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PANEL 6: DRIVING THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM CURRICULA

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UNESCO MODEL CURRICULUM

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Five years ago, UNESCO decided to develop a set of model curricula for journalism education. This was in response to an urgent demand for well-trained journalists, especially in developing countries and emerging democracies. The curricula were developed over a period of two years by a committee of four people, Stuart Adam (Carleton University, Ottawa; at that time at the Poynter Institute, Florida), Hans Henrik Holm (Danish School of Journalism), Magda Abu Fadil (American University of Beirut), and myself as coordinator and writer. We did this with the help of numerous journalism educators at various stages of the curricula's development. The curricula were launched at the first World Journalism Education Congress in June, 2007.

The curricula offer programs for three-year and four-year undergraduate degrees and two forms of master's degree, as well as undergraduate and post-graduate diplomas. They consist of course listings for each program, course descriptions, and a set of 17 full syllabuses, as well as a set of journalism competencies.

The curricula are published in a book and on-line, and are now available in 8 languages: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, Hindi and Indonesian.

Since the curricula were launched three years ago, 54 journalism training institutions from 44 countries have expressed interest in adapting them to their needs and resources. These institutions are in Africa, Asia, the Arab states, and Latin America.

The curricula have also been used

- in China, in establishing standards of journalism training curricula involving more than 800 schools of journalism;
- in Brazil, by the Ministry of Education in a review of the current curricula in Brazilian journalism schools;
- and in other countries, in various ways, to enhance journalism education.

Regional consultations on adapting the curricula have been held in South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Pacific region, the Caribbean, Arab States (GCC and Maghreb) and Africa. Consultations will also be held in Central Asia, Latin America, Central America and Francophone Africa.

The curricula recognize from the outset that “journalism education is offered in many different ways by many different organizations with different educational traditions and resources, in many different settings, circumstances and cultures, and in many different political conditions”. The authors say they “do not assume or assert that the curricula ... will suit every situation”; their only claim “is to have tried to develop models that, once adapted to local conditions, will lay a foundation for good journalism education”.

The model curricula are organized around three axes:

- an axis comprising knowledge of the world and journalism’s intellectual challenges
- an axis comprising the norms, values, tools, standards, and practice of journalism
- an axis emphasizing the social, cultural, political, economic, legal and ethical aspects of journalism practice

The curricula reflect the principles of these three axes. But, as we say in the introduction, there are two other principles that guided our work. One leads to a careful allocation of time in the curriculum to ensure that courses dedicated to general content and intellectual development are not marginalized.

Accordingly, in a three-year Bachelor’s degree we estimate the division of coursework as follows:

- arts and science, 50%
- journalism studies, 10%,
- professional practice, 40%

In a two-year Master’s degree the respective division is as follows (combining journalism theory and practice) – separately for (A) a program for students with little or no journalism education or experience, and (B) a program based on a Bachelor’s degree in Journalism or a Bachelor’s degree in another subject and at least five years of practical journalism experience:

	A	B
	BA with no journalism education or practical experience	BA in Journalism or BA in another subject but long practical experience
arts and science	30%	60%
journalism theory and practice	70%	40%

The second principle leads to a special emphasis on writing and reporting – throughout the program, not just as introductory journalism courses. In each of the model curricula, we propose that reporting and writing courses develop through a number of tiers. These courses constitute a core or spine of each program. The first tier concentrates on the reporting and writing of news and feature stories. The second emphasizes in-depth journalism (including investigative techniques and longer forms of story). The third tier is specialized journalism. This third tier, ideally constructed, stitches the substantive knowledge of an academic discipline in the humanities or science into the craft of reporting. We also suggest the possibility of a fourth tier in analytical and opinion writing.

The foundation for every undergraduate program in the model curricula is a set of courses students take in the first year. These courses are designed to promote prerequisite intellectual and craft skills, which are: an ability to think critically, a knowledge of national and international institutions, a knowledge of current affairs and issues, and an ability to write clearly.

In the three years since the curricula were launched, there have been several developments in media technology and media culture. None of these alter the fundamentals of journalism or of journalism education. But they all have affected or may affect the way reporters do their work, and they all need to be taken into account in teaching journalism.

One of these developments is in the digitization of media technology. The model curricula’s list of competencies includes “an understanding of and ability to adapt to convergence and technological developments in journalism” and calls for beginning journalists to have “a full range of Internet competencies, including the ability to judge and check the authenticity, accuracy, and reliability of information available on the Web” and “to be familiar with journalism tools in all media and to be able to move easily among different media”.

And the model curricula include a course entitled multimedia/online journalism and digital developments. The course was designed (by Rosental Alves) “to give journalism students a broad perspective and practical skills in the emerging forms of journalism based on the Internet and other digital platforms”.

But every day technological developments raise new questions about journalism education. All over the world, journalism schools are scrambling to adapt their programs to these new technologies, or to reinvent their programs. The model curricula offer some pointers but also need some adapting of their own.

Other media developments – just as important as the digital revolution – include what Michael Bromley calls de-westernization, the insinuation into journalism of marketing and public relations influences, and the cult of celebrity and the tabloidization of media. Journalism educators need to recognize these trends and adjust their teaching accordingly.

The UNESCO model curricula are designed to prepare students to practice journalism in a world of rapidly and dramatically changing media technologies, rapidly expanding information, and some of the other trends I have mentioned. Take a look, for example, at Stephen Ward's foundation course in critical thinking entitled Logic, Evidence and Research and at Nalini Rajan's foundation courses in General Knowledge and in National and International Institutions. And look at Yvonne Chua's course in In-depth Journalism. Anyone taking these courses, and taking a concentration in a second discipline, will be equipped to cope with changes and challenges that lie ahead for journalists.

Whether the model curricula need conventional newspaper and broadcast workshops, and a separate course in multi-media/on-line journalism and digital developments, needs to be discussed. It seems to me these courses are no longer required. The research courses need to incorporate computer-assisted reporting and skilled use of the Internet, the Web, and technologies like Twitter and Facebook. And the courses in analytical and opinion writing need to include writing for and editing digital and social media.

I wouldn't tinker with the courses in the foundations of journalism or the part of the curriculum that anchors journalism in the intellectual soil provided by the arts, social sciences, and sciences. There is nevertheless much re-thinking called for by the emergence of new technologies and the other developments I've referred to.

I would like to see UNESCO appoint someone with well-rounded and current experience in reporting and writing in a multi-media, Internet environment, and alert to the threats to journalism, to review the curricula and suggest necessary changes.

Finally, I would like to see UNESCO consider ways to encourage journalists and journalism educators, especially in developing countries, to develop textbooks and other resource materials, and to help journalism schools, again, especially in developing countries, to develop the capacity to offer programs that give students the education and the training they need to make the best of new technologies and new practices, to fight against developments that are driven by base and corrupt instincts, and to learn to work for the benefit of their own cultures.

The UNESCO publication is available online at
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001512/151209E.pdf>

See also <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/media-development/journalism-education-and-training/model-curricula/>

REGIONAL OVERVIEWS

A Curriculum for Asian Journalists

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I address the panel's theme by first describing where I am coming from. Second, I will link our program to the UNESCO-initiated model curricula. Third, I will briefly discuss concerns about the adoption of the UNESCO curricula in Asia.

First: I represent the journalism training center of my university. It is called the Konrad Adenauer Asian Center for Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University. The name carries the names of the two partners in this enterprise: the German Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and the Ateneo, a Jesuit Catholic university. The center's mandate is to promote excellence in journalism in Asia by providing continuing education and training to Asian working journalists.

We are carrying out this mandate by offering a Master's degree in journalism and non-degree programs, including a Diploma in Photojournalism. In the pipeline is a Diploma in Multimedia Journalism.

The operative terms describing our programs are 1) Asian, 2) working journalists, 3) an international faculty, and 4) ICT-driven learning methods. We aim to offer courses that reflect contemporary public affairs issues in Asia and we offer these courses using the technology of the times: ICT-based learning methods and online learning.

The Master's program

The Master of Arts in Journalism is a two-year program consisting of 12 courses grouped into core courses, journalism electives, and cognate courses. The slide below shows the different courses comprising each. The core courses which everyone must take are Advanced News Reporting, Contemporary Issues in Media Law and Media Ethics.

The elective journalism courses offered include: writing and reporting courses such as Writing for Broadcast, Investigative Reporting and Advanced Computer-assisted Reporting; specialized courses such as Reporting Business, Conflict and Peace, and Religions. A third group of electives are those in management and a fourth group focuses on theory such as Media Economics, Media and Politics, Journalism Theories, and Research Methods. (See slide below.)

Curriculum

3 Core Courses	9 units Advanced News Reporting & Writing Contemporary Issues in Media Law Media Ethics
5 Journalism Electives	15 units Online Journalism, Media Economics Media and Politics, Newsroom Management Writing for Broadcast
3 Cognate Courses	9 units Asian History Political Communication Psychology of Media, etc
1 Master's Project	3 units A work of journalism/Study of journalism

Journalism Electives

Writing and Reporting

Writing for Broadcast, Investigative Reporting, Advanced Computer-Assisted Reporting, Editorial and Opinion Writing, International Reporting, Creative Writing, Online Journalism, Photojournalism, Multimedia Reporting

Specialized Courses

Reporting Conflict and Peace, Reporting Religions, Reporting Health, Reporting Business

Management Courses

Newsroom Management, Leadership Principles and Strategies

Theory

Media Economics, Media and Politics, Theories in Journalism, Research Methods

Part of the curriculum is devoted to cognate courses. These aim to provide a foundation for an informed and critical understanding of news and issues. Among these courses is Contemporary Asian History which the students are required to take. Otherwise the students may choose a course from any discipline including the Humanities such as

Philosophy, History, Literature, etc., or from the Social Sciences such as Psychology, Education, and others.

