influence the thinking and sharing of others. She also said that in order for all participants' comments to be understandable and useful, they must be boiled down to essential information using a systematic and verifiable process. Begin by transcribing all focus group tapes and inserting notes into transcribed material where appropriate.

In a study by Gruta (2012) entitled "Evaluating a Development-Oriented Community Newspaper: A Content Analysis of the Los Baños Times," it evaluated the Los Baños Times as a development-oriented community newspaper through content analysis using the Krippendorff inter-coder reliability test. From 1983 to 2011, there were 28 archived issues of the Los Baños Times that were used as a sample. The research assessed the

newspaper's fulfillment of its goals as a development-oriented community newspaper, and the prevalence of the development journalism practice. The study also identified what development news categories in the newspaper were most and least salient, relating these to the newspaper's goals. The most salient development categories in the newspaper per attention were Political and Infrastructure. Least attention was given to how-to's, Consumerism, and Science and Technology. The most salient category in terms of prominence was Political and Ecology, and the Environment. Least prominent were Education, Health and Population, Ecology and the Environment, and Community Development. Ranking of these categories indicated low development-orientation and a decline in the community newspaper function of the Los Baños Times. In terms of the salience of development writing characteristics, development writing techniques, and development journalism approaches, the Los Baños Times was found to adhere to its claim of being a development-oriented community newspaper. This indicates that the development journalism advocacy is indeed practiced. The newspaper was also found to perform most of the identified functions of a community newspaper. Per the level of development-orientation and community newspaper function, the Los Baños Times only had low to moderate levels for both roles. This was shown by the aggregate space allocation percentage of each variable indicating development-orientation and community newspaper function.

An undergraduate research by Casapao (2012) aimed to find out if Agoncillo Ngayon, a community newspaper in Agoncillo, Batangas is an effective tool in communicating information for development. The study utilized the case study method. An in-depth interview of key informants, man-on-the-street interview, and review of all the issues of Agoncillo Ngayon were conducted. This is to gather the needed information such as operation, objectives, editorial policies, problems and challenges encountered, and how

these were addressed and their effects on readers. The respondents of the study are the staffs of the community newspaper, the former mayor, five barangay captains, and 50 persons who belong to different sectors of the municipality. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data.

Results showed that the potential of Agoncillo Ngayon as an effective tool for communicating information for development has not yet been optimized. At present, the newspaper is just being utilized as a medium for the local government to report its projects and programs. Also, because of low circulation, the community newspaper does not provide access and participation of the community to the community newspaper.

However, the researcher concluded that there is still a greater chance for the Agoncillo Ngayon to be an effective tool for communicating information for development. A proof of Agoncillo Ngayon's potential was the willingness of the 50 persons asked to learn issues concerning the community.

In 2004, Lopez conducted a study that was set to determine the frequency, placement, treatment, and space allocation of developmental articles in the two community newspapers and find out its effects on readers' perception. Nine representatives from community newspapers in San Pablo City were interviewed to determine the two community newspapers with the most number of circulations. The Morning Chronicle and Laguna Express were used in the content analysis. One hundred residents of San Pablo City served as participants in the survey which includes questions on socio-demographic background and the residents' perception of community newspapers.

In terms of the number and placement of developmental articles, Morning Chronicle and Laguna Express prioritized developmental issues. In

terms of space allocation, most of the spaces of community newspapers were still allotted to greetings and advertisements.

Majority of the participants read community newspapers because they learned something from them and they acknowledged its importance in the development of the country.

Napiza (2007) employed a survey research design consisted of five parts: socio-demographic profile of the respondents; their reading behavior; their information needs; the evaluation of community newspapers in terms of attractiveness, acceptability, content, understandability, and self-involvement; and their awareness on local issues. The respondents of the study were arepresentatives of the reading public of San Pablo City. There were a total of 143 respondents, selected through snowball sampling.

Generally, respondents perceived the community newspapers as moderately attractive, moderately acceptable, had satisfactory content, moderately understandable, and promoted high self-involvement from the readers.

Readers of the community newspapers identified community news as the information they have learned from reading the community newspapers, and perceived it to be important. In general, the respondents believed that community newspapers were effective in increasing their awareness regarding local issues.

In 2004, Latido conducted a research about how the socio-demographic characteristics of high school teachers in Malvar, Batangas affect their Internet use. A self-administered questionnaire was used to determine the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, Internet use, and attitudes toward the Internet. Frequency counts, ranks, percentages, and Chi-square Test of Independence were used to analyze gathered data.

Results showed that 40 percent of the respondents used the Internet as one of their information sources. Though majority (60 percent) of the respondents does not use the Internet, generally, high school teachers have a positive attitude towards the Internet.

