



MIDDLE EAST

MEDIA EDUCATOR

Issue 3, March 2013

New Approaches to Journalism and Media in the Middle East and Africa



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Middle East Media Educator

Issue 3, March 2013
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New Approaches to Journalism and Media in the Middle East and Africa

Middle East Media Educator (MEME) is a refereed journal published at the University of Wollongong in Dubai. It was inspired by and takes as its model **Asia Pacific Media Educator** (APME) which has been published since 1996, founded and still edited by Eric Loo, now at the University of Wollongong in Australia.

Like APME, MEME “aims to bridge the gap between media educators and practitioners.” MEME is the first such journal in the Middle East, and it will strive to encourage dialogue between industry and academe in a region where informed analysis of the media isn’t widespread.

Research articles and commentaries about the state of the media, media professions, media education, and other topics relevant to the region are welcome. We welcome articles for the next MEME scheduled for August 1, 2013 and will consider pieces for that issue submitted by June 1, 2013.

This third issue of MEME heralds our expanding to twice a year publication. We continue to make the journal available for free in two ways: MEME will be distributed at regional and international conferences where issues relevant to media in the Middle East are discussed. A PDF version for download is available on the University of Wollongong in Dubai website (www.uowdubai.ac.ae) from March 1, 2013. For further information, contact alma.kadragic@gmail.com

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Introduction

With this third issue of Middle East Media Educator (MEME), we begin twice - yearly publication, harder to manage but much better for staying current and providing more opportunities for media practitioners, academics, and students to be included. We hope at least some readers of MEME will take up this challenge and submit articles - both research and commentaries - as well as book reviews, conference reports and other formats introduced in Issue 1 but not continued in Issues 2 or 3.

The intention is to bring out the fourth issue in time for the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication this year from August 8 - 11 in Washington D.C. This convention has provided the deadline for producing Issues 1 and 2 and provides a fixed point again for Issue 4.

Last summer in the introduction I wrote that we had not yet reached a sustainable balance between articles from journalists and other media professionals and academics teaching journalism, media studies, public relations, and other forms of communication. As a result, the second issue was heavy on research pieces and light on war stories.

In MEME Issue 3 the balance is better with substantial contributions from journalists and academic research articles that deal with how journalists are trained and how they work.

The two final sections go into other areas of media. One covers the market value of social media and mobile communications. The final section offers an important Arab theory of public relations.

In Section I, Journalists at Work, Krzysztof Burzynski, my colleague from the ABC News Warsaw bureau 1983 - 89, discusses how to work in war zones, something he has been doing for 30 years with major news organizations from around the world. If war zones are dangerous for every journalist, they are even more so for the one with a video camera. Burzynski is based in London and finds his way to the big stories with camera and laptop.

Golnaz Fakhari studied journalism in the US and then returned home to Iran. Her comments about how she “became a conservative journalist” are relevant and instructive for everyone in media or studying media in the Middle East.

Rym Tina Ghazal writes about her experiences covering war and violence in Lebanon and the advantages of speaking Arabic as well as the mixed blessings of being a woman. She is senior features reporter for The National, the Abu - Dhabi based English language government newspaper and a contributor to The Huffington Post.

Peyman Pejman is a former journalist, government spokesman, and teacher/trainer of journalists who draws on his experience in Central Asia, Africa, as well as the US to suggest a new direction for journalists getting into the profession today.

Ibitayo Popoola surveyed news publishers in Nigeria to determine “constraints/challenges of political reporting” in the country. This type of survey is needed in many countries where lip service to press freedom is accompanied by rules written and unwritten about what can be done and what is out of the question. Professor Popoola teaches at the University of Lagos in Nigeria.

Andreas Strater considers how journalists in Egypt and the UAE deal with the new transparency that allows them to interact with viewers and readers. He is a doctoral student at the University of Dortmund in Germany.

In Section II, Training Journalists, academics Parmod Saran Bhatnagar in Ethiopia and Maurice Ondine in Kuwait discuss techniques for training future journalists at universities. On the other hand, Magda Abu - Fadil, one of the best - known professional trainers of journalists in Arabic, English, and French, finds journalism education at Lebanese universities inadequate.

Parmod Saran Bhatnagar conducts a case study of journalism education at Bahir Dar University in Ethiopia where he works.

Maurice Ondine has relied on student newspapers as part of university training in several countries. Currently he's teaching in Kuwait and finding the lab paper once again a valuable tool.

In Section III, Social Media and Marketing, Swapna Koshy examines the monetary value of tweets and likes to put social media in an economic framework. Dr. Koshy teaches in the Master of Media and Communication at the University of Wollongong in Dubai.

Saumya Pant and Varsha Jain compare mobile marketing in India and the United states and come up with some unexpected findings. Dr. Pant and Jain teach at the Mudra Institute of Communications in India.

In Section IV, An Arab Model of Public Relations, the authors offer a new theory based on an extensive survey of how public relations might work in the Arab world. MEME is delighted to be the first to publish their work. We look forward to the ongoing discussion. Dr. Dedria Givens - Carroll teaches at the University of Louisiana in Lafaeytte while Naghan El Karhili is a doctoral student who also teaches there.

Section I: Journalists at Work

Filming in Hostile Environments: For Camera Operators and Their Teams

By Krzysztof Burzynski | krisbur28@yahoo.com.uk

My goal is to give you an idea of what kind of situations you may be confronted with, what living conditions you may expect, and what kind of danger is waiting for you in hostile environment. I will give you examples of various situations I was in, and, as you see, I did survive.

Each of you has experience with filming and working in a team to produce the film to be broadcast. In conflicts there are similarities to what you have already experienced, and also situations that are very different than filming, for example, a television serial.

You sometimes will have no chance to take a second shot and usually the command 'action' is given only once.

My first experience of television coverage in a hostile environment took place in 1982 just after martial law was declared in Poland. I was hired by ITN and couple of months later by ABC News to work in Poland. In the mid 1980s ABC News expanded news coverage from the Warsaw bureau to other countries in Eastern Europe and in the 1990s to the Middle East. When ABC closed its bureau in Warsaw, I began to freelance for ABC and other organizations.