The culminating requirement is a Master's Project. This is either a work of journalism, such as an investigative story. Or it can be a study of journalism institutions, principles and practices – a research work. The work must implicate at least two Asian countries.

Outstanding Master's Projects find print in Asian Currents, a journal of works and studies in Asian journalism.

To solve a number of pragmatic issues and to benefit from the boons of ICT, the program is offered as a hybrid online learning program. Classes take place alternately on-campus and online. The core courses are hybrid courses, that is, they meet alternately on-campus and online. The journalism electives are purely online courses, and the cognate courses in the arts and sciences are taken on campus during the six-week summer semester.

Our online learning platform is Blackboard, and classroom sessions take place in the Discussion Board and the Chat Room.

From 2003 until the present semester, the program has drawn 139 enrollees from 14 Asian countries including Burma, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, The Philippines. About 85 per cent of them are working journalists with an average of about 13 years of experience as such; they come from both the mainstream as well as non-mainstream news media. Many of them receive scholarships from us. 79 have completed the degree.

The UNESCO curricula

The curriculum of this Master's program reflects the goals and content of the UNESCO curricula. It falls under the Master's program for students with a bachelor's degree and at least five years of journalism experience. Like the UNESCO curricula the courses in this program correspond to the three axes of professional and formative development, namely: a) professional practice, b) journalism studies, and c) arts and sciences. Moreover the curriculum reflects two other UNESCO principles, namely the emphasis on writing and reporting, and the inclusion of courses devoted to knowledge and intellectual development.

However, our curriculum does not call for placement or internship, which is one of the suggestions in the UNESCO curricula. This is superfluous for our program since our students are professional journalists.

Still the UNESCO initiative provides a valuable benchmark for our program and the various syllabi are of great use.

Hurdles in the implementation of the UNESCO curricula

The UNESCO model journalism curricula are unquestionably of tremendous value to many Asian schools who seek to improve the quality of their program. Their adoption however may be fraught with problems.

I have been part of formal discussions at a regional scale, on this issue, including a workshop in Bangkok which looked at the curricula's usefulness in training journalists to report governance stories and issues.

Invariably the difficulties or obstacles that are mentioned refer to organizational, human resource, infrastructure and societal factors. Some of these are:

- There are no journalism schools in countries such as East Timor or there are just few of them. Myanmar has only one school offering a degree in journalism.
- Lack of teachers and lack of training facilities such as computers.
- Lecturers are not qualified to teach; teachers need to be educated on the curriculum as well.
- Mainstream journalists only teach part time, while academics teach without much experience.
- Non-availability of faculty who balance both theory and practice.
- Journalists are not receptive to change; younger ones may be eager to learn but they represent the minority.
- Journalists who want to undergo training do not get the support of their editors.
- Most newspapers do not see the value of training to improve their quality and competitiveness.
- Course materials are in English (a foreign language).
- Most of the courses are taught in English.
- Institutions themselves are resistant to change; universities are controlled by groups which are resistant to change.
- Universities follow certain cycles in regard to curriculum changes.
- Editors and publishers are not included in decision-making.
- There is need for advocacy of the curriculum; for instance from the federations and associations of journalists in each country.
- Updating or revising the curricula entails costs and troubles.
- Courses and materials represent Western models and mindsets; need to Asianize.
- Course materials are not relevant to local needs.
- Ethnic and other minority groups are excluded.
- Some topics are not appropriate to the realities of the country.
- Needs assessment has to be done before the curriculum is implemented.

In brief, a strategy that seeks the widespread adoption of the curricula would entail: the institutionalization of values such as the value for freedom of expression, an independent

press, and excellent education for journalists. It would entail providing the resources that are needed to teach the courses and run the program and these include teachers, course materials and the like. It would entail widespread information about it, for instance through workshops such as what we are having today. It would call for champions of the curricula who are perceived as credible and prestigious and are therefore influential. Perhaps these champions can be your universities or press associations, or the Ramon Magsaysay awardees in journalism. The strategy will also entail localizing – or Asianizing – the curricula and the course materials required to run it.

Chinese Journalism Education and Chinese Curricula

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Chinese journalism education at a glimpse

As of March 2010, 360 colleges and universities in China have offered a total of 650 undergraduate programs in journalism (180), broadcasting journalism (128), advertising (230), editing and publishing (50) and communication (20), with an annual increase of 67 programs in the past five years. The total estimated number of student enrollment at the undergraduate level has amounted to about 160,000, with an average of 440 for each college (LI, 2010).¹ However, only 45% of these j-students can find jobs related with media upon their graduation.

Meanwhile, the number of graduate programs has also risen fast in the new century. As of March 2010, China has approved 123 MA programs in journalism (60) and communication (63), while only 15 universities are permitted to hold a total of 21 Ph.D. programs, including 11 Ph.D. programs in journalism and 10 in communication (ditto). So far, about 8,000 faculty members are now teaching in these J-education programs with 14% of them professors and 27% associate professors.

On a marco level, fast economic development of the country has contributed to the progress of journalism education in China. However, the direct driving engine for the increased journalism programs in China (especially MA and Ph.D. programs) has resulted from the official recognition of “Journalism & Communication” by the Ministry of Education as the first-tier discipline of social sciences in 1998, while it used to be only a second-tier discipline under “Literature” ever since 1949.

The recognition of Journalism & Communication as a discipline of social sciences has significant implications for journalism education in a centralized system in China,

¹ Cited from the latest statistics provided by China Association of Journalism & Communication Education, LI Liangrong is the president of the Association.

because it means that the Ministry of Education will allocate independent funding budgets for these approved journalism programs in terms of their teaching and research.

Curricula arrangement of journalism education in China

On the whole, the overall curricula arrangement of the J-education in China are listed in the following table at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

	Program Length	Public courses	Required Course areas	Selective Course areas	Total Credits
Undergraduate Programs	Four years	4-5	News Writing History Law & ethics Internship	Mostly in journalism & communication Few from other disciplines	130-160
Graduate Programs	2.5 years	3-4	Theories Methodology	Journalism & Comm. & other disciplines	30-40
Doctoral Programs	Three years	3	Theories Methodology	Focus on courses from other disciplines	30-40

While the J-education curricula at graduate levels remains relatively more diversified in different universities, the curricula at the undergraduate level are more unified.

In March 2010, the Chinese Association of Journalism and Communication issued five national sets of J-education curricula for journalism, broadcasting, advertising, editing & publication and communication, including (1) overall introduction, (2) goals and standards, (3) contents and knowledge systems, (4) requirements for teaching facilities.

Normally, the undergraduate curricula require a number of 160 credits for a j-student, of which 55% are known as public courses while 45% are journalistic courses, including basic courses, required courses, selective courses and internship and graduation papers.

Besides, about 10 universities are still running “international journalism programs”, which is basically English journalism. Their curricula consist of (1) English learning courses, (2) J-courses in English, (3) J-courses in Chinese, (4) Knowledge courses, as well as internship.

Challenges for journalism education in China

As is the case elsewhere, the greatest challenge for J-education in China has highlighted in the fast changing pace of media organizations and slow catch-up of J-education curricula. They include, but not limited to, (1) shrinking traditional media and adjustment of J-education. Though the shrinking trend of traditional media in China has been slow, it should be noted that the J-education, particularly its curricula, is lagging behind media practices in the country as it has been very slow to adjust the j-curricula to meet the needs of j-students in China. (2) Besides, with media convergence, media contents are becoming increasingly rich and diversified, yet j-curricula in the above five concentrations have turned out to be rigid and have witnessed a growing difficulty in

reflecting the media development and practices in recent years. (3) For English J-education programs, they find it difficult to identify themselves as a real academic discipline, even though they are placed under J-education. The English J-education programs have been in existence in China during the half century, but they still find it always an issue to identify itself as an independent academic discipline, in terms of government funding and academic promotion, because the English J-education model has primarily focused on the teaching with limited efforts devoted to real English research, particularly in a Chinese environment.

Specifically, fundamental challenges of China J-education in the new century can be summarized as follows:

(1) Sharp increase of journalism students vs. small recruitment by news organizations: While the total enrollment number of journalism undergraduate students has always been on the rise in recent years, media organizations in China² are recruiting less and less journalism students from journalism programs. Because only less than half of j-students can find jobs in media organizations, while others have to find jobs in media-related companies like PR and advertising companies or even non-media companies. The employment pressure has resulted in a decline in professionalism among journalism students, who have become more realistic, superficial and even lacking social responsibility, as they have to survive their market competition.

(2) High demand for interdisciplinary students vs. limited selection of courses for students on Chinese campuses: One of the reasons why media organizations have been recruiting less journalism students is that they want more interdisciplinary students with different backgrounds, that is, students from other academic programs. As they become more specialized, media organizations need to recruit more people from computer, law, economics and arts, sports and education, which has made the competition for journalism students more intensive than ever. Even though media in China call for interdisciplinary skills, journalism students in China may find it difficulty to find a chance to learn these interdisciplinary skills or knowledge in the curricula of J-education programs. Most courses for undergraduate students, for instance, are basically journalism-related courses and they hardly have any courses from other disciplines. The situation is getting worse for j-colleges with a weak support from other social sciences during the past five years.

(3) Lack of qualified faculty members and sufficient funding: Most journalism programs, particularly those programs that have been set up in recent years, lack qualified faculty members to maintain their basics operations. Journalism deans or department heads are always concerned to find a qualified faculty member to teach news writing and editing courses and courses on journalism and communication theories. The shortage of sufficient funding has made the situation worse for most journalism programs, particularly those located in the areas that are not so metropolitan, while most journalism colleges do not even provide enough office space and computer facilities for professors to talk and work with journalism students.³

² According to the China Media Industry Development Report (2004-2005), China has a total number of 2,199 newspapers, 1,900 radio and TV stations as well as 9,074 journals.