Sta. Ana (2008) also conducted a research on socio-demographic characteristics of selected private high school teachers in San Pedro, Laguna and their attitude towards computer assisted instruction (CAI). In this study, she used the Chi-square Test to assess if there is a relationship between the socio-demographic profiles of the respondents. The Chi-square Test at 95 percent level of significance proved that there is no relationship between the respondents' age and gender, and their attitude towards CAI. However, teaching experience and computer ownership were found related to their attitude. It can be concluded that the more experienced the teacher, the more positive is their attitude towards CAI. In addition, the more the high school teachers own a computer at home, the more positive is the attitude towards CAI. The same statistical method was used by Diezmo (2012) in her study which aimed to determine how the residents of Orani, Bataan view the print media. Data gathered from 100 respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Chi-square statistical method. Respondents were generally male, between 51 to 60 years old, married, high school graduates, and with an annual income of more or less Php50,000. There was no relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and their perception of the print media.

These studies are in one way or another significant to the study of the researchers. However, the study of the researchers is different from the studies cited above because the latter focuses on the design and content of the school publication, and the measure of its effectiveness among the students of LPU–Laguna.
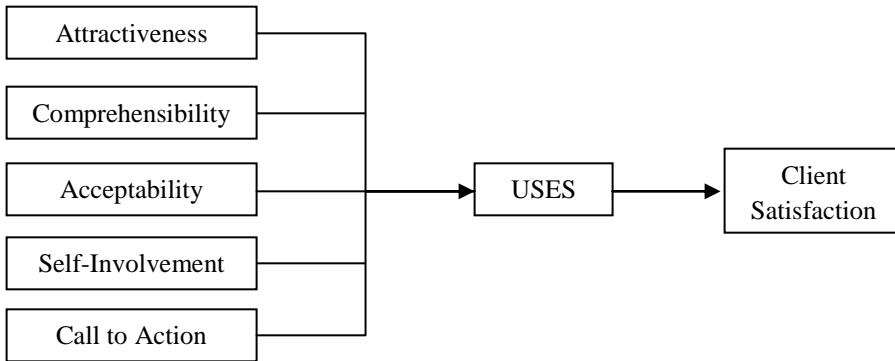
Theoretical Framework

Figure 1. Theoretical framework of the study

The theoretical framework that the researchers used was Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch's Uses and Gratification Theory which focused on audience as active seekers of specific media and content to achieve certain results or gratification that satisfy their personal needs (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008). The research used an audience-centered approach wherein the clients of *Voyage*, specifically the students, evaluated the paper in terms of attractiveness, comprehensibility, acceptability, self-involvement, and call to action so as to determine whether the school paper gratifies their needs as students of the institution. This model claims that students use the school newspaper to satisfy their various needs in relation to talking about institutional issues.
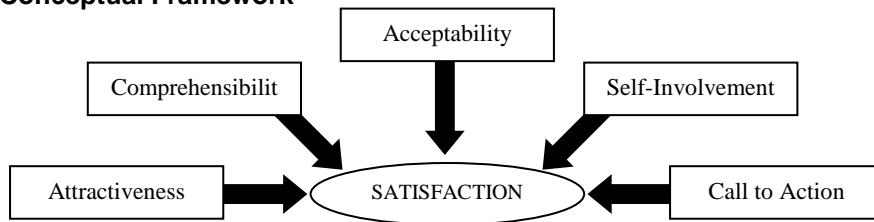
Conceptual Framework

Figure 2. Conceptual framework of the study

The concept of this research is based on the Uses and Gratification Theory. It aims to evaluate whether *Voyage* gratifies the needs of students for a student publication. The variables studied are attractiveness, comprehensibility, acceptability, self-involvement, and call to action. Under the attractiveness are the questions which asked about its texts, images, titles, and also the arrangement of the articles. In comprehensibility, it aims to know if the articles are comprehensible to the students. There are questions that were asked after reading random articles. While in acceptability, it aims to know if there are things that are confusing to the students, offensive or intended. For the self-involvement and call to action, there are questions asking if there are articles in the paper which are opposed to the beliefs of the students or asking the students to do something, respectively.

These are the factors that affect the gratification of needs of students for a student publication. These are indicators whether the students are satisfied or not with the student publication. These are elements of effectiveness wherein attractiveness can be measured through the appearance of the paper while comprehensibility, acceptability, call to action, and self-involvement can be measured through the impact of the paper to the students in such factors.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to evaluate *Voyage*, Vol. 3, No.4 (broadsheet) published for the School Year 2013-2014, the official student publication of Lyceum–Laguna. Specifically, it aimed to evaluate the paper in terms of attractiveness, comprehensibility, acceptability, self-involvement and call to action, find out the readability level of the articles in the school paper, solicit feedback from experts, and provide recommendation on the improvement of future issues of *Voyage*.