In October 2001 I was sent to first Afghanistan by NBC and spent more than three months there. I was in Afghanistan again in 2002 for the anniversary of September 11. In October 2002 I was with NBC at Moscow's Dubrovka Theatre filming the hostage crisis and the assault by Russian special forces.

At the beginning of 2003 I was in Turkey, filming preparations for the war in Iraq for NBC. During the war I spent nearly three weeks on board of USNS Comfort, the aircraft carrier converted into a hospital, filming the one - hour documentary 'Hospital Ship at War' that received the Cine Award the same year. Finally, I was in Iraq six times for FOX News. Altogether I spent more than half a year there, embedded many times with the US Army.

The goal for the team; was, is, and will always be the same - to get on air a video report of the event.

My first experience was in my own country, and knowledge of local customs helped me. The practical knowledge I obtained helped me survive many dangerous situations later. Then I was a local hire who could speak English, working with an American correspondent and producer. Later I worked with American correspondents and producers as a foreigner with locally hired people. Remembering my experiences as a local hire helped me predict the reactions of local people in dramatic situations.

During the coverage of martial law in Poland, more than 25 years ago, the whole team worked hard to get on air news coverage of demonstrations, police riots, strikes of workers in shipyards, steel mills and other factories.. In the turmoil of demonstrations and clashes with police the camera crews could be beaten by police or attacked by demonstrators who thought we were a police crew. Our tapes could be confiscated by police, ruining our efforts to get dramatic shots on air.

The team: Correspondent, Producer, Associate producer, Local fixer, Interpreter, Cameraman, Soundman, Videotape editor, and Driver.

For location shooting the team consisted of a correspondent or a producer, camera crew, an interpreter and a driver. In those days the camera was huge, and the Umatic tape cassette was recorded on a BVU, a heavy recorder, carried by the soundman.

To achieve our task we had to

- Reach the location
- Film, collect sound bites, shoot stand - up piece to camera with a correspondent
- Return team and tapes to base
- Edit the package following the script written by the correspondent
- Transmit the final product

Demonstrations and clashes with police usually happened at the same locations in different cities. Solidarity celebrated anniversaries of tragic events in Polish history. It was widely known that on May 1 and May 3 thousands of protesters would gather, and police violence would follow.

Our team had to get the coverage of the clashes in Warsaw, Gdansk, and usually Krakow or Wroclaw to film the activity of Solidarity leader Lech Walesa with at least a short sound bite from him. Since he didn't speak English, a translator was needed. The correspondent was required at the location to shoot a stand up and then in the bureau to write the script and record a track.

The bureau was in Warsaw, and Walesa was usually in Gdansk, more than two hundred miles north via one - lane roads. The feed point to transmit our final product was at Polish Television about fifteen minutes from the bureau.

Editing was with Umatic equipment, heavy and not very portable recorders. Thus moving the edit room from the bureau to other locations seldom happened. Linear editing was much slower than today's computer editing, so there were few last minute changes.

Although Polish authorities couldn't openly forbid us covering the events because they had signed various international commitments to support a free press, they did their best to make our task impossible or very difficult.

Polish News Agency Interpress, the structure created to deal with foreign correspondents officially accredited in Poland, demanded the presence of the American reporter or producer during filming riots. Each bureau of western television had two foreigners, a correspondent and a producer. That limited us officially to two locations.

To get coverage from more locations, the camera crew travelled with equipment packed in ordinary suitcases. They met in a safe flat with a window facing the location of the expected event, arranged in advance by members of Solidarity. Often local oppositionists carried the suitcases with gear, so neighbours wouldn't suspect foreign media was around.

Another difficult task was delivering a tape with the material to the edit room in another city. Often police patrols checked identification documents of everyone near anti - government demonstrations. Non - residents of the area were detained. That wasn't life threatening, but the tape would be confiscated, and the material wouldn't air that day.

We had to be clever. I usually had a shirt in a different color than my sweater or jacket in my pack, and after leaving the sensitive area my description changed from 'tall male with moustache in red sweater' to 'tall male with moustache in denim shirt.' Leaving with the tape cassette under my shirt - tape in those days was bigger than a paperback - a bunch of flowers in my hand, and walking fast to where a driver was waiting, I looked like a guy heading for a date with his girlfriend.

Often outside Warsaw, we rented a car of the same type used by the secret police. Several times we were able to cross a blockade because the low - ranked policemen took us for their agents. I even followed a police car, using the horn, and they sped up, turned on the flashers, and led me to the site of a huge demonstration.

We were pretty successful, but not always. Once one of our team travelled to an allegedly secure flat in Wroclaw and was arrested before he started filming. Somebody had tipped off the authorities.

Polish Agency Interpress, the government monitor for the foreign press, employed camera crews in order to lease them to foreign media. The officially signed international Helsinki agreement guaranteed freedom of the press, so no open action against our activities could be taken. Official salaries were well below the poverty line, and foreign employers paid our real salaries secretly.

We bad guys working for foreign media were invited several times to meetings with the head of the Western Media Department. Once he told us that rumours were circulating about financial gratuities we allegedly received for working with foreign correspondents but claimed he didn't believe such lies.

He also said that he couldn't ask us not to film the policeman beating the protester if the American producer or correspondent insisted, but suggested only wide shots to keep the correspondent happy and make the images less dramatic.

At another meeting prior to a day of expected demonstrations, a delegate from the Central Committee of the Communist Party said that if pictures of police beatings were shown on western television, we would lose our jobs. He said his words were confidential and should not be leaked to any foreign correspondent. He was surprised when we told him that his demands were in conflict with the Helsinki accord, and, of course, correspondents were promptly informed. Coverage was fair and not self - censored, and we got away with it.

That coverage many years ago in Poland still relates to situations in any hostile environment today. But there are some big differences.

These days you work as alone without a soundman. It makes the job of camera operator not only more difficult but more dangerous. When you are filming, you can easily miss something more interesting on the other side, and you may not see the danger.

After a long shooting day you have to edit the package, and you have to meet the deadline. You are the first (and only one) to blame if the material isn't ready.

The camera is much smaller than the ones used a few years ago. When I covered the war in Afghanistan for NBC in 2001 with a Betacam, I worked most of the time with an experienced soundman. NBC had two satellite dishes, and engineers working round the clock. Material was promptly transmitted to the US and edited in New York and other bureaus.