³ The Journalism College at Fudan University may be the only college that can provide one office for each faculty member who can use it for research and teaching with students.

Trends of journalism education in China

Despite of its progress, the journalism education quality in most Chinese journalism programs has been deteriorating in the past decades when they started to increase the enrollment of undergraduate and graduate students, without substantially expanding their budgets. And this trend does not seem to alter in the near future.

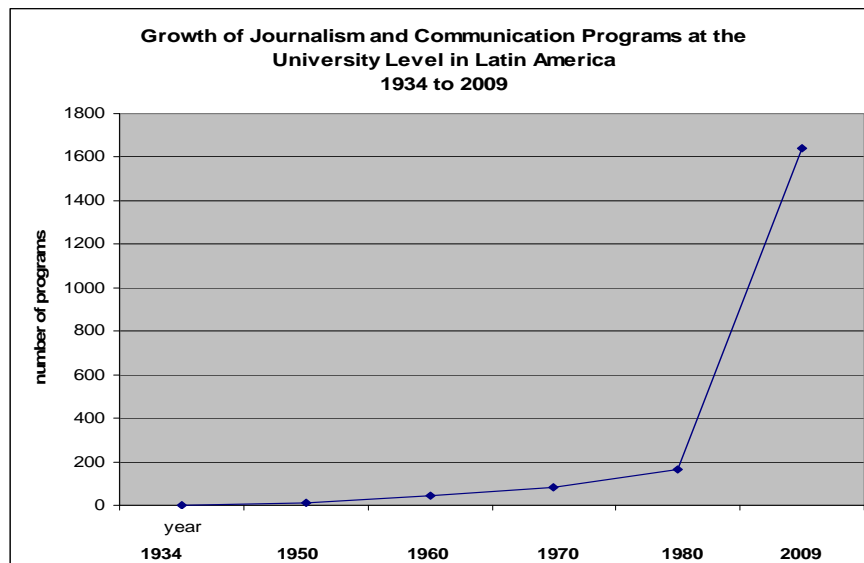
Therefore, journalism deans and professors as well as media professionals in China are much concerned about the status quo of journalism education in China and call for not only governmental attention to the quality of journalism education, but also professional measures to focus more on the improvement of journalism education quality in China.

The Chinese J-education association has thus been making efforts to formulate an accreditation system of journalism education in China, by borrowing relevant standards from the US and the Europe. Instead of imposing the accreditation system through the Ministry of Education, as it was the case in the past, the Chinese association hopes to implement the new evaluation system on a voluntary basis among J-education programs in China, so as to make it more popularly accepted and also as a way to increase the awareness of quality journalism education and for the betterment of journalism students in the future.

Journalism Education in Latin America and the Caribbean: Building Bridges towards Diversity and Excellence

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As with most of the regions of the world, growth in journalism and communication programs in Latin America and the Caribbean increased dramatically during the latter part of the 20th century. From 1980 to 2009, the number of programs rose from about 200 to over 1,600 (see the graph below). This rapid rate of growth along with social demands and changes in journalism as a field, have created challenges regarding the relevance and quality of journalism education in the region. Within this network of challenges, the integration of digital media into the curriculum has proved particularly daunting, due to the high costs of these technologies, their continuous rate of change and the multiplicity of changes that accompany their introduction into professional journalism practices.



(Source: Felafacs, 1986 for 1934 to 1980 data; Felafacs, 2009 for 2009 data)

1

One response to these challenges in the region was the publication in 2009 of a UNESCO sponsored study *Mapa de los centros y programas de formación de comunicadores y periodistas en América Latina y el Caribe* [Map of journalism and communication centres and programs in Latin America and the Caribbean]. This publication was also sponsored by the Federation of Latin American Social Communication Faculties (FELAFACS).

In addition to creating a map of university level programs in journalism and communication, the study aimed at evaluating these programs in four categories:

- Quality of instruction

- Labor market demand for graduates
- Obstacles faced by programs
- External links established by programs

UNESCO had sponsored two other publications in 2007 on the theme of journalism education: *Model Curricula for Journalism Education* and *Criteria and Indicators for Quality Journalism Training Institutions & Identifying Potential Centres of Excellence in Journalism Training in Africa*. In addition to a concern with the promotion of excellence in journalism education, the three publications share an identification of vibrant journalism as a pillar of democratic societies.

Surprisingly, the Latin American and Caribbean study was not based on the *Model Curricula* document but on the *Criteria and Indicators for Quality Journalism in Africa* document. The existence of similar studies for both regions presents an unprecedented opportunity to open channels of collaboration among journalism programs in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. Both the African and the Latin American studies focus on excellence in the curriculum, institutional capacity of journalism programs (including the use of strategic development plans) and networking nationally and internationally.

Major findings of the Latin American and Caribbean study include: the quality of curricula is heterogeneous; in public institutions, large increases in enrollment are coupled with budget cuts; there is a growing commitment towards accreditation, particularly among public institutions; and, few graduates find fulfilling jobs.

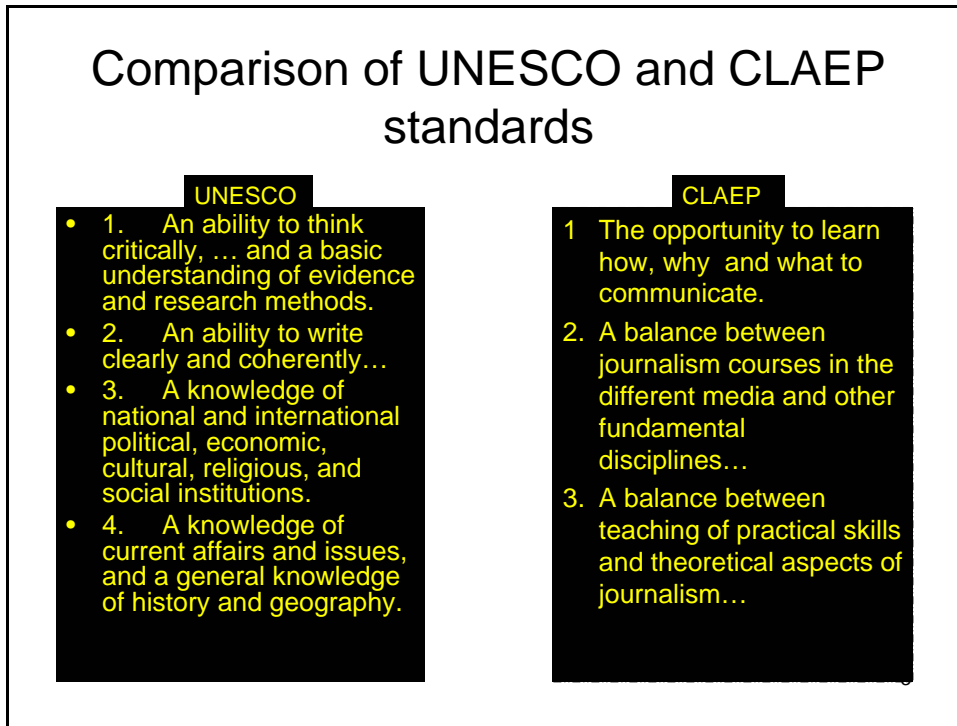
The study identified the following as the major obstacles to the continued development of journalism and communication programs: socioeconomic conditions of each country; institutional cultures that place little value on journalism programs; the non-existence of accreditation systems; the high cost of digital technologies; and, the recurring need for faculty development as related to use of digital technologies.

Finally, the study identified two principal needs for journalism and communication programs in the region: the need to strengthen networking efforts, both nationally and internationally; and the need to increase FELAFACS's commitment with accreditation of programs as the most effective means towards improvement of academic quality as well as responding to social demands and labor markets.

Yet very few journalism programs in the region have yet to fulfill the commitment towards accreditation. To date only eleven programs—4 in Colombia, 2 in Chile, 2 in Peru, 1 in each Mexico, Brazil and Argentina—have been accredited by the Latin American Accrediting Council on Journalism Education (CLAEPE), an organization created in 2000.

A comparison between CLAEPE's accreditation standards and the standards promoted in UNESCO's *Model Curricula for Journalism Education* reveals strong similarities. The themes of critical thinking, balance between journalism and general education courses,

and the balance between theory and practice of professional journalism are highlighted in both the UNESCO and CLAEP standards. These similarities point towards an international convergence of criteria for excellence in journalism education. And in turn, the convergence points towards the need for greater bridge building, particularly South-South networking. In this context, one reason for the slow growth of CLAEP in the region may be due to the heavy influence of United States universities and organizations in its inception and philosophical approach to accreditation.



This brief overview of journalism education in Latin America and the Caribbean has identified the region's need to intensify its efforts towards diversity and excellence in its journalism programs. Diversity here is understood as both the tension between the public and private sectors, as well as the philosophical approaches that inform standards of excellence. The three publications on which this overview is based, particularly the Model Curricula, also underscore the need to intensify bridge building among the different regions of the world as a means to strengthen excellence in journalism curricula.