METHOD

Research Design

The researchers used the descriptive research to come up with the evaluation of *Voyage*, the official student publication of Lyceum of the Philippines University–Laguna. According to Devin Kowalczyk, descriptive research is a study designed to depict the participants in an accurate way. There are three ways a researcher can go about doing a descriptive research project and one of these ways is survey. He said that a survey comes in different flavors: it can be by interviewing people face to face or handing out questionnaires to fill out. He also added that surveys are useful because they do not take as long as an observational study since the researchers are asking people about themselves instead of spending weeks observing them.

Quantitative research was used for gathering the responses of the students in evaluating *Voyage* through the use of a survey questionnaire answerable by strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. However, qualitative research design was used for the analysis of the FGD and one-on-one interview with experts. The survey questionnaire was distributed to students of Lyceum–Laguna and one-on-one interviews are conducted to experts working in the field of journalism or related. The study was a combination of atomistic and holistic approach. Holistic study means studying the whole of something while atomistic study, on the other hand, is studying all the parts and how they work together to make the whole. Atomistic and holistic approach is studying how messages move in the brain to understand a person's thinking, in this case, evaluating the paper as a whole and breaking down personalities in sub-parts such as transactional analysis. This now is the evaluation of the student publication based on the categories provided in the research.

Participants of the Study

The respondents of the study were the students of Lyceum of the Philippines University–Laguna. Using the Yamane's Formula:

$$n = N\frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n   = number of samples

N   = total population

e   = margin of error

With a five-percent margin of error, the researchers gathered a sample per course, per department to answer the survey questionnaire. They used this formula to come up with the sample that would participate in their study because if they randomly selected half of the total population, it would not come up with a credible answer because one department cannot be taken credible to represent the whole institution. The results were rounded up to the nearest tenths, so the researchers can come up with a whole number. These participants were enrolled in LPU–L during the second semester SY 2013-2014 and were not freshmen students. Two representatives from each college participated in the FGD; these participants were selected through stratified random sampling. A total of 12 participants chosen through purposive selection joined the focus group discussion. Four experts namely Perry Mallari of *Manila Times,* Sol Luzana of *The Kipling Times*, Ricarda Villar of *LB Times,* and Jassed Cabrera, a freelance layout artist, were interviewed for experts' feedback. These experts studied Communication-related courses and have been working in the field of writing and layout designing for print media for three years or above.

Out of 348, 8.62 percent was from the College of Allied Medicine, 11.20 percent was from the College of Arts and Sciences, 17.52 percent from the College of Business and Accountancy, 8.90 percent from the College of Computer Science, 22.70 percent was from the College of Engineering, and dominantly, 31.03 percent was from the College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management. The table below shows the sample size gathered through the same stratified random sampling that the researchers used per department to answer the survey questionnaire.

Table 1. Sample size to be surveyed according to the Yamane's formula

DEPARTMENT	COURSE	POPULATION	TOTAL POPULATION	SAMPLE SIZE
College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management	BS ITTM	367	808	108
	BS IHM-CLOKA	149		
	BS IHM-CLOHS	136		
	BS IHM-HRA	118		
	BS IHM – CAKO	115		
	AIHM-CAKO	61		
	AIHM-HRS	37		
	AITTM	28		
	BSHM	1		
College of Engineering	BS IE	220	592	79
	BS ECE	201		
	BS CPE	128		
	BS EE	109		
	BS CE	38		
College of Business and Accountancy	BSBA MKT	166	454	61
	BSBA MA	160		
	BSA	134		
	BSBA OM	82		
	BSBA LM	3		
College of Arts and Sciences	ABComm	150	293	39
	AB MMA	119		
	BS Psych	87		
College of Computer Studies	BS IT	221	229	31
	BS CS	50		
	ACT	29		
College of Allied Medicine	BS MED	118	222	30
	BSN	92		
	BS RT	64		
	BS PHARMA	24		
	TOTAL		2598	348

Demographic profile of survey participants

This part presents the demographic profile of the students who took part in answering the survey questionnaire. This includes their age and year level.

a. Age

Table 2 shows the age of the participants. From 348 students, 18 to 20 is the dominant age.

Table 2. Demographic profile of participants according to age

Age	Frequency	Percent
15 to 17	113	32.47
18 to 20	194	55.75
21 above	41	11.78

b. Year Level

Table 3 shows the year level of the participants. Mostly, fourth year students were able to answer to survey questionnaire.