Only a couple of years later I was with FOX in Iraq using small cameras like the Sony PD - 150 or HVR - A1E without a soundman. I edited the packages with Final Cut Pro, then compressed them to MP4 format, and transmitted them with BGAN. I was also responsible for providing Internet access for the correspondent and producer via R - BGAN.

Live shots were done by videophone and Streambox, and I was responsible for those too. It is not very difficult to learn how to use these tools, but they make your working day very long. As the usual assignment lasts a couple of weeks, it is really a demanding job.

Editing is much faster now, and changes can be made quickly. Because a laptop is easy to carry, editing can be done almost everywhere. Transmission also can happen almost everywhere. Transmissions from military bases may be interrupted by military transmitting devices, and if that happens, we wait until the military transmission is over.

Skills needed for an assignment in a war zone

- You have to be multi - skilled, used to working alone and operating various cameras. You have to be experienced with operating SX machines and computer editing, preferably Final Cut and Avid although some companies like FOX and CNN use only Final Cut for field editing.
- You should complete a training course organized by companies like Centurion or AKE. The 5 - Day Hostile Environment and Emergency First Aid Training Course will help you with risk assessment and providing first aid to other team members. Your life and other people's may depend on your skills. The course will teach you how to avoid dangerous situations and how to behave if facing one. Some news companies don't hire camera crews without certificates from such courses.
- A basic knowledge of regional culture and local customs will help you to deal with locals. Most people are very sensitive and easily offended even if you are trying to respect them. You should know how to greet people in their language. Don't be ashamed of your pronunciation, your good intention is what matters.
- It is better if a cameraperson is an athlete and used to sleeping under any conditions for only a few hours a day. A sleeping bag and a camping mat on the floor or ground are more common than a soft bed in a luxury hotel. Body armor weighs about 10 kg, and the temperature in some countries may be over 50C. In Afghanistan, especially in the mountains, you can be exposed to low temperatures and low levels of oxygen due to high altitude.
- Smoking and drinking don't help in hostile environments. You might find yourself with no access to alcohol and tobacco for a long time.
- You can expect very limited access to everyday hygiene.
- You can't expect a great variety of food. In extreme conditions you survive on MREs (Meal Ready to Eat).
- You have to be a team player. After several weeks with the same people living in difficult conditions, almost anything may provoke a conflict.
- In Iraq you travel in an armored car and live in a secured compound, guarded by professionals from AKE. Not everybody handles the stress created by such living conditions.

Living with danger

Every day headlines report suicide attacks not only in Iraq, Afghanistan, the areas of regular conflicts, but in India and Pakistan too. In Iraq and Afghanistan you have to wear body armor outside the military base or compound where your organization is located. There are no safe places. If you are with the army on patrol or in action, you can be under fire just as they are. If you are filming in a crowded market, you can be the victim of a suicide bomber. You may also be a target for local gangs trying to kidnap you for a ransom or to steal your camera or money. Foreign journalists are like ATMs for them.

When you finally get to the war zone

- **Remember, you are a team player, so learn the first names of other members of your team.**
- **Try quickly to establish personal relationships with others, especially locals,** and try to find out what motivated them to take the job. That might help you estimate how much you can trust them. The locals are taking risk working for you. They and their families may be treated like traitors by insurgents. They can be blackmailed and could be working not only for your company but for your enemies too.

- **If you address your local fixer with greetings** and ask about his family before asking business - related question, you will make him work more effectively. Try to remember the first name of locals you are working with. It is difficult but worth doing.
- **If you are embedded with the army, you will be briefed on how to behave and whose orders to follow. During filming you will have an officer in charge of you, so follow orders; they are for your safety as well as the safety of the other members of your team.**
- **Never take any action, which may create danger for you or other team members.**
- **Listen carefully to the safety instructions before each action. It doesn't matter that you have heard the same safety procedures many times.** Make sure the person who tells you about safety procedures sees that you are listening. The company spends a huge amount of money to provide safety for the whole team.
- You don't have to remind yourself about adjusting the iris and focusing while filming because you have done it many times. But you probably have not been under military attack too often, so **listen carefully to the safety procedures** before the convoy starts to move.

About filming

- You are working with a team. Follow the requests of the correspondent and the producer. Don't hesitate to ask questions. You have to know whether you are filming a one - hour documentary or a news package of 1 minute and 28 seconds.
- If you are under fire, nobody will blame you for unsteady shots. Shots when you run with camera rolling just above the ground are very dramatic and widely used. Never use auto focus. Run with camera lens wide with focus close to infinity. The same is true with setting the iris - avoid auto mode. It is better in changing conditions when you're running to have something underexposed than the flickering caused by auto mode.
- The pocket reflector is a friendly tool for filming a short interview in dangerous conditions and easy to carry. You can hold a small reflector in your left hand while filming an interview with camera on your shoulder.
- You have to bear in mind that working conditions in hostile environments are usually far from ideal. Work fast and when you have enough footage, get back to base and start editing. Sometimes, the getaway decision is taken by others, and you have to follow orders.
- Try to get a variety of shots. If you travel in an armored vehicle through villages, do some filming. You never know when your convoy might be attacked. You can't roll nonstop, but if you are ready, sometimes you get a great shot. Remember tape is usually the cheapest part of coverage.
- You have to keep calm and be aware that often it is better to skip a shot from the opposite side because crossing the line of fire is too dangerous.
- Normally, after the team returns to the base, you will have to capture the footage to the computer. Transferring from tape to computer is real time and gives you, correspondent, and producer the chance to see the material you have shot. You won't always have time to screen the tape and choose the best shots for editing the package, so a script with time code of suggested shots to cover specific paragraphs is very helpful.
- Sometimes the correspondent might be doing live reports and has no time to screen the footage before writing the script, and that makes editing more complicated. You might not have the proper video to cover certain segments. You have to meet the deadline, and additional filming is out of the question. Cut - away or reverse shots can be helpful as well as those extra shots while nothing much was happening.