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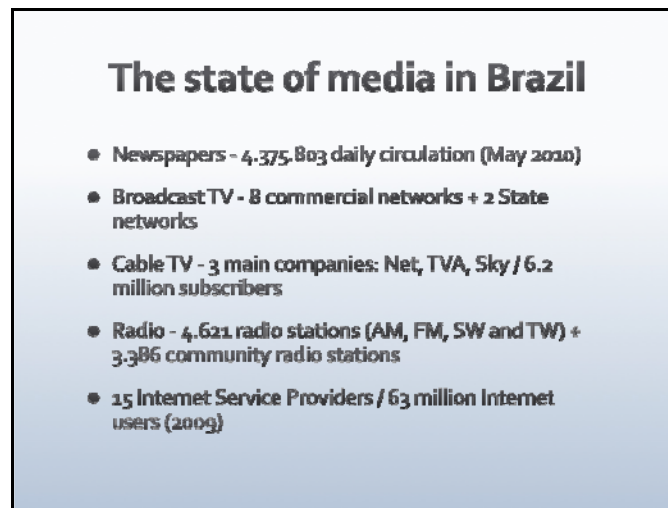
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Journalism Curricula in Brazil

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Introduction



Any consideration on Brazil's journalism curricula has to deal with two main aspects, in addition to the fact that Brazil is a big country also by the media. First, Brazil is the only Portuguese speaking country in Latin America, which gives to it a distinctiveness regarding journalism education in the sub-continent. Second, journalism was the very first of present-day Social Communication courses, which explains the higher number of journalism courses in the country: about 400 schools in all Brazilian states. This total may be explained by the fact that for more than 30 years a journalism diploma was mandatory to those interested in carrying out journalistic activities.

Since the 1970s journalism education has been influenced by American patterns. This was partly because newsrooms adopted in the 1950s the "American school of journalism" standards. By that time, the professional rules were modified in order to address the five Ws canon, while news writing in the Brazilian press evolved from the French influence to the American lead. The American influence was also in part because in the early 1970s the Brazilian universities adopted the credit system in their curricula, as a result of the

Law of University Renovation in 1968, based on the studies of the American theorist Rudolph Atcon.⁴

The UNESCO model curricula

In 2010, three years after the UNESCO Model Curricula was presented at the 1st World Journalism Education Congress in Singapore, the certified report with suggestions to the courses' design in Journalism was still a missing issue in the Brazilian academia, mostly because there was no version of the curricula in Portuguese.

The comprehensiveness of the UNESCO proposal, as well as its international input, although, motivated a session at the Brazilian Society of Journalism Researchers' 2009 Congress, titled "Journalism education in Brazil and the UNESCO curriculum", which compared the Model Curricula to Journalism training in the country. The presentations dealt with the following themes: the educational role of media criticism; journalism education and democracy; cyber journalism; a comparative analysis of the curriculum content and professional techniques; education for educators in a world media; media criticism and the democratic debate — media watching in the Journalism curricula; journalistic ethics in the UNESCO's Model Curricula and in the Brazilian journalism curricula.

As the author of two syllabi for the UNESCO Model Curricula, my attempt was to draw attention to some of the many lacking subjects in the country's curricula, since for instance, International Journalism and Development Journalism do not figure as elements in most of the country's journalism courses.

Current curricula challenges

During the last decade we have seen the strengthening of Journalism as a scientific field. The creation of the Brazilian Society of Journalism Researchers — SBPJor, which published its academic journal in English since its first edition, together with the establishment of a graduate program specialized in journalism, and the growth of journalism research groups in the long-established Brazilian Society for Interdisciplinary Studies in Communication (Intercom), are some examples of the increased awareness regarding journalism education's proceedings in Brazil.

Additionally, in 2009 a Committee of Experts was set by the Ministry of Education with the task to rethink journalism education in Brazil in the context of a society undergoing transformation. It focused on the strengthening of democracy, in which journalism, as well as other areas of knowledge, plays a crucial role by informing citizens and forming the public opinion. Journalism professors and researchers offered their demands and ideas at four public hearings, in four different cities, fed to an analysis of existent knowledge

⁴ The Law 5540/68 a) indicates the *vestibular* as the sole admittance test, b) unites all faculties in the university (seeking greater productivity with the centralization of resources), and c) introduces the credit system, enabling the enrollment by discipline.

on journalism education's national and international literature. Those were the main elements for the diagnosis of the current scenario in this area in Brazil.

During the Committee's work, new facts changed the national scene, overlapping the proposal's trend: the Supreme Court decision revoking both the Press Law and the diploma requirement for professional practice. Almost at the same time, the main national graduate office (CAPES) announced the new rules for professional master's degree, a suitable resource for journalism.

Among the Committee final recommendations can be cited:

- The need for a distinctive Journalism curriculum, but as part of the main area of Communication.
- The courses should concentrate both on theoretical and technical subjects and, also, on the changing labor market and in the context of technological convergence.
- The Journalism graduate should be a professional journalist with an education at the same time generalist, humanist, critical and reflective. This would enable him/her to act as a citizen's agent by realizing the complexity and pluralistic characteristic of the contemporary society and culture.

The Committee also expressed its belief in journalism higher education, since the social responsibility of journalism, its essential role in democracy and the specific competence required to carry the profession, dealing with new technologies, issues emphasized throughout this document, recommend a course based on ethics, competence technique, social insight and critical ability, skills that can only be acquired in a solid higher education course.

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Journalism Curricula in Sub-Saharan Africa: Salient Issues

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Introduction

The preoccupation with the quality of journalism education in Africa is widespread. Members of academia, civil society, and even governments have strong opinions on the matter. Fackson Banda's paper presented in 2009 at the Rhodes University Colloquium "Towards an African Agenda for Journalism Education" cited the need "to articulate a vision" for journalism education (see Banda 2010). A lack of vision has weakened journalism landscape resulting in what White (2010) has called lack of "passion" among working journalists.

UNESCO has made several attempts to improve journalism education by, among other things, helping develop *Model Journalism curricula for Third World* (2007), *Reporting Africa Syllabi* (2009) and *Quest for Centres of Excellence in Africa* (2007) initiatives. UNESCO sought to offer a universally adaptable guide for building a quality journalism programme. Critics, however, scoff at such guidelines noting already decades ago that "there are no universally applicable models of journalism education" (Jolliffe 1962).

Journalism education debates are very academic often glossing over fundamental problems: lack of writing skills, non-existent reading culture, lack of passion, and rudimentary English language skills. The debates dwell on the need to find African "onto-epistemic foundations" (Banda 2009), Afri-ethics (Kasoma 1996), the need to use local languages, and legitimating African philosophies as valid knowledge systems (Banda 2009). These are ivory tower concerns rarely found among typical journalism graduates in Africa.

Journalism training differ widely from country to country, region to region (Botha and de Beer 2007; Banda et al. 2007). Mostly journalism curricula transplant European ideas and models with little regard for communication realities on the ground. As a result, the organization, nature, structure and the relevancy of the programmes is a matter of some controversy.

The contemporary debates on journalism curricula revolve around two axes. On the one hand, there are calls for some form of "contextual theory" (Banda et al. 2007) to underpin curriculum development in Africa. On the other hand, there is call a for journalism curricula to address criticisms against the media both on the political economy of the media and on professional levels (Fourier 2005).

The question of relevancy

Existing surveys show that journalism curricula are Euro-centric having very little reflecting the African realities. Actually, the expertise and technology needed to

implement successful journalism programme are largely non-existent in Africa. And the epistemological assumptions as well as the worldview embedded in the curricula do not dovetail with the experiences of most journalism students. So Banda (2009), called for the need to interrogate “the epistemic-ontological foundations of African journalism education.” Others point to the need to inject Afro-humanism, namely, exposing students to African history, politics, culture, and philosophy in the process of “decolonising the minds” (Botha & de Beer 2007).

Deficient skills & knowledge

The curricula largely fail to address multiple challenges facing the average journalism student in Africa. As noted students lack a reading culture, have limited writing skills, and live in a permissive culture of the larger society, which often encourages entitlement.

Online journalism & new media

The ever-increasing importance of new media and online journalism, notwithstanding, they get scant attention in the existing curricula. As a result students leaving journalism schools face technological realities they are hardly aware of. While the convergence of media technologies calls for “convergent reporters” with multiple skills, the journalism curricula offer specializations that limit students’ capacity to function in “the convergent newsrooms.”

Curriculum organization

The manner in which journalism curricula are organized is hardly conducive to form candidates with multiple skills. Journalism curricula are fragmentary requiring specialization in television, radio, and print media (Tarcia 2008). This denies students the multiple skills needed to operate in modern “convergent newsrooms.” Furthermore, “media centrality” of the curricula makes it difficult to understand the African communication environment needed to allow scholars to respond to the African development challenges (Taylor et al. 2004).

Learning outcomes

Okigbo (1994) lampooned the Tanzanian journalism profession as a circus whereby “any one with a pen and a notebook can pass as a journalist.” It may be a blatant exaggeration. However, this criticism reflects the fact that most training programmes focus on skills and professional norms (laws/ethics) rather than theory or cultivation of critical skills.

Generally, journalism graduates fail to anchor their work in any larger societal vision like nurturing democracy by facilitating honest debate. African journalists are accused of lacking “stable, deep value commitments” in their lives (White 2010). Journalism education must shape and change attitudes in fundamental ways if journalism is to become a force for democratic change in Africa. Increasingly, contemporary journalism is part of the problem of corruption and poor governance.

Chasm between classroom & newsroom

Journalism training shows a gap between “the academia” and “the industry.” What happens in journalism classrooms is rarely informed by what takes place in the newsrooms. Also due to the massification of journalism training, students rarely get adequate internship placements. According to Ogong-Oganga (2010), journalism education creates gaps between “What (universities) say they would like to achieve and the real training actually needed provided.”

Focus on community

While the trend is towards community media with the potential to cater to the information needs of the grassroots in Africa, there is very little in the curricula that provides critical community-media literacy at universities and colleges. If curricula development is to address the African information needs, what Traber (1989) suggested, namely, to produce committed “bare-foot reporters” at home in rural areas where most people live must be addressed. Most journalists have a cynical view of rural areas and are imbued with a sense of entitlement.

Way forward

One, the degree programmes should develop in ways that respond to the new communication challenges such as community and nation building, conflict resolution, leadership, international relations and diplomacy (Taylor et al. 2004).

Two, journalism studies must raise its own status as an academic discipline, to focus more on intellectual skills such as reasoning, argumentation, persuasion (rhetoric), contextualization, the skills of historical thinking, description, interpretation and evaluation (Minogue 2005).