Table 3. Demographic profile of participants according to year level

Year Level	Frequency	Percent
1st	0	0
2nd	117	33.62
3rd	94	27.01
4th	124	35.63
5th	13	3.74

Data Gathering Tool

The study used survey questionnaires following the Likert Scale, a 10-item comprehensibility test, FGD guide questions, and interview guide for

the feedbacks of experts regarding the evaluation of the school publication. The survey questionnaire is validated by the fact that it is the same survey questionnaire used by third year AB Communication students in pretesting their community paper, the *Lycean Post*, in terms of attractiveness, comprehensibility, acceptability, self-involvement, and call to action. These survey questionnaires were then distributed to the actual participants. Choices ranged from strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree that were answered by the participants to know their evaluation of Voyage. The first part of the survey questionnaire was their demographic profile, the second part was divided into four parts based on the categories for evaluation, and the last part was a 10-item comprehensibility test wherein articles are randomly selected and questions were formulated to test the comprehensibility of the students towards the articles.

The researchers also held a focus group discussion and an interview with four experts to solicit feedback evaluating *Voyage.*

Procedure

After carefully studying the research, the researchers consulted their mentors for approval of the topic. After then, they asked for a copy of the questionnaire from Ms. Gerby Muya, the professor for Print Production where the *Lycean Post* is produced. As the questionnaires were already validated, the researchers distributed the survey questionnaires to 348 selected students of LPU–Laguna and were answered by the students. The completely filled out questionnaires were collected by the researchers.

They also conducted an FGD through purposive selection of participants. This method is qualitative which purpose is to obtain in-depth information on whether the school publication serves its clients, the students of the institution, well. The discussion was more than a question-answer

interaction. The idea is that the members of the group discuss the topic among themselves with guidance from the facilitator. The facilitator's sole responsibility is to ask questions and is not allowed to say her personal biases. All the participants have skills or interests related to journalism.

The FGD techniques used in this discussion were focus research, formulation of appropriate questions, and exploration of controversial topics. The focus research is the development of relevant hypotheses by exploring greater in-depth interaction among different individuals to investigate a problem and its possible cause. The question formulation as itself is structured. It helps the facilitator in guiding the group members and exploration of controversial topic includes the breaking of the tendency of people to center their opinions on common ones. This technique proved that opinions in reality are more diversified by explicitly soliciting other views from the group members during the FGD proper.

As this topic is highly sensitive since it involves an accredited school organization, participants were selected carefully. As group members may hesitate to air their feelings and opinions freely, one remedy that the researchers came up with is the selection of participants who may know each other but were not aware that they are selected participants of the FGD. The participants were also allowed to introduce themselves in any name they want, even not under their own to ensure confidentiality. This kind of strategy works well in some cases like that of the one in Tanzania and Nepal wherein the adolescent health section of WHO/HQ has developed a Narrative Research Method which is very well suited to help adolescents develop narratives and role plays about their interpretations of sexuality which can profitably precede the single sex.

This FGD has determined objectives which are as follows: (1) to evaluate *Voyage* in terms of attractiveness, acceptability, comprehensibility,

self-involvement, and call to action; (2) to know the opinions of students towards their school publication; and (3) to find out whether the student publication gratifies the needs of its client.

For the interview with experts, the researchers were able to have an in-depth interview with four experts who answered a set of questions provided by the researchers. The answers then served as a validation of the survey results which validated the focus group discussion done by the researchers.

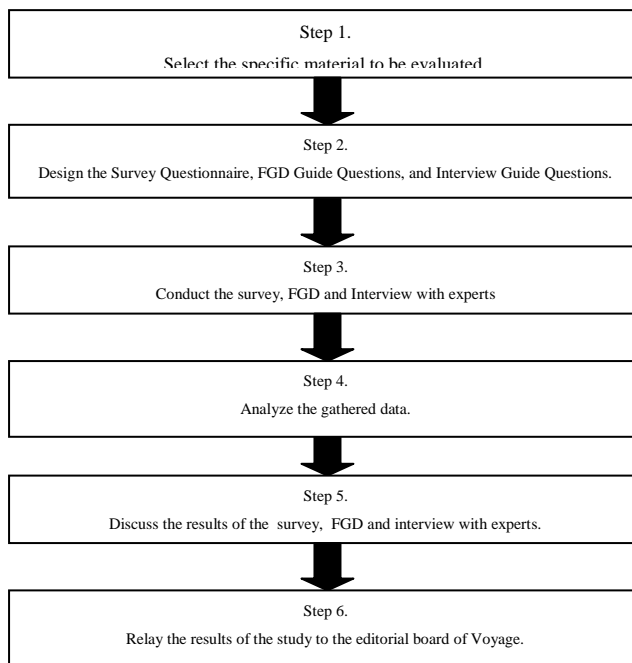The figure below shows the detailed procedure on how the researchers conducted the study:

Step 1. Select the specific material to be evaluated
Step 2. Design the Survey Questionnaire, FGD Guide Questions, and Interview Guide Questions.
Step 3. Conduct the survey, FGD and Interview with experts
Step 4. Analyze the gathered data.
Step 5. Discuss the results of the survey, FGD and interview with experts.
Step 6. Relay the results of the study to the editorial board of Voyage.