- Sometimes when you are editing with the producer in charge of the package, you might hear comments like ‘don’t try to find the best shots, take just decent ones, we have to finish editing soon, etc.’ Stay calm and edit the package the way you are asked to do. Accept compromise, but bear in mind that computer editing allows you to make quick changes after the package is finished. Then you might have a chance to correct the final product as long as you remember where the best shots are stored.

How I survived a dangerous situation

In the first week of November 2001, the NBC team was staying in a village in north Afghanistan and asking for volunteers to take a trip to the Panjshir Valley to join the other NBC team waiting for the collapse of the Taliban regime in Kabul. Their satellite amplifier had collapsed, they were running out of food, and they needed a second camera crew. We had three camera crews while they had only one.

The trip by heavy truck loaded with 66 cases of television equipment, food, and water should take about a week. The most difficult part of the journey was crossing the Hindu Kush mountains. The cold as well as the altitude of more than 16 thousand feet (5 thousand meters) scared everybody.

I was the only volunteer. The soundman I was working with openly said that his body might not survive such difficult conditions. He was never nervous in combat, but he admitted his objections to being exposed to extremely hard conditions. I accepted the assignment because I really love adventures and being in unpredictable situations.

My team included the Afghan fixer, Ahmed, who was 26. I met Ahmed the day before our trip but managed to chat with him for a while. I found out that his girlfriend lived in Kabul, so he had a personal reason to get there. The truck driver with two young helpers completed the team.

About five the next morning the truck was loaded, and we were ready to leave. Unexpectedly, the producer in charge of our operation in the north handed me a heavy envelope with 30 thousand dollars in cash, saying loudly in front of everyone that the team in the Panjshir Valley needed the money, but if I wanted money for the trip, he would give me more.

I was really shocked. I could probably trust my fixer, but the driver and his two helpers weren’t in the same category. I would robbed a mile after leaving our compound. So I thought quickly to come up with a way to avoid danger.

Using Ahmed the fixer as an interpreter, I demanded a huge Betacam camera case to be taken from the truck. I opened it, and I placed the envelope with money in the case and asked the driver to put the case back on the truck. That surprised the producer who had just given me the envelope. He asked whether the money would be safe there. I said we would see.

We started off, but after about two hundred yards, I asked the driver to make a U - turn and come back. When we stopped, I asked for the case to be taken out again. Everybody saw me open the case, take the envelope out, and close the case. They put the case back in the truck.

Then I went into the house for not more than two minutes. No one saw me slip the envelope into the inner pocket of my reporter’s jacket. I told Ahmed in English that I had given the money back to the producer. I wasn’t sure whether the driver understood English, but I wanted to convince him that I didn’t have the money. I knew that Ahmed was given five thousand for expenses, but he didn’t know whether I had any money with me. I knew that the driver received a cash advance of one thousand dollars and was promised two thousand more when he returned.

The trip was fantastic. In the mountains I walked most of the time, much faster than the truck. At crossroads I had to wait. We spent nights in villages sleeping near the fire. The driver kept picking up hitchhikers, tribesmen carrying rifles. I couldn’t stop him from accepting armed passengers.

To increase our safety I insisted on a short break every two hours. During the breaks I assembled the satellite phone and pretended I was talking to our base. I was only pretending because I wanted to save batteries. The telephone was a huge device and setting it up looked impressive.

After four or five days we reached a pass covered with fresh snow, and the driver refused to go on. He suggested that I hire horses to cross the higher mountains. He also demanded one thousand dollars for the partially completed journey. I told him we would spend the night there, and I would decide what to do the following morning. The driver answered that for staying another night he would charge three hundred dollars more.

This time I really called the Panjshir Valley team. They said we should return to the little town we passed three days earlier while they would try to arrange a helicopter to pick us up. That would make it impossible to transport some gear including the satellite amplifier. We agreed that I would call them again the following morning.

I had a long discussion with Ahmed and the owners of the horses. We learned that a BBC team had taken the same trip two weeks earlier before the heavy snowfall. We talked for several hours, and Ahmed kept mentioning his girlfriend. Finally we decided that we both wanted to take the risk and go.

Early next morning I assembled the satellite phone and called the Panjshir Valley team. I said I was ready to cross the mountains with the herd of 24 horses. They tried to stop me, but I said I was taking responsibility for the trip. Soon after, the driver approached me accompanied by two hitchhikers with Russian Kalashnikov rifles. He was in a good mood and demanded only one thousand dollars.

As Ahmed translated, I said that they could easily kill me, but it wouldn’t be profitable as I was calling our colleagues every hour and a half. They would send the helicopter if I stopped calling. I suggested to the driver that he hire a horse and join us and negotiate with the people who were on their way to meet us on the other side.

The other option for him was to go back and talk to the producer who had negotiated the payment with him. Ahmed was very brave, not showing nerves. Then they pointed their guns again at me, and asked me to write a letter to the producer. I wrote it at gunpoint. I felt we were safe for the moment, and I would talk to the producer before the driver reached him.

In this case, I took decisions alone, but most of the time you are part of a well - constructed machine. Working for major news organizations you can count on professionals making decisions about logistics and will be able to focus on filming.

Long ago, our ABC News Warsaw Bureau Chief Alma Kadragic used to say, before each action, “the strategy (strategia in Polish) is . . .” and everything worked fine.

No matter how brilliant and dramatic the next shot might be, If it creates unnecessary risks for you or any member of your team, DON'T TAKE IT!

How I Became a Conservative Journalist

By Golnaz Fakhari | golifakhari@gmail.com

No matter how brilliant and dramatic the next shot might be, if it creates unnecessary risk for you or any member of your team - DON'T TAKE IT!

She was talking to her friends, and laughing loudly. We were all standing in front of the Tehran University campus, and I could tell by their backpacks and binders that they were students. They looked confident and welcoming, just the kind of girls I needed to interview for my article about women's social roles since the Islamic Revolution. I couldn't have asked for more. So I straightened up and walked toward them. They did not look much older than I, but they were much taller. They noticed my existence and, one by one, looked at me. For a moment I got my old courage back. "Excuse me, ladies, would you mind if I ask you a couple of questions?" I asked. "I'm a journalist and I'm writing this article."

"No."