Three, there is a need to keep up momentum in the quest for “a vision” and “an agenda” for journalism education initiated by the Rhodes Colloquium of 2009.

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Journalism Curricula in the Arab Region: A Dilemma of Content, Context and Contest

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The rapid strides in different mass media industries in the Arab region have opened up new opportunities for the field of journalism education and profession as never before. This transformation of societies have urged global standards in educational components and curricula that address specialized skills and knowledge, and opened up new possibilities of launching education programmes in journalism at new universities located at various geographic locations of the region. As a result, both local regional and international agencies have come up with offers for undergraduate and post graduate/Masters programmes in Journalism or communication studies.

One can never talk about the case of twenty-two countries as a homogeneous landscape, but there are a number of factors and restrained that made the proposed curricula on journalism education a story of false starts with certain wrong ends. A holistic view of journalism education in the region has created a free-for-all situation bound to suffer parameter of journalism education standards and curricula standards as a result of the

unplanned and disoriented endeavours that have generally jeopardised the very dignity of the profession and the social service mission of journalism. The question remains concerning the monitoring of these pit-falls or lapses in the interest of journalism students and educators?

This happens at a time when the entire gamut of education in the Arab region is itself in a mess as regards to the observance of ethics and standards, and journalism education is a neglected domain left at the mercy of market forces or governments. In the backdrop of these disturbing trends, the paper seeks to examine the relevance of journalism education curricula model that is suggested by UNESCO.

This research attempts to address and evaluate the 2007 UNESCO Model Curricula after a regional consultation meeting on the possibilities of adaptation of the model in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries of the Arab region at the University of Bahrain That was supposed to be a generic model that can be localised and adapted to match each country's specific needs.

The impossibility of one Arab model

It is impossible to develop an Arab curricula model, because that would simplify a whole region into one bundle that includes twenty-two countries stretching from Mauritania in the west to Oman in the east with the lowest average literacy rates in the world (66 per cent). The situation is not even in these countries; for example in Mauritania, Morocco, and Yemen it is as low as (50 per cent), while in Kuwait and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories the rate is over (90 per cent). In addition, gender disparity is very high in this region, though women account for two-thirds. And within this geographical area, there reside several populations with different ethnic or linguistic diversities (Saleh, 2009b).

The wonderful idea of a common Arab model has a paradox in its own prospects for a number of reasons. Firstly, the curricula were assessed in petrol countries that have a very limited population in ratio to the rest of the whole Arab region's population. Second, the current financial situation of the Gulf States even during the recession period can never be compared to the other populated middle and low income countries like Egypt, Sudan, Morocco and Algeria and others with their long list of problems both socially, economically and politically. Third, many of the non-national universities in the Gulf States are taught and managed by foreigners who live in a ghetto even with all of their good intentions (Saleh, 2010a).

I am reluctant to what some of the Arab scholars or visiting foreigners mention in some of the UNESCO events because it ignores a key issue that is embedded in the Arab mind of the "otherness" as a true 'false starts.' Journalism in any country reflects its historical memory and current settings, and all the Arab pride that has experienced the introduction of journalism and its education in an imposed mechanism by colonial and semi colonial rule at the end of the 19th century. And many of the non-Arabs forget that the imperial powers transplanted their institutional models from France, Great Britain and later the United States to their new hosts in the region with their political traditions, cultural linguistic diversities, which lacked organic connections (Saleh, 2010 a).

Many Arab societies lack proper journalism education, and of most of the media and journalism educators are incompetent with the sufficient skills that have made the field of education having scare skilled personnel, drastic erosion of civil services, decline in salaries, and increasing in mass poverty have all gathered to instigate struggle over the limited human and material resources needed for the educational process.

Therefore, the current expansion of journalism education and training opportunities in the Arab world is unbalanced and suffers from confusion and false starts. One could describe the major problems to be related to social inequalities, where most of the real learning opportunities directed towards the elite or the governments' entourage, especially when it comes to job opportunities and training. There are no curricula that journalism schools and departments that follow but rather translating the western curricula with actually domesticating its approach and content as a result of the lack of investment in research and resources within the absence of clear national policy and resource allocation plans. In contrast to the official claims that the UNESCO is present and implemented in many of the Arab regions, most of the journalism schools and department still lean heavily on theoretical study due to lack of adequate funds, over-crowding of classes, inadequate supervision and management. Besides, there are no specific criteria adopted for the selection of journalism educators causing a lack of uniformity and adoption by other campus also.

Hence, despite the great boom in the media industry and education when it comes to volume, we must admit in all frankness that journalism training and education do not figure anywhere in national development planning and resource allocation. This regional phenomenon has transformed journalism in many cases into public relations curricula, and making it a space for losers and educators struggling to acquire skills to maintain the craft and subject to states' threats if they cross the lines and dare to ask to be critical about anything (Saleh, 2010a).

In contrast to this boom is the low ranking of Arab universities. As the Arab world is not present in two of the world ranking such as the Quality and Success Ranking in UK, and Shanghai Ranking, but the top ten Arab universities can be found in the Spanish ranking.⁵

University	Arab Ranking	World Ranking
King Saud University	1	164
King Abdulaziz University	2	291
Umm Al-Qura University	3	681
An-Najah National University	4	1160
American University of Beirut	5	1181
United Arab Emirates University	6	1512
Cairo University	7	1604
American University in Cairo	8	1657
Kuwait University	9	1863
Qatar University	10	1910

⁵ http://www.webometrics.info/top100_continent.asp?cont=aw

The skeptical approach towards the UNESCO model is explained in the light of the practical dent in the domain of journalism education on a sustained basis, which partly explains the sordid conditions in almost all of the twenty two countries that have made its status quo a true discouraging environment outside the offices of the government officials or away from the official press conferences.

Simply socio-political and economic realities about the region make many Arabs in a state of denial to these facts on one hand and many of the foreigners who great intentions yet lack rational understanding make their work completely wasted on the other hand. These realities include the fact that the majority of the public are impoverished, marginalized and overwhelmed with the historical memory of colonization on one hand, and the harsh living conditions on the other hand. Hence, they neither consider the model or even know about it, unless we refer to those (elite) of Arab nationals or foreigners who speak about the 'fantasy world' or those who are on the pay-roll of agencies and governments and are willing to say anything out of cosmetic PR-ization.

My concern here is not the UNESCO Curricula per se, but rather the impossibility to localize in the current settings and its unsuitability to the environment that is full of different kinds and levels of limitations. As such, many of the Arab countries, especially the Gulf States experience two separate worlds of the national and the expatriates living in the countries, who have different rights and visions to the same lands.

We cannot think of allowing and empowering the model within the current limited parameters due to the vulnerable public sphere with all its sensible circles, fiscal squeeze and the many legislative and legal impediments that block any real chance to adopt it within the regional social unrest, political agitations and poor civil liberties that are still plaguing. Besides, the public opinion has very low esteem of journalism as a profession and its education as a refuge for the low caliber students who find no other thing to do so they chose this field.

Such a collective view of journalism education in many parts of the region is a direct result of the weak economic base, heavy political patronage, cultural fragmentation, centralized geographic concentration, decreasing credibility and low prestige of journalism. Besides, laws and regulations are not clearly stated with regard to safeguard the journalism education and other professional values (Saleh, 2010b). Hence, it is very rational to link in a reciprocating manner the internal socio-political and economic problems with the external cut-off from the world that resulted with hybrid curricula in the Arab region (Saleh, 2009b).

Many of the journalism educators and education advocates echoed four types of criticism. The first is the marginal endorsement of freedom of expression and the press, while also ignoring other basic human needs. The second is the superficial approach to democracy, which results in the marginalization of the interests of the majority to preserve the ruling minority's interests (Saleh, 2003). The third problem is the governments' subjugation to major regional issues such as the invasion of Iraq, Islamophobia and the "resentment and tyranny" motivated by hatred for the Arab-Israeli Conflict. And the fourth problem deals with the official simplistic analysis of multifaceted complexities of the current endemic

problems in the region that varies from xenophobia to religious fundamentalism and social disintegration (Saleh, 2006).

This situation repeats what many of the international news agencies and broadcasters call 'Parachute journalism' -- 'Parachute education,' where a number of foreigners just come for a short time into a country with all of their predispositions and claim to the world that they are experts in the Arab region. The argument here does not suggest that the reality in these countries is perfect; we only point out the opaque vision that does not clearly understand the contextualization in the best scenarios, while completely rejecting the notion of conspiracy theory. Another pertinent issue in that regard is the clash of interest between locals involved in assessing its suitability to the region for political or economical reasons.

In such a context, journalism education and literacy come at the end of the priority list; because media are used as a platform for fabricated reality, for rationalizing the government's own iron hand. To reinforce their politicizing solidarity, Arab governments in almost all cases have never allowed journalism to investigate and evaluate critically national domestic policies, or those of friendly governments. Besides, journalism education nearly never delve into national or local issues, even in the cases of Pan-Arab satellite channels such as *Al-Jazeera* and *Al-Arabya* channels because these are the issues that most threaten their governments' authority and legitimacy.

It might be logical due to the fact that the overall illiteracy in the region is 66 per cent, which is relatively low, though the absolute number of adult illiterates fell from 64 million to around 58 million between 1990 and 2000-2004 (Hammoud, 2005). The gender disparity is very high in this region, and women account for two-thirds of the illiteracy rate while the literacy rate is higher among young people than adults.

During the second half of the 20th Century, the Arab region aimed at unifying the general framework of its respective legislative processes, particularly through multilateral cooperation within the League of Arab States. In 1981, at the Second Conference of Arab Ministers of Justice in Sana'a, the capital of Yemen, the "Sana'a Strategy" unified the domestic legislation through a series of integrated codes, including civil law, civil law procedures (Saleh, 2009b).