Figure 3. Step-by-step procedure in doing the study

Data Analysis

The data were presented through the use of tables and were analyzed through the use of formula. The researchers used frequency-percentage and weighted mean to compute the gathered data. The verbatim comments were also included in the discussion of the results.

For the demographic profile data, frequency percentage was used.

To determine the evaluation of the students based on the four categories, attractiveness, acceptability, self-involvement, and call to action, the weighted mean and standard deviation were applied.

Interpretation of weighted means:

Scale	Verbal Interpretation
1.0 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree
1.50 – 2.49	Disagree
2.50 – 3.49	Agree
3.50 – 4.00	Strongly Agree

To determine the comprehensibility level of the school publication, the researchers used Bertrand's (1987) 60-percent rule for comprehensibility. This rule suggests that if the number of all participants who took the comprehensibility test got 60 percent or above correct answers, the articles are easily understandable. If the articles got lower than the 60-percent passing rate, the writers should consider trying to change their articles. To compute for the comprehensibility rate of the articles, the formula is as follows:

$$\textbf{Comprehensibility Rating} = \frac{\text{Total No. of Corect Answers}}{\text{Total No. of Items x No. of Respondents}} \left[100\right]$$

For the readability test, the researchers used the SMOG readability test. According to Bakker (2005), McLaughlin validated his formula against the McCall-Crabbs passages where he used a 100 percent correct-score criterion, whereas most formulas test for around 50 to 75 percent comprehension. The steps to find the readability level of an article are as follows:

Step 1: Take the entire text to be assessed.

Step 2: Count 10 sentences in a row near the beginning, 10 in the middle, and 10 in the end for a total of 30 sentences.

Step 3: Count every word with three or more syllables in each group of sentences, even if the same word appears more than once.

Step 4: Calculate the square root of the number arrived at in Step 3 and round it off to nearest 10.

Step 5: Add 3 to the figure arrived at in Step 4 to know the SMOG Grade, i.e., the reading grade that a person must have reached if he is to understand fully the text assessed.

Table 4. SMOG readability test analysis

SMOG Conversion Table	
Total Polysyllabic Word Count	**Approximate Grade Level (+1.5 Grades)**
1-6	5
7-12	6
13-20	7
21-30	8
31-42	9
43-56	10
57-72	11
73-90	12
91-110	13

111-132	14
133-156	15
157-182	16
183-210	17
211-240	18

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Below are the results of the data gathered:

Student evaluation of *Voyage* through survey

This part presents the result of the survey questionnaire answered by 348 students evaluating *Voyage* in terms of attractiveness, comprehensibility, attractiveness, self-involvement, and call to action.

Attractiveness

The survey evaluation results show that the students of Lyceum of the Philippines University–Laguna *agreed* that *Voyage* is attractive with a composite mean of 2.50. However, during the FGD conducted by the researchers, some comments were brought up by the participants who can be given attention in order to improve the student publication.

All the participants of the FGD agreed that the typeface and font size of the school publication is inconsistent. The publication used more than three family of fonts in the body text and titles of the articles. A simple typeface will allow people to read a large block of text easily. Fonts are a key component in showing the hierarchy of a design (Oleck, 2011). Also, they all agreed that the pictures used in the student publication were not so pleasing to the eyes. These comments about the photos also need to be given attention to because on a study conducted by Jennifer Ehidiamen (2010), it is said that a photograph in newspaper speaks more than a thousand words.

No formal education is required to understand a picture. Photographs are therefore able to break through literacy barrier to effectively communicate a message. It is a universal language; it is just as equally important to be very careful on photos as a journalist is careful on his/her articles. Photos should be sharp and clear. If one's photos are dull and vague, the tendency is that readers and advertisers will not be interested in his/her articles. Especially on the front cover, readers and advertisers will not look beyond an amateur cover design.

The FGD participants also observed that the layout of the school publication was not so convincing. In Guity Novin's book (2012), he said that the layout design is more than just a design; it is a visual communication. Newspaper, magazine, book, and other paper media layout designers not only must make the layout visually appealing to the eye, but they must also tell and show the importance of the story, the text, and the message through their designs. Stories and photographs are not the only elements that convey a context to a reader; a good design suggests a context, too.

