Framing Identity Through Language: A Discourse Analysis of Batangas State University's Social Media Communication

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Abstract

In an increasingly mediatized academic landscape, social media functions as a key site where higher education institutions construct, negotiate, and legitimize institutional identity. This study investigates how Batangas State University (BatStateU) frames institutional identity through language use in its official Facebook posts and develops a research-informed Social Media Communication Handbook. Drawing on discourse-analytic and framing perspectives, the study examines the deployment of linguistic framing devices—metaphors, catchphrases, narratives, emotional appeals, repetition, and visual imagery—as well as salient language practices, including language variation, code-switching, informal language, and cultural reflection. Employing a descriptive mixed-methods research design, data are collected during the Academic Year 2024–2025 through survey questionnaires, focus group discussions, and interviews with purposively selected faculty members, students, and public relations information officers from the Pablo Borbon and Alangilan campuses. Quantitative data are analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, and independent samples t-test, while qualitative data are subjected to discourse analysis guided by the SPEAK framework. Findings demonstrate that BatStateU's social media discourse constructs institutional identity through a strategic balance of formality and audience engagement, although communication practices remain inclined toward excessive institutional formality. Linguistic framing devices and informal language are employed to a moderate extent, indicating underutilized potential for creativity, affective engagement, and cultural resonance. No statistically significant differences emerge between faculty and student assessments, reflecting shared evaluations of institutional social media practices. Based on these findings, the study proposes a Social Media Communication Handbook designed to enhance strategic coherence, audience responsiveness, and institutional branding across BatStateU's digital platforms.

Keywords: institutional identity; discourse analysis; social media communication; linguistic framing; higher education branding; Facebook discourse; digital institutional discourse