The League of Arab States also formed a committee to unify legal and judicial terms, structures, and processes that includes the penal law, penal procedures, combating information technology crime, and other related matters. To that goal, the League of Arab States also established the Arab Center for Legal and Judicial Studies in Beirut, Lebanon.

Irrespective of whichever option may prevail in future, it is high time to undertake a high-level review of both the suggested curricula model by UNESCO in the light of the current journalism education in the region which has remained static for decades. Let it be understood that there is already a widening gap between the market requirements and the modest quality of training and education to cope with this demand.

Another point to make here is the disconnection of journalism education between its curricula, and its governance that made journalism students lag behind the required skills and capabilities, which in turn need a valid curricula model that could provide a strong shift in the current pedagogical paradigms. The paper is thus attempting to examine the current needs in industry and society to argue for this shift, and provide some pointers to possible solutions, while considering the role of curricula can play in realizing this goal. However, this goal was never realized due to the absence of a real independent free media and difficulties in securing an appropriate political culture context that could be a refuge for elevating conversations that could address the current challenges of journalism education and provide practical solutions.

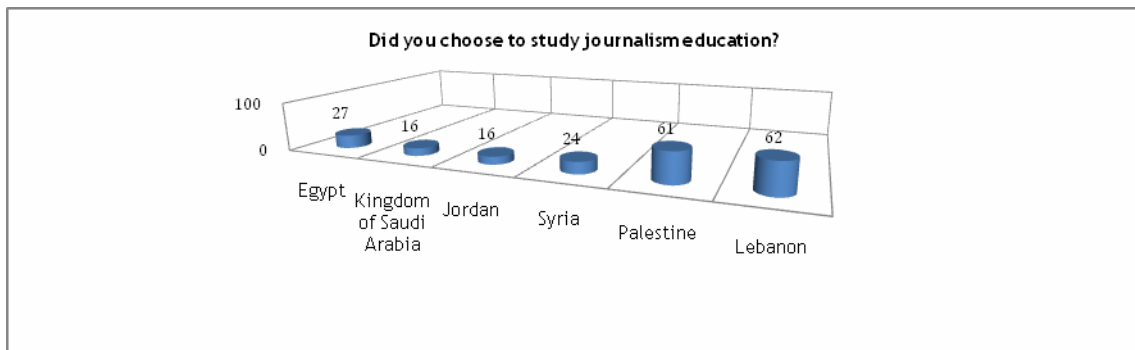
Empirical evidence from a survey

In a Pan-Arab study in six countries sponsored by the British Council in Cairo as part of the 'Media and Society Project' that conducted over (1210) intensive face-to-face interviews (200 interviews per country). The samples were drawn from residents in major cities in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan or Palestine , which is purposive non-probability sample that can't be generalized but it is still providing clear indications of why 'False Starts' lead to 'End Results'.

The general response to the question "Do you approve the current curricula?" concerning the level of assessment of the current curricula, the students and the journalists had a high rate of accepting the current curricula with (30 per cent) agreeing and (12 per cent) strongly agreeing on the suitability of the curricula. However, the general view favors the disagreement or neutrality because (24 per cent) disagree that the curricula in the Arab region is suitable, and (16 per cent) strongly disagree with a (16 per cent) of the sample took a neutral stance or it might be disengagement from the educational setting and being apathetic about it.

The key question that was asked during the interviews was related to the level of liking and preference of students to the field of journalism.

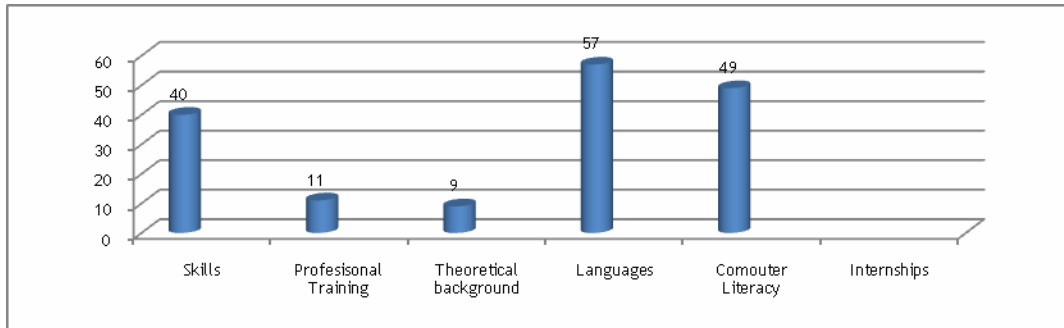
Chart 1: The Choice of Journalism Education



In chart (1) the results suggest that it is a priority choice for students in either much opened society that allows press freedom as in the case of Lebanon (62 per cent) or in a very desperate society that has a common cause and goal as in the case of Palestinian to

serve the mind set of "Jihad,. It is also much preferred in transitional societies like Egypt (27 per cent) and Syria (24 per cent) in which the picture and freedom is not clearly defined and established. In societies with serious political and social oppression it is least preferred as in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and in Jordan (16 per cent).

Chart 2: What are the required competencies in the journalism education curricula



In chart (2), the sample selected the languages (57 per cent), the computer literacy (49 per cent) and the journalistic skills (47 per cent) as the most desired competencies in the journalism curricula. Not surprisingly, the training, theoretical background and knowledge as well as internships did not score high in the selection of necessary competencies.

From realities to reforms/challenges

Many of the academics and professionals deal with journalism education through a polarized prism of either focusing on the theoretical part or its hands on experience part, but I see that both sides ignore the sad reality in the region in which department and schools of journalism represent the air for any proposed models. And in reality most of these departments and schools are run by 'patrimonial mechanisms' that color them with factional maneuvering, clientelistic relations, and the exclusion of real experienced educators at the expense of (Wasta) nepotism, which is a common practice in the region that involve educators, students and journalists, by either selecting students to be enrolled in a journalism school not based on the students' skills and potentials or any transparent criteria but rather connections and unfair selectivity motives, or recruitment of educators based on bribe and mutual synergy giving no fair change of election, or providing journalists with information based on their government or business loyalty.

It is not thus enough to have a UNESCO curricula model or other means of reform in the Arab region. Hence, there is an urgent need to investigate the correlation between journalism education, on the one hand, and the possibilities of stipulating a culture of reporting reality, on the other.

This needs accelerating a coherent social progress that maintains harmony, through the cross-examining of three key domestic conditions: the degree of democracy, the degree of social divisions, and the level of economic prosperity. There is space in this paper only

to touch on some of the specific challenges that make the current curricula that was suggested by UNESCO with limited benefit or outcome on the journalism education field. This is no disadvantage: beyond individual case studies, which are environment- and technology-specific and likely to date quickly as new advances in technology, pedagogy, and knowledge arise, it is far more important at present to work towards developing an overall pedagogy for finding a domestication of curricula that really works in classrooms and in the news rooms Curro & McTaggart (2003).

In addition, the ministers of information throughout the years execute the agenda of the state to control journalism curricula and shape their content, by enforcing harsh laws with imprisonment and physical violence. Though there is new means of expression that have proliferated between the Internet and other mobile communications, yet the 'Patron State' through the ministries of information in many of the Arab states and its orchestrating role and influence over the ministries of higher education have regulated the freedom of press, and expression, blocked the emerging activism of the expanding population of a predominately poor, illiterate youth; and offered a hybrid journalism curricula through a prism of individual and collective humiliation and resentment.

This current curriculum emphasize a sort of 'casual collapse' of the established hierarchies and institutions in the journalism education that is a typical outcome of the failure to attain a paradigm shift that could level the quality of learning and practice. It is thus trivial to consider any curricula without stipulating good governance through governments' effective assistance. The journalists and many of the journalism students are very frustrated with the results of poor governance. Besides, the economic growth and poverty reduction remain major challenges. But beyond remuneration, there are problems with management structure, human resources, staffing and career paths.

Changing the wrong ends of journalism curricula

As ivory towers crumble, the current journalism education curricula narrative-based or apprenticeship-style education is increasingly irrelevant and appropriate so proposing a new valid curriculum is primarily based on its ability to provide a strong combination of systematic overviews and deep engagement, and in its ability to provide a targeted course of study aimed at developing those journalistic capacities which are crucial to successful participation in journalism. Any successful curriculum could make an important contribution to the levelling of journalism education MENA in order to avoid continuing in the current process of casual collapse (Hamilton, 1998).

Fundamental to their propositions are the tremendous motivational advantage and efficiencies which could be gained by creating effective learning environments. Journalism education in the Arab region could only be leveled through the emphasis on three competencies (Saleh, 2008). First, the focus should be directed towards the students, stimulate their interests and help them to optimize their skills and capacity building, while enhancing their mindset toward investigative journalism. Second, the curricula can never be successful without providing at least an academic environment that is both safe and secured, while indoctrinating professional codes of ethics that can help the students hold accountable yet free to learn. Third, the curricula can never be a valid

one without breaking down the artificial academic barriers separating various fields is a mandatory action to deal with the "contentious politics," social movements, revolutions, ethnic conflict.

The research paper suggests that not only is there a surge in student demand for university-based journalism studies in the Arab region, but also there is a growing concern about the quality of journalism studies. In the light of what has been discussed in the paper, it is important to state that no curriculum can function on its own, but rather it is contingent on local conditions that vary widely from each country to the other in the Arab region.

The research paper has projected two main concerns: the first relates to the trend of merging journalism with public relations, the lack of educational grounding in the ethics of independent journalism, and the failure of universities to underscore the journalists' mission as independent watchdogs holding the powerful accountable. And the second observes that the current UNESCO curricula does not really consider the local settings that do not leave room for interdisciplinary studies which are now sought in certain job markets. The implementation of this curriculum if it is done at the first place does not consider the moving of university journalism studies out of the field of literature.