One of the participants suggested that the use of "rotated" logo was punishable by law and other participants agreed to it, considering it a copyright infringement. This can be found in Chapter XVII Section 216 of the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines which states that any person infringing a right protected under this law shall be held liable.

According to the interview with Ms. Villar, the citation or disclaimer in the photo should not be "from Google Images" because Google is a search engine and is not the owner of the photo, and she verified the comment of the FGD participants about the rotation of logos and images. She also said that *Voyage* has a lot of pages but the contents are unoriginal. She said that it would be better to produce an eight-page publication with original contents

than a 12-page broadsheet containing news that are also published in local and national papers.

In an interview with Mr. Mallari, he said that the layout editor of the publication did not utilize the spaces, but rather, just placed articles to fit the pages without considering the amount of white spaces visible in the area that distracts the readers. Mr. Luzano also said in his interview that the articles were already dragging and were too many.

The table on the following page shows the evaluation of survey participants in terms of attractiveness and its verbal interpretation.

Table 5. Survey results according to attractiveness

ATTRACTIVENESS		
TEXT	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
The letters in the articles of the school paper are just enough.	3.11	Agree
The letters in the articles of the school paper are big.	2.73	Agree
The letters in the articles of the school paper are too big.	2.36	Disagree
The letters in the articles of the school paper are small.	2.29	Disagree
The letters in the articles of the school paper are too small.	2.16	Disagree
IMAGES		
The photos are too small.	2.96	Agree
The photos are colorful.	2.92	Agree
The photos are just right.	2.91	Agree
The photos are too big.	2.80	Agree
The photos are supportive of the content.	2.23	Disagree
The photos are clear.	1.27	Strongly Disagree
The photos are in sharp focus.	1.03	Strongly Disagree
TITLES		
The titles of the articles are too big.	2.93	Agree
The title in the headline is too small.	2.89	Agree
The titles of the articles are just enough.	2.86	Agree
The title in the headline is just right.	2.82	Agree
The titles of the articles are too small.	2.81	Agree
The title in the headline is too big.	2.68	Agree
ARRANGEMENT		
The arrangement of the visuals including all the colors, texts, and images are concise.	2.99	Agree

Some of the images, texts, and colors are not pleasing to the eyes.	2.67	Agree
The arrangement of the visuals including all the colors, texts, and images are supportive to the content.	2.18	Disagree
The overall arrangement of the visuals including the colors, texts and images are concise.	1.43	Strongly Agree
COMPOSITE MEAN	**2.50**	**Agree**

Legend   1.0-1.49 **Strongly Disagree**   1.50-2.49 **Disagree**   2.50-3.49 **Agree**   3.50-4.00 **Strongly Agree**

Comprehensibility

Following Bertrand's 60-percent rule, the 10 randomly selected articles in the school publication got a 73.01 percent comprehensibility rate. Meaning to say, the articles in the school publication are understandable by readers.

This is supported by the result of the SMOG Readability Index which showed that most of the articles in the student publication can be read and understood by students between seventh and tenth grade. Most of the articles analyzed had word counts ranging from 200 to 600 words and 10 to 70 sentences long.

However, FGD participants believe that the photos are not related to the articles. The FGD participants also noticed some errors on the use of jargons in sports articles. This led them to the inference that the writers possibly lack knowledge and research in writings.

According to the interview with Mr. Mallari, he said that the articles in the student publication are comprehensible. However, the placement of the articles per section is confusing and not clear. The editorial board should put more information rather than website screenshots. Mr. Cabrera said that the design is important but the readers will judge the student publication by how

much new stuff the board gives them. Mr. Luzano also said that the student publication may already be mistaken for a national paper because the articles that it contains are more of local and national news than school news.

Ms. Villar said in her interview that the placement of the opinion page was too early and the articles were featured. The student publication was supposed to be a newspaper but the editorial board used magazine format, which is disconnected from its purpose. The Development Communication page contains articles that are not about social change, catalyst for social change. The interviewee said that the editorial board might not have enough knowledge in writing a development communication article.

Below is the table that shows the SMOG readability test index that the researchers gathered from the study and the comprehensibility test scores.

Table 6. SMOG readability index of 10 randomly selected articles

SMOG Readability Index Results	
ARTICLE TITLE	**SMOG INDEX**
Psych Behind the Moves	10
In the wake of Yolanda: Lyceans extend help…	9.8
RIP Printing	9.3
Ald Da Good Things	9.1
The Rise of the Shelf of the E-books	8.8
Beauty and the B	8.7
Lycean Takes Home Ms. IECEP Crown	8.6
Pork Chopped	7.9
Anti Genesis	6.9
"Put*S^!n@!!!"	6.7

Below is the table that shows the Comprehensibility Test Scores that the researchers gathered:

Table 7. Comprehensibility test scores

COMPREHENSIBILITY		
Number of Item	**Number of Students with right answers**	**Number of Students with wrong answers**
1	239	199
2	337	11
3	49	308
4	348	0
5	314	34
6	204	144
7	304	44
8	295	53
9	311	37
10	149	199
Total	**2541**	**939**

Acceptability

The survey results show that the publication is unacceptable in terms of contents and the purpose of the paper is not clear to the writers. The FGD participants all said that some of the articles in the school paper are biased and most, if not all articles in the publications, are uninteresting.