That little word is among those I have heard most since I came home to Iran last summer after a year at the University of British Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism. I had long been used to hearing this word, but when I moved to Vancouver to start my master's degree program, it seems I left the memory of denial and rejection behind as well.

Yet it is not easy to start a career in one place and try to pursue it in another, especially in places where people's reactions and the institutionalized cultures have huge differences. For the first months of my work as a journalist, I had no problem involving myself in any story. Trying to start a conversation in your second language is not always easy, especially when those conversations are the most important part of your job, and even though my professors and classmates don't recall my personality as shy and reserved, I had my share of small panic attacks now and then.

After a few months in the field, though, I was unstoppable. I would run toward total strangers to ask for interviews. I was not intimidated by anyone, even the most mysterious and clever politicians. Being a student helped me get in touch with almost anyone involved in the stories I pursued; my sources genuinely wanted me to learn. I was treated with respect, and no one questioned my ability to report just like a professional journalist with 20 years' experience.

In Iran, where I was born and grew up, things are not so simple. Even though people are warm and kind, and I can speak to them in Farsi, my native language, I am slowly losing my sharper side - not only in meeting people and getting interviews, but also in finding new ideas and new stories.

My mentor on Shargh newspaper's international desk, where I was a summer intern, once told me: "If you want to work in the Middle East, you should try to stay away from anything that is politically inflamed, and there is nothing that's not political over here. Get into sports. Become a sports reporter." He paused for a moment. "What am I saying? Even sports are politically inflamed in this part of the world."

When a journalist decides what perspective she will take on her narrative, obviously it is important for her to know what message she will be sending via the story. Political messages are not very pleasant in Iran, and I have been told continually to stay away from stories that will have political background. But since decisions made by politicians affect people's day - to - day lives, it is really hard to do a story without a snip of politics. As a result of such complexities, many people won't agree to an interview unless they "really" know you and you have a great deal of credibility to them.

There are no special criteria for a person to become a source. Sources have to be open and honest and, above all, trustworthy. They need to be able to trust journalists as well; they need to know that their reputations and images won't be damaged. Of course, there are times when people are willing to talk and to address their concerns about the issues, but - like those students at Tehran University - most of the time they won't even stop to listen.

I have been rejected so many times that I cannot think otherwise. Yet the fear of rejection has cost me my confidence and boldness, my eagerness to investigate and make new connections. So, instead of becoming more confident, especially now that I can start conversations in my native language, I have become conservative in my methods.

I once decided to do an article about minority marriages in Iran, with a clear vision of what my piece would be. I wanted to interview young Armenians and Zoroastrians to see if they ever had romantic relationships with someone outside their religion. As a teenager, I had a few Armenian friends, and I always wanted to know how their families would react if they dated or even married a man of a different religion. None of them agreed to be interviewed, since they feared their families would recognize their stories.

Some date Muslim boys and never tell their families; if their relationships lead to marriage, under Iranian law they will have to convert to Islam. One of them told me this is the main reason families don't agree to such marriages.

"The Iranian society leans more toward conservatism," said Mariam Taheri, an Iranian professor of mathematics based in Doha, Qatar. "People don't trust strangers easily. There's no doubt that culture plays a tremendous role here, but government's attitude toward journalists also helps this perspective." Although she says gender is not a factor, she admitted that "people might have different attitudes toward a female journalist, and I think that's because of our culture, which sometimes doesn't adopt the concept of women's social activity."

Taheri, 51, became a teacher after her religious family told her that the only "respectful" job for a woman is teaching. "There weren't many educated women in our family," she said. "I was among the first ones that got into a college. My father was so against it that he actually locked me up in my room for two days. At the end he agreed, on one condition: that I would become a teacher and nothing else."

She believes that if she had been born in another family, maybe a more liberal one, or in another place and time, she could have become a writer, as what she wanted to be. "My family didn't want me to write about love and romantic relationships; they thought this kind of issues shouldn't be in a young woman's mind," she said with a laugh. "Culture and tradition are deep - rooted in Iranian society. A family's values sometimes are more important than a person's dreams. My family's religious ideology didn't bear my education, and when it did, they made sure that my future career wouldn't damage their religious image."

There may be very few similarities between Taheri and me, aside from our nationality and sex; we share nothing when it comes to our families and social class. She is a middle - aged, curious teacher who spends her days at her apartment with her little terrier, Almas, and detests social gatherings. I'm a young journalist and Christiane Amanpour wannabe still trying to find myself in my chosen career. But those social values we do share have much bigger effect on our professional lives than anything else.

In Iranian society, people try to keep a low profile, and it is hard for them to open up. It is not difficult to participate in people's conversations; I have involved myself in total strangers' chats. They do not seem to care who I am or what I do until the moment they find out that I write for living. For most of them, it is not usual to be pursued by a young woman who is asking them about social and economic problems, and who might later address their thoughts in her articles.

Ali, a taxi driver who once gave me a ride, was quite very comfortable when I asked him how he felt about the economy. He started talking about his salary and living expenses and did a little math. He was actually an expert on calculating how most people are living on low salaries these days, and he really wanted me to understand what was going on. The friendly chat ended as soon as I revealed that I was a journalist, and even though I had no intention of using his voice anywhere, he became very upset and asked me to get out of his cab.

Of course, even in Iran there are many journalists who have done a great work - people like Parisa Hafezi, Reuters' Tehran bureau chief, who won the 2011 Courage in Journalism Award, or my colleagues at Shargh newspaper, most of whom have worked in Iran all their lives. They know where to look for stories and how to win people's trust; it also helps to have good connections here and there. But even these veteran journalists have a hard time putting ordinary people's voices in their stories.

The difference between being a "good" journalist and a "responsible" one is something I never noticed until I came home to Iran. To be a good journalist is to do whatever it takes to get your story, even if that means going overboard with questions and putting the interviewee on the spot. A responsible journalist is the one who is aware of her interviewees' feelings and considerate of their situation, who will not risk their reputation for her own fame.

I was a good journalist, or at least my colleagues in Vancouver and Iran say I was. But in Iran, as much as I want to continue being a good journalist, a small part of me tells me that I "need" to be more responsible. As a result, I have become cautious and conservative.