Unfortunately, many Arab educators and others involved in the process of developing the UNESCO curricula model are typically monolingual and often get very sharp in responding to the criticism that is ingrained in western ways and is usually designed to be implemented in a western context. Thus, the collective cultural knowledge, local context and English language, which are the foundations of a western curriculum created an epistemological exclusion as a result of the commonly ignored current socio-political setting that is colours the journalism education with fear and uncertainties, where complex issues are discussed and various answers are sought, where no answer is right or wrong, the current format of the UNESCO model might lack the appropriate level of content and context that understand the nuances of academic discourse in the Arab region.

At the end, the research acknowledges the continuous disagreements on how to best provide a curriculum that teaches journalism in the Arab region, and the much skepticism related to its current format, yet it remains imperative to at least open up the dialogue on the topic and evaluate its parameters and validity. Only then, the false starts could be changed into valid ends.

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How to Adapt the Curricula to the Francophone Countries

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Shortly after the launching of the curricula at the first WJEC in June 2007 in Singapore, the UNESCO document was presented at a Theophraste Network General Assembly, in December 2007 in Paris. The Theophraste Network is an NGO, founded in 1997 within the AUF (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie – a Francophone organization of 693 universities all around the world), representing journalism schools throughout the world that use French as a teaching language (totally or partially). Members of the Theophraste Network from 15 different countries wished not to translate, but to adapt the curricula. If the Anglophone version seemed to be a great leap towards a more specific journalism education recognition, it seemed to be quite different, from some parts, to what was done in francophone countries.

The original document was titled “Model curricula for Developing Countries and Emerging Democracies”. For many members of Theophraste that suggested that there would be one model for some countries and another for others. Theophraste Network believed that journalism education should be built on the same fundamentals, whether you are in an old democracy or in an emerging one, in a rich country or in a developing one. Of course, such a curriculum has to be adapted to the possibilities and the reality of the country where it is used. So, with the support of UNESCO and AUF, the Theophraste Network started a Francophone adaptation, instead of a simple translation. This almost two years long process was made possible by the existence of the original curricula, which was a starting point for discussions and debates.

Debates on the curricula structure

First there were debates on the degree structure which followed an overall Anglo-American model. Most Francophone countries are using a BMD/LMD model (Bachelor-Master-Doctorate/Licence-Master-Doctorate) with mainly two years master’s degree.

Another important problem was the place occupied in the curricula by “Arts and Sciences” approach, which typically doesn’t exist in Francophone region. We could say that journalism programs are more using a concept of “General Knowledge” or “General Education” (culture générale) with courses almost always directly related to the future work practice (for example, economics, international relations, politics etc.).

There were also a lot of debates about the textbook oriented approach, which doesn’t really exist in Francophone journalism education, where most of the educators use their own material, adapted to the country or region where they work. Also the syllabi with a week-by-week program presentation seemed too rigid.

Debates on the curricula content

After analysing the original curricula, there were debates about the presence and/or the absence of some courses. Mainly two courses, widely taught in Francophone journalism schools, were missing: photo-journalism and media economy. The original version includes 17 courses while the Theophraste one has 21.

The importance of internship(s) within the curricula was reinforced and also the timeframe was widely discussed. It seemed clear that internship should be an important moment of future journalists training.

The overall homogeneity of the original curricula was also subject to discussion, due to certain aspects of general or specialised courses.

Answers on the curricula structure

The overall organisation of the curricula is slightly adapted to endorse the LMD/BMD model, staying as close as possible to the original model. The distribution of subjects within the curricula is balanced, taking into account the framework of the English model. Also, after a great deal of debates, the teaching of Arts and Science has been adapted to a Francophone environment.

The teaching models proposed in the courses outlines are fully re-thought, based on the teaching experiences of network members. All courses were built by North-South educator teams, and then approved by all members of the network, during consensus meetings.

Answers on the curricula content

Some courses were added. A certain emphasis was put on media convergence and online journalism. Practical lessons (hands-on approach) were valued and dispersed to several places. As a consequence of this practical approach, the Francophone model suggests a higher value of internship in professional training.

The presence/absence of certain materials from the fundamentals of training is tailored to the design implemented in the schools of Theophraste Network. So the course content is tailored to the situation encountered locally by schools of the Network, so it could be amended and adapted.

Conclusions

In most cases the course syllabi are the fruit of collaboration between centres of the North and of the South. This was made possible by a great work of international coordination by Professor Frederic Antoine from UCL Louvain-la-Neuve in Belgium. Six regional coordinators ensured that the courses received the endorsement of all members of the network.

After this 18 months work of intense collaboration, the Theophraste Network believes that journalism education is based on the same fundamentals, wherever it is taught, and as stated in the original UNESCO model. But if these fundamentals exist, we can't say they could be, or should be, only one model of journalism education. That's why it should be considered more as a proposal, due to be enriched and adapted locally, more than a model to be applied as it is.

Theophraste Network believes that this adaptation was made possible because it was not built on a regional basis, but on a linguistic basis. So we hope this model is as rich as members of Theophraste are different. We believe that this coproduction of knowledge between North and South (and East and West) is the power of an international network. The idea is to offer at the same time a more homogenous curricula with more liberty in the setup. The same journalism education, with a different spirit.

Here are the main differences between the two versions.

The three first courses (*) were not in the original version. Note that there is a fourth original course that is not mentioned here: in the French version the broadcast course has been split in two courses: radio journalism and TV journalism.

The two others were present in the first part of the curricula but not developed in the detailed courses outlines.

The detailed workshop approach is specific to the French version.

<i>NEW COURSES</i>	
<i>Photojournalism (*)</i>	<i>Journalisme d'image</i>
<i>Media convergence (*)</i>	<i>Convergence des médias</i>
<i>Media Economy (*)</i>	<i>Économie des médias</i>
<i>DETAILED COURSES</i>	
<i>Analytical and opinion writing</i>	<i>Journalisme d'analyse et d'opinion</i>
<i>Advanced investigative journalism</i>	<i>Méthodes avancées d'investigation en journalisme</i>
<i>WORKSHOPS</i>	
<i>Print journalism Workshop</i>	<i>Atelier de presse (variantes 1 et 2)</i>
<i>Radio journalism Workshop</i>	<i>Atelier de journalisme radio</i>
<i>TV journalism Workshop</i>	<i>Atelier de journalisme télévisé</i>
<i>Online/multimedia workshop</i>	<i>Atelier de journalisme plurimédias</i>

Journalism Education Curricula in Russia

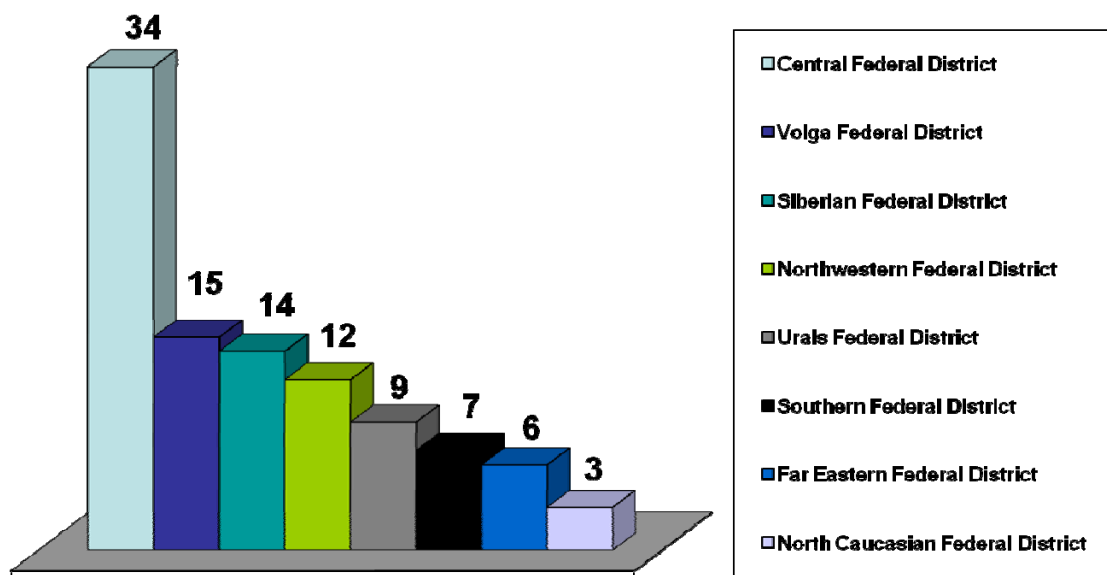
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Journalism education in Russia is available within the system of higher education and on the basis of different media and public organizations. The ratio between different forms of education shifts in favor of universities. Journalism university programs which combine broad academic disciplines with practical training are the main suppliers of journalism personnel to the media outlets. Out of 123 Russian universities, where journalists are being trained, 92 (75%) are state and 31 (25%) private institutions.

Their geographical spread in the country is quite uneven, as shown in the following figure. This is connected with the concentration of business life and media activities. The greatest number of faculties of journalism (34% of all), both state and private, is situated in the Central federal region. Nearly half of them are in Moscow (25 institutions). The second largest area is the Volga federal region with 19 educational institutions, (15% of all). The Siberian federal region takes the third place with 17 higher educational institutions (14%). The fourth position is occupied by the North-Western region with 15 educational institutions (12%), six of them situated in Saint Petersburg.

Geographical spread of higher educational institutions by regions (%)



Journalists are also being trained in several big media outlets, as well as in teaching centers within public organizations. These programs unlike those based in universities are as a rule short-term or refresher courses for mid-career training. News gathering agencies such as ITAR-TASS, RIA NOVOSTI, newspapers *Izvestia* and *Literaturnaya gazeta*,

BBC Russian provide training and retraining courses for their own staff and freelancers. Public organizations such as the Russian Union of Journalists and its regional branches also play an active role in journalism training. The majority of them collaborate closely with universities and invites prominent academicians to lecture and teach seminars.