The FGD participants also agreed to the fact that the student publication does not cater to the needs of the students for a publication because there are very few articles about the school that are included in the publication. Most articles published were local or national news which can already be seen on television, read over the Internet or national papers, and heard over radios.

In an interview with Mr. Mallari, he said that having a student publication in the school is very useful only if it gratifies the need of the students for a student publication. Mr. Cabrera also said that the use of something depends upon the demand of the user. In this case, this student publication may only be used as a source of information for a time. He used

a poster as an example. A poster is only useful as a poster until the event it promotes happen. After that, the user will determine what to do with it, if may be recycled or put into trash. Mr. Villar on the other hand said that the usefulness of the paper depends on how much it costs.

The table below shows the survey evaluation of the participants in terms of acceptability.

Table 8. Survey results according to acceptability

ACCEPTABILITY	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
The school paper contains things that are confusing.	2.80	Agree
The school paper contains things that are offensive.	2.64	Agree
The school paper is intended for students like you.	1.78	Disagree
COMPOSITE MEAN	**2.41**	**Disagree**

Self-Involvement

The result of the survey questionnaire shows that the publication contains something contrary to the belief of the participants (Composite Mean: 2.95; Verbal Interpretation: Agree). However, only 1.15 percent or four out of 348 participants provided the category that is opposed to their own beliefs. One said that their political belief is contrary to that of the publications. Another said that his cultural belief is not the same as those stated by the publication and two said that their religious beliefs are different from that presented in the publication.

The FGD participants, referring to the feature entitled "Ald-Da Good Things," said that the article is contrary to what they observe and experience in real life.

In an interview with Ms. Villar, she said that the student publication may or may not contain things confusing to the readers, depending on their belief and preferences. This is supported by an interview with Mr. Cabrera wherein he said that some may accept the biases of the writers but others may not. The writers may use the paper to persuade people in believing what they believe but other may contradict to their idea especially that people have their own personal biases.

Call to Action

The survey results show that the student publication is not asking the students to do anything in particular (Composite Mean: 1.04; Verbal Interpretation: Strongly Disagree). Supporting this result is the fact that the FGD participants agreed that the student publication does not call for any "direct" action.

The interviewees all said that the student publication was not asking for any particular action involving school or community issues and activities. Mr. Cabrera said that the writers write articles only to persuade its readers to change their minds about a certain topic or issue, following what is believed by the writer himself. The articles were mostly featurized and were not straight news, according to Ms. Villar.

The figure below shows the FGD sociograms of the FGDs. According to Drahota (2008), a sociogram is a visual representation or map of the relationships between individuals. These sociograms show the distinct interactions between the participants of the FGD. The transcript of FGD last August 5, 2014 shows that the facilitator guided the discussion in 25 questions. Vince is seen to be the most active and responsive among the group trying to interact with all the participants of the FGD. He is also the one considered to initiate discussion among the group. On the other hand, Conan

has the least to say during the discussion. However, he is equally important as Vince is, since his statements try to keep the balance among the discussion.

The transcript of FGD last August 12, 2014, on the other hand, shows that the facilitator guided the discussion in 5-15 questions. Nezi and Rel were seen to be the most active and responsive among the group, trying to interact with all the participants of the FGD. On the other hand, it was Ricel who had the least to say during the discussion.
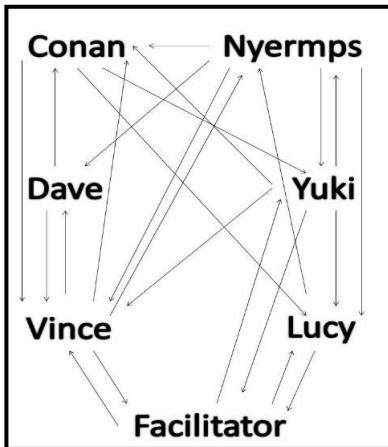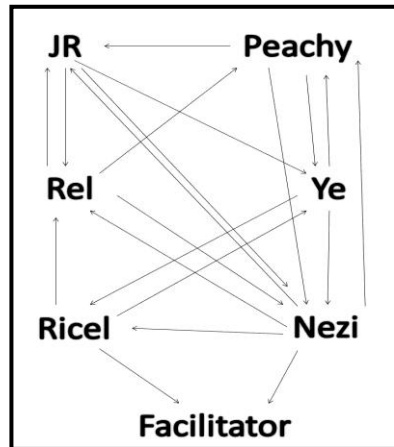

Figure 4. **Sociogram of FGD I**   Figure 5. Sociogram of FGD II

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

The study shows how the students of LPU–Laguna evaluate *Voyage.* These evaluations are then supported by FGD and experts' advice.