Iftah Ya Semseem or Open Sesame: From a Correspondent's Notes
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"The public have an insatiable curiosity to know everything, except what is worth knowing. Journalism, conscious of this, and having tradesman-like habits, supplies their demands."
OSCAR WILDE, "The Soul of Man Under Socialism"

In an age of instantaneous information, when more and more readers turn to social media like Twitter for news and spend less and less time reading long articles or doing research in libraries, it is important to reflect on what gave birth to the word journalism in the first place: the journal. Based on the French *journal*, which in turn comes from the Latin *diurnal*, or daily, the daily journal was a humble notebook when I first started journalism, before it was a personal blog, tweets or updates on Facebook. The notepad was, and remains for many of us, the most trusted companion, the backup that saves and records a wealth of observations and information that later forms the foundation for many of our stories and documentaries.

I was surprised to find out that many journalists these days never write or ever wrote anything in a notebook. Some immediately tweet what they see, then forget about it and move on to new tweets. Then there are those who rely solely on computers and smartphones, noting things there as well as filing through them. It is the nature of the job these days: you must file as soon as possible, before anyone else, if you are to get the "scoop." But it comes at a cost.

I find it hard to reflect on my stories or find overall patterns or lessons whenever I haven't written down all my first impressions in a notebook. Even if you look back at your published stories, things have been edited out, and unless you made note of the changes, they get lost.

Just how much I have forgotten over the years became blatantly apparent when I found several notebooks from my travels. The notebooks ended up being more like a diary; sometimes they were in the form of *yumiyat* dailies or *mouzakarāt* memoirs, as they are known in Arabic. Often they include commentaries and observations on political and social instances happening around me, more than an open book into my private life.

Interestingly, one of the earliest known diaries was actually written in the Arab world. It belonged to an 11th-century scholar and contemporary historian from Baghdad, Abu Ali Ibn Al Banna Al Hanbali. His diary was called *Al Tarikh* (Arabic for dates) because it used dates like those found in modern diaries.

Ibn Al Banna wrote in the first person, relating incidents and events that occurred around him and those he overheard from other sources. He was sometimes like a journalist in his writing, reporting *Akhabar* or news, such as an earthquake that shook Palestine, and he would source this piece of news.

It is fitting, then, that one of my most interesting collections of diaries was from Baghdad, Iraq. I rediscovered these crumpled notepads in one of my boxes, buried under layers of already yellowed newspaper clippings and trinkets.

When you step back and simply read over your old notes, you may learn something new about the place and time. It is also an important mirror of yourself, what you chose to put down and why.

Being an Arab Canadian journalist who started reporting from war zones back in 2003 - a time when there were few Arab women in the field - made me stand out and helped me gain the trust of people who allowed me into their homes. Besides having a common language and culture, it was their kindness and willingness to trust me that allowed me to write and document great stories no one else was bothering to write.

It is different now. There are sometimes more women in this profession than men, and many Arab women are daring to go and report from the world's most dangerous areas. It is truly the century of the woman.

Iraq and Lebanon: The red, blue, and pink notepads

I had no system, but I scribbled numbers on the front of the notepads. For some reason, I bought a whole stock in just three colors. Most of what I wrote in them was never published. A lot of the information was buried in my master's thesis, which in turn was edited and had details removed, which were preserved in the notepads.

In the case of Iraq, the notes date to 2003 - 04, capturing the period right after the fall of Iraq's President Saddam Hussein, before the onset of deadly clashes that lasted for many years - some of sectarian nature, others more politically driven and manifestations of outright terrorism.

Back then, hectic traffic, dead phone lines, power shortages and lack of security limited access to sources, for journalists and Iraqis in general. Interestingly enough, while conditions are now much better and there are more reliable phone lines and mobile networks, not much has changed in Iraq. It is still a risky place, and a bomb can go off at any time at any place.

I tried to reconnect with many of the people I met. But most of those in Iraq have disappeared; either they were killed or they left Iraq out of great disappointment in what they hoped was a new Iraq.

Meanwhile, the notebooks capturing moments from Lebanon are so full it would take a book to sum them up. Lebanon is always full of action, and while I did visit Syria regularly, that was where we all went to take a break from the stress and chaos in Lebanon. That has completely changed now.

Beginning with the first uprising in March 2011, Syria has sunk into a deadly conflict, leaving thousands of people dead and more than a million displaced, with an unprecedented destruction to its cities and landscapes. Thankfully, I also made notes when I visited Syria, and will save those for another day.

Here are some stories and observations out of Iraq and Lebanon as revived through the notepads.

Iraq: Tea, Poetry and a Different Kind of Expression

The veteran Iraqi poet Sadiq Al - Jalaad, or Al - Jowari, as he is better known, likes to sit at his favorite teashop sipping tea as he writes poetry. He's famous for romantic and seductive Arabic poetry called *ghazel*. At 80, Al - Jowari still writes and has recently taken up a hobby: editing poems from hopeful Iraqi poets.

Al - Jowari reads out a poem written by a teenage girl, titled "my earth":

*I felt trapped within the walls of my sadness,
dark thoughts surround me and
drown me as I scream knowing no one will
hear me and my pain, but you my dearest
country as you embrace me with the
strength of your past and overwhelm me
with the odor of your earth.*

Al - Jowari says he has noticed a dramatic shift toward "sentimental, idealistic and nationalistic poems" since the fall of the regime. "We are now hopeful and dreamy and cling to what we love, able to express our innermost desires and our fears," says Al - Jowari, who suffered in jail for having once expressed a desire for change in one of his poems.

"People don't understand the kind of misery and suppression we lived under with Saddam. There isn't a house in Iraq untouched by him in some negative way. My brother was a simple man who said, 'Why should we fight a neighbor? Why go to war with Iran?' And we never saw him again, and ten years later they tell us where he was buried. The regime prevented us from even sending prayers on our dead relatives."

Al - Jowari once wrote a poem "Cursing Saddam from dawn to dusk." Fearing execution, he hid it in the curtain rod in his bedroom, and there it remained for 20 years. He finally took it out the day Saddam was captured but still refuses to publish it.

"Even in the new Iraq a poem can get you killed!" Al - Jowari laughs. "One against Saddam will get me killed, and a poem praising the Americans will get me killed. Sadly, I still have to be careful with what I publish."

While Al - Jowari finishes his tea, a group of young women spontaneously start singing in the teashop. Their husbands watch, looking bored. The women make their own percussion, drumming on the tables and cardboard boxes. Al - Jowari pretends the women have gathered there just for his pleasure, for "women are my passion," he says. Then he blows them a kiss and recites a couple of flirtatious lines. He seems to forget he is 80 and missing some teeth.

Later, the teashop owner gently tells the group that this is not how Iraqi women behave. "Just because the Americans are here doesn't mean Iraqi women should forget their values," he says. In short, they are politely kicked out, and their singing has not been heard again in the teashop.

Al - Jowari says Iraqis will need time to become comfortable with the different ways people are expressing themselves. "I am 80 years old and I have never seen Iraqi women sing in a teashop," he says. "But I have to accept that part of what a new Iraq brings is change. And by Allah, this one is a very good one!"

Putting it all in perspective, he says: "I feel the happiness we gained from this freedom is incomplete, for really, we didn't bring down Saddam with our own hands. The same people I wrote against in the 1960s and 1970s rescued us. Any freedom we have now is difficult to enjoy, as it is not really ours. It leaves us feeling awkward."

It is with this sentiment lingering in his heart that Al - Jowari begins writing a new poem titled "The New Iraq." This is his third attempt. He says it has been hard defining exactly what "the new Iraq" really means. "Iraq is like an old belly dancer used to moving her waist a certain way," he says. "She is now trying to learn a new and 'freer' shake. But there is an old Arab saying that when the belly dancer dies, the waist still keeps shaking. Old habits die hard."

A Roundabout and Its Story

In one of Baghdad's famous roundabouts, Kahramana Square, stands a lovely green statue of a young woman pouring water into 40 large jars. To some the square is known as "the 40 Thieves Square," to others simply the Ali Baba Square, a tribute to the ancient and timeless tale of Ali Baba from *Alf Layla Wa Layla* - "A Thousand and One Nights" - as told by the enchanting Shahrazade, who saved her own life and changed ours by using her storytelling gifts.

In the tale, the poor woodcutter Ali Baba is in the forest with his donkeys, collecting wood, when a group of men on horseback ride past him. He watches them enter a cave, after the magic words "Open sesame." When he uses the phrase, Ali Baba discovers a cave filled with hidden treasures of silver and gold.

I was told by many Iraqis that references to this old tale of greed, wit and love never seem to go out of fashion; they always go back to it. The underlying theme is theft. For instance, after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the fall of Saddam Hussein, Ali Baba became a metaphor for looters who destroyed

or stole from national buildings in Iraq. American forces accused of robbing Iraqis of their honor have been compared to Ali Baba. But the story also has other connotations, equally relevant to post-Saddam Iraq.

Iraq with its wealth of history and natural resources laments its hidden treasures. Who took them and what has happened to them since 2003 is heartbreaking to Iraqis who lost hundreds of thousands of people in deadly clashes and are still losing them. In the story, Ali Baba stashed as much of the treasure as he could. Later, when the 40 thieves realized he knew their secret, they decided to kill him. In the tale, stolen treasures came with a deadly cost.

Forgotten Pages, Lessons Learned

“Only in Iraq” was something I frequently found myself saying whenever unbelievable things would occur during my stay. I would end up saying “Only in Lebanon” when I stayed in Lebanon. And then when I moved to the United Arab Emirates, guess what I caught myself saying? It is funny how we tend to forget that every place is unique in its eccentricity. But only in places of chaos do we have chances we would never get if everything were settled.

For example: When I was still finishing my master’s in journalism, I was honored as a guest lecturer on Canadian journalism at Baghdad’s journalism college. I was invited to do outrageous things like sit and “get comfortable” in Adnan Pachachi’s chair in his own private office when he was the president of the Governing Iraqi Council.

When I first went to Iraq, I was equipped with nothing more than my curiosity and faith, to do “a cool master’s research project” on the newly acquired freedom of expression. Iraqi artists, writers and poets I had read about and studied as a child in Saudi Arabia actually agreed to meet and chat with me, a complete stranger, and welcomed me into their homes. I can’t believe I had a poem written for me and signed by a legendary Iraqi poet in the midst of a run-down teashop with an almost toothless cashier!

Getting down to the actual interviewing and observation of the local media in action was a bit tougher than expected. Given that there were about 170 newspapers in Baghdad alone, I was overwhelmed deciding which to explore and which editors and journalists to interview. Having no functioning phone lines didn’t help matters. I ended up being driven most places and trusting strange men, or walking for hours and often wasting more hours waiting for someone to talk to me. But in the end, most were helpful and welcomed me into their workplaces and homes.

I couldn’t help admiring the local journalists and their perseverance despite financial, transportation and communication problems. They kept in touch with me and kept me updated on things as I worked away at my projects back in Canada.

Technical matters aside, there was the looming danger that I might be a target. Wearing a bulletproof vest was like saying, “Yoo - hoo, I am here, shoot me!” to anyone with a grudge. Based on observation and the word on the street, I avoided wearing a vest as much as possible; it was just too bulky and always triggered suspicious questions from passers-by and interviewees.

I just hope my father doesn’t read this part, for I promised I would always wear one, but sometimes I think it gave me a false sense of security. I applied this rule in other war zones whenever I could. I avoided wearing the vest in the 2006 Lebanon war, unless I was very close to the fighting, when I wore both vest and helmet. A dent and scrape at the top of my helmet is proof that it shielded me from a sharp object in the midst of conflict.

However, no matter how much fun one has in hot zones, there were many times I almost got hurt. And that is without even talking about bomb explosions or random shoot-outs. Being a woman in Iraq got me into many places I knew others had difficulty getting access to. For example, I had no trouble

going in and out of the tightly guarded “green zone,” home to the governing authority in Iraq, while other journalists often called ahead and stood in lines. I respected the soldiers, and they seemed to respect and trust me.

I especially got along with the Polish army, as I spoke their language and understood their culture. They knew how it felt to be occupied and hence treated the Iraqis much better than the other armies there. I would often see a group of Iraqis sharing a bottle of vodka with Polish soldiers who were taking a break.

Then again, being a woman had its disadvantages. I would get dirty comments from passers-by, and sometimes comments about various amusing ways of “frisking” for security reasons. Once I was even locked in by a shop owner pretending he heard something outside and “wanted me to be safe.” I picked up the most expensive thing I could see in the shop and threatened to break it against the window. It worked; the shop owner was quick to unlock the door for me. I can’t believe I did that, but then again, what else could I do? I felt I was viewed as either a delicate flower that needed protection or a sex object that needed a different kind of attention. Either way, I wished I knew some karate or any kind of self-defense moves so I could put some of the men in their place.

I rarely wore the hijab, only at a mosque or the Al-Sadr area. It was actually funny to hear how the locals would comment on how they knew when a woman was a journalist by how “she would wear the hijab everywhere.” Since then, many Iraqi women have become more conservative. Covered women were rare in Saddam’s Iraq. Now people cling to religion more, especially as they struggle to make sense of things.

It wasn’t just Iraqi men who were rude to women. I don’t know if it was the effect of bombs, the looming sense of danger or the lack of entertainment, but everyone seemed especially frisky in Baghdad. It was the same during Lebanon’s many conflicts.

Western Media: Lost in Translation

While living in Baghdad, I ended up working on some stories with major international news agencies. As a fresh journalist on the media scene, I learned a lot about the inner workings of Western media corporations. It wasn’t really that hard, since the journalists all stayed at the same hotel, hung out at the same places and talked about the same things.

It was kind of disappointing to find out there is truth to the rumor that “star” foreign correspondents rarely leave their hotels in a conflict zone. While a few brave ones actually ventured beyond secure and familiar areas, most waited for the cameraperson to come back with footage and the producer with information. They would write to the pictures or go on top of the roof and do “live shots” in front of a geographical monument to give it that “I am in a foreign land” look while talking to the camera about what they have “seen” or “heard.”

It was the same in Lebanon. The local media would risk everything to expose what was happening on the borders and in the south as it was being bombarded by Israel, only to have our stories stolen and passed off as scoops or breaking news by the bigger foreign media. In the 2006 summer war with Israel, there were numerous times when we local journalists were saved by Hezbollah members, picked up on their scooters and moved to safer grounds. I would then see those who saved us killed and their homes destroyed; it was heartbreaking.

It was a time full of hate. Lebanon always seems on the brink of another civil war, and it remains a country divided by its warlords and parties.

Whatever the case, no story is worth your life. But there is something to be said for a journalist who has researched the story and actually done all the interviews as well, who has been there where it all

happened. At the same time without the actual presence of the professional journalist, a story could be missed, misunderstood or even overstated. A lot of journalists will hate me for saying this, but relying on translators who have no journalistic training or lack an understanding of core journalistic values cannot produce what a professional journalist could.

Some translators even admitted to me they lied about who they were and what they had done in the past when they were interviewed for the job - understandable, given how everyone in places like Iraq, Lebanon and now Syria is desperate for a stable job.

A story can be skewed or lost if the wrong questions are asked in an interview, especially in Iraq, where interviews are done on the run. So asking the right questions is critical. I have often heard a translator, through no fault of his or her own, ask a question like “Do you feel happy or sad?” as opposed to asking “How do you feel?”

Independent journalists have a crazy time in war zones, where they are overcharged for everything. They need to give \$200 to every taxi driver or source to help them out, the way big corporations do. I didn’t have a lot of money, and that was a great barrier in the beginning, but later I gained the trust of a few locals who helped me get around. It also helped to make friends with the chief of police in Iraq and later in Lebanon.

“Being a fixer is the best - paying job,” a translator told me once. He showed me around and introduced me to many locals I wouldn’t have had access to on my own. He forgot to tell me one more thing: it is also the riskiest job, as a fixer can be viewed as a traitor. He is dead now, shot in an ambush, leaving behind a widow and two sweet boys.

A Moment Can Change Everything

One day in Baghdad, I was heading toward *Al - Sabah* newspaper, formerly funded by the United States but now working independently, still struggling to gain credibility among the locals. Just minutes before I arrived, someone in a passing car shot at the office, killing a security guard and injuring innocent bystanders. I remember looking at the bullet holes in the walls and getting an eerie feeling. Now I understand why newspapers have security guards with guns.

Another time I ended up at an Iraqi mafia leader’s house by mistake, thinking his house was that of a renowned retired journalist. After being locked in a luxurious living room for two hours - because I was “a nobody,” according to the self - proclaimed godfather - he had one of his thugs escort me out to the right address, but only after I had tea with him.

The journalist lived a block down and had a blast laughing at my good, or bad, fortune - it depends on how you look at it. I was told the godfather was very dangerous and often dealt with the Fedayeen, Saddam Hussein’s personal militia. The journalist said that I must have had a guardian angel, for no one “just walks out of that place.” Or maybe it was the chain of prayer beads I bought from a local store that protected me.

I think it was beginner’s luck. I owe a lot of thanks to all the people I have met through my career. I can’t believe I had the great fortune and honor of being trusted with their tales, their lives, their secrets. In the end, names didn’t matter, for most just called me the Canadian, or *Al - Kanadeya*, as I used to carry with me everywhere a handbag with “Canada” printed on it.

This bag, which my dad bought me in the Montreal airport, became my good luck charm and my second ID, after my passport, in places like Iraq. After a while, security guards and other officials stopped asking me for my passport; they just looked at my bag and waved me in. That was a nice feeling.

What Can Journalists Do

By Peyman Pejman | peymanpejman1@gmail.com

When a friend asked me to write an article for this issue, I first said “yes” without knowing what I was going to write about. I was on a train from Munich, Germany, to Vienna, Austria. By pure coincidence, the train was just passing through Salzburg, the Austrian city that hosts the famous Global Seminar.

I knew about the Salzburg program because a few years back, one of my former colleagues had taken a few students to the International Center for Media and the Public Agenda (ICMPA), which according to its web site, “brings together for three weeks every summer undergraduate and graduate students from a broad variety of top universities around the world. Faculty and deans of these universities participate in the Academy, giving lectures and acting as mentors to small teams of students.”

That moment - receiving the message from my colleague and the train passing in front of Salzburg - got me thinking about journalism - again