The educational market is now full of commercial journalism courses. Internet search engines provide tens of offers, which cater the needs of different media niches and segments – business and multimedia journalism, scientific writing, editing, photojournalism, etc.

The concept of contemporary journalism education is based on clear perception on the role of media in a democratic society, the development trends in media industry towards digitalization, the essence and social significance of journalism profession.

The basic principles of journalism education in Russian universities are:

- Fundamental training based on humanities and social sciences
- Combination of theory and practice
- Professional training in classes and during internships in media
- Training of universal and special skills
- Teaching contemporary information technologies.

To start an educational program in journalism both state and private universities should get a special license and pass the procedure of accreditation. The Russian Ministry of Education is responsible for that but the professional expertise is carried by the Council for Journalism Education based at the Faculty of Journalism at the Lomonossov Moscow State University which is considered to be the leading school in the field.

Like all other spheres of education Russian journalism curriculum is constructed within the frames of the Federal State Education Standard adopted for a period of 5 years. In 2010–2011 a new third generation curriculum is coming into force. It is created in the context of Bologna process, European (Tartu Declaration) and world educational practice (UNESCO model curriculum) and is based on competence approach, module structured teaching plans, the adoption of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and broad possibilities of academic mobility for students and academic staff.

The new curriculum is a two-level training system close to European system with 4 years for Bachelor's and 2 years for Master's Degree. The main goal is to supply media demand for qualified specialists, to make curricula compatible to international experience. For this purpose the structure of the new curriculum foresees cycles of disciplines which students are supposed to master. Besides obligatory it includes the approximate amount of elective courses. The ratio between them should be 1:1 that mean that this indicator now meets world standards. This indicator now meets international standards. At the same time the new curriculum permits a content diversity connected to local and national specifics of an institution which now gets more freedom. The new document also foresees broad opportunities for student's mobility.

Most of the universities organize the training process using the module structure. A module in Russian educational practice is considered as a group of similar study disciplines and as a scope of types of educational work aimed at achieving a particular goal.

For example, the curriculum for Bachelor's degree program contains several modules forming general knowledge in humanities and social sciences: history, philology, sociology, psychology, legislation, ethics, politics, and economics. These modules constitute 1/3 of credits.

Another part of studies is devoted to professional journalism which consists both of theory and practice. Studying the basics of journalism theory help students to get a general understanding of media functions, the specific features of mass information, the way freedom and responsibility are interconnected. Students learn the functioning principles of contemporary editorial offices and they will deepen their knowledge during internships in media outlets.

The goal of practical training is realized through professional and creative module. Its aim is to focus on the media sector on the whole, on the work of journalists, stages and technologies of media texts, particularities of content, structure and formats. Special attention is paid to information accuracy and ways to check facts, methods of distinguishing views from news, information balance etc. Studying journalism methods they activate knowledge they get when taking linguistic courses in Russian and foreign languages, logics and editing. One of the latest innovations in professional module is training a universal journalist who can work in a convergent editorial office and prepare texts for different media platforms.

The compulsory part of the curriculum is combined with specialization courses divided into groups according to different media types – press, television, radio and online media or other spheres (publishing, advertising, television, PR). Students may chose a specific type of journalism work (editorial manager, media designer, photojournalist) or to get enrolled in a thematic course and gain special knowledge in the sphere they are going to cover (politics, international relations, economy, culture, sports etc.).

Taking into account the dynamic developments of media technology schools pay more and more attention to technological module and courses devoted to digital technologies used in profession. Today the technical equipment of the majority of journalism departments meets modern standards.

The Federal journalism curriculum also contains an applied module, which is carries out in two formats – in university classes when students produce school media (newspapers, TV and radio programs, multimedia projects) and by means of outsourcing. Curricula in all Russian universities include outside-class activities and internships in different media. Internships usually are held at the end of academic years during summer and last a few weeks. The first one is introductory and is supposed to familiarize students with the basics of production process in different media and to help them gain skills in preparing information news items. During the last years of study the internships become more

advanced and are qualified as practical training. Their aim is to master students' skills of preparing texts in different genres, and to learn how to cope with different types of journalistic work.

In order to evaluate the competences of graduate students intermediate and final assessments take place. Intermediate forms of assessment at the end of a semester, module, and discipline include group discussions, tests, exams, essays and term papers. Final assessment includes a qualification paper and final exam. A final paper could be either creative and based on the graduate's own articles or media project or research-based.

The final graduate examination consists of two parts. First students are asked to defend their portfolio. Then they are supposed to speak on theoretical topics such as history and theory of journalism, methods of journalistic work, genres, Russian and international media practice.

Future directions: issues and challenges

Today journalism education in Russia abruptly finds itself at the crossroads of different key trends in global development. The fast progress of new information and communication technologies raises the question of students' technical literacy. Departments are debating over the amounts and character of skills needed, the level of technical competence, which students should have by the end of their studies. The topicality of this issue is intensified by media convergence which brings to the editorial office journalists, who previously worked for different media branches – print, TV, radio. To work in a convergent environment newsmen should gain skills which are important for a multimedia journalist. This means that journalism education should adjust to the technological progress and introduce new general courses, which would be addressed to all students regardless of their specialization.

The penetration of the market into Russian media makes journalism education more conscious about collaborating with media industry. This helps solve not only the job placement problems and the introduction of new educational courses. The close connection between journalism and advertising, journalism and public relations represents a serious danger to the independence. Journalists are getting less critical to the news coverage; and this creates the conflict of interests, which affects the quality of journalism and erodes the basic professional and ethical standards.

Taking into consideration the previously listed statements journalism education is challenged by one of the most important questions: what higher educational institutions should teach and how they should do it. The problem is intensified by a number of reasons which are connected with the active penetration of ordinary people into convergent journalism. They blog, comment on events, become mediators for traditional media while this role initially belonged to journalists. That force journalism schools to pay more attention to information marketing, to new patterns of communication with audiences.

For Russian universities the significance of the present stage is also connected with the fact that there is an active process of transition to the two-level educational system with Bachelor's and Master's programs. Russian universities are forecasting that the most popular Master's programs will be those which are specialized in international journalism, convergence, media economics and management. They are ready to launch joint Master's programs in cooperation with foreign universities which will get students a chance to study at least for a semester in an educational institution abroad.

CONCLUSIONS

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The Principles of Journalism Education, declared at the first WJEC in Singapore in 2007, contain among the 11 principles the following:

4. Journalism curriculum includes a variety of skills courses and the study of journalism ethics, history, media structures/institutions at national and international level, critical analysis of media content and journalism as a profession. It includes coursework on the social, political and cultural role of the media in society and sometimes includes coursework dealing with media management and economics. In some countries, journalism education includes allied fields like public relations, advertising, and broadcast production.

This, together with the main lines of the UNESCO Model Curricula as summarized above by Michael Cobden, constitutes a synthesis of the *substantive content* of journalism education according to what could be called the “WJEC philosophy”.

Equally important is the *overall structure* of academic degree programs as divided between the two main areas of study: (1) arts and science, (2) journalism theory and practice. The traditional division between them in the United States has been 75/25 – allocating an overwhelming majority of the volume of studies for (liberal) arts and science, i.e. general substance, and leaving only a quarter for journalism studies as such.

However, the past few years have brought more and more pressure to add to the curriculum elements of journalism, including online journalism, at the expense of general subjects of arts and science. Today the reality is probably about 50/50 division between the two main areas, but it is still important to retain at least half of total for studies beyond journalism and media, as advocated by the UNESCO model.

In this regard it is worth noting what was concluded by the WJEC-2 syndicate group Ultimate Journalism Education: “Journalism, on its own, does not constitute enough of substance to make up a full three or four-year degree program. Journalism education needs to draw on, interact with and contribute to other forms of knowledge in the university.”⁶

What else should be drawn as central conclusions of this exercise?

⁶ Point 2 in the respective report, see <http://wjec.ou.edu/syndicates2010.php>

Regarding the *general orientation*, two perspectives emerge:

- A need for balance between industry/market orientation and academy/scholarship orientation. To quote again the Ultimate Journalism Education report: “We need to be cautious about training journalists solely to meet industry’s needs... Journalism is increasingly not totally defined by employment... We should seize the opportunity in this regards in this moment of crisis amidst the digital revolution and reaffirm journalism’s usefulness to the community.”⁷
- A need to overcome a Western bias in journalism studies: Internationalization, De-Westernization, Asiatization, etc. This is supported by a wave of scholarship⁸ and calls for “de-colonizing journalism curricula”⁹.

Regarding the *practical action*, there are some obvious tasks which should be done beginning with these:

- Further development of the UNESCO model curricula, taking seriously their scholarly criticism¹⁰ and updating them in relation to specific socio-cultural circumstances, based on critical assessment and reflection, as done in the French adaptation
- Production of textbooks – an overdue task to follow up the IAMCR textbook project¹¹

⁷ Ibid., Point 8.

⁸ Curran, J. and Park, M-J. (eds.), *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, London: Routledge, 2000; Thussu, D. (ed.), *Internationalizing Media Studies*, London: Routledge, 2009.

⁹ Paputski, E. (2007) De-colonising journalism curricula: A research & “development” perspective. *Media Asia*, 34(2):79-87.

¹⁰ See for example Freeman, E., Rendahl, S. and Shafer, R. (2009) Re-examination of development communication theory and practice: Informing a critique of UNESCO’s model curricula for journalism education for developing countries and emerging democracies. *The Journal of Development Communication*, 20(2): 15-31.

¹¹ <http://www.uta.fi/textbooks/>