In terms of attractiveness, students agreed that *Voyage* is attractive. Also, students agreed that the articles in the school publication are comprehensible. In terms of acceptability, students agreed that the school publication is not acceptable and contains things that are confusing and offensive. Students also agreed that the student publication is not intended for students like them. In terms of self-involvement, students believe that the student publication contains something contrary to their beliefs. In terms of call to action, students strongly agreed that the paper is not asking them to do anything in particular.

The result of the SMOG Readability Index showed that most of the articles in the student publication can be read and understood by students in between seventh and tenth grades. Most of the articles analyzed had word counts ranging from 200 to 600 words and 10 to 70 sentences long

Based on the FGDs, students believe that most, if not all, of the articles in the student publication are biased. They also agreed that the overall layout and design of the student publication need to be improved in order for it to be attractive to its clients. Also, students believe that *Voyage* needs to arrange its article placements because some articles are not relevant to their sections.

Based on the interviews, one of the main concerns of the experts is that the target audience of the student paper is not clear. Therefore, they should consider their readers when publishing articles and stories. The editorial board should choose news that are related to the school and lessen the placement of national news or news that can already be seen on television. The layout of the paper should also be improved and the opinions should be lessened because some of the news they placed in the paper are irrelevant to the institution. They should also have precautions in placing news about their organization because it sounds bias to the readers.

Having all these said, the editorial board of *Voyage* may follow the suggestions and recommendations given by the students and experts in order for them to further improve the publication.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the researchers recommend the following:

For the current and future editorial board of *Voyage,* in terms of design, they may start from beginning without any considerations focusing on the layout and the content of the school publication, and must bring together the right combination of colors for right reasons.

They should also make a standard or qualification for the layout artist in order for the publication to be published with an appealing, attractive, and convincing layout. The layout artist should limit the use of different typefaces to only two to three font styles with sizes that will bring out the emphasis on a point.

For the pictures that they will include, especially that the publication is in color, it should be high definition and is edited properly. Visual objects should be comfortably spaced from each distinct article. Proper positioning and spacing, and use of clever typefaces and sizes are the keys to a visually attractive publication. Build pages from starting with bigger ads at the bottom.

Photos should also be original and Google images or other website images should not be used as citations to photos because these are just search engines, most probably, the picture they will be downloading over the Internet belongs to somebody else.

They should also consider that the spread should be very appealing as the readers tend to look at the visuals first before they read it, and lastly, the printer's setting should not ruin the color of their output. Know the printer's setting first before the final publication of the paper.

The researchers also strongly recommend that before the editorial board publishes or writes an issue, they must first seek the advice of the students and ask for their opinions on what articles they would like to find in the publication.

The Rhetoric Theory of Aristotle states that to communicate effectively, one must tailor his/her message (whether written or spoken) to the size, shape, tastes, expectations, interests, cultural circumstances, moral and social concerns, and intellectual level of his/heraudience. A corollary of this advice is: "The more you know about your audience, the more likely are your chances of communicating with them successfully." Ethical considerations should also be followed in accordance to responsible journalism.

In terms of content, the articles should focus on institutional news rather than general information or national issues so that they may gratify the needs of the students. The opinions should come directly from the students and the editorial board is not allowed to consolidate their biases from that of the ordinary students. Administrative staff, if possible, should not be given a feature article because the participants may find it very unconvincing. Also, the sections of the publication should be well defined and should only contain articles that are relevant to the section.

News should contain news; feature should contain feature, and others. They should make their sections stand out with attractive banners and colors because readers have the tendency to look for their "favorite"

section and they will want to get there fast. Most importantly, articles should be proofread carefully to avoid typographical and grammatical errors.

For the future researchers, they may use this research as a reference. They may get a larger number of survey participants, an in-depth interview with different selected students, and more experts to validate their study. Also, they may try to layout the *Voyage* themselves and pretest it, so that the editorial board of the *Voyage* will have an idea on how to further improve their paper.

For the academe, someone who has the knowledge of print media or the like should first check every issue before it is published so that the release will be approved by someone who knows the standards of writing and publishing a school paper. They should ensure the quality of publication that the institution shall publish. This will ensure the gratification of students for their need of a school paper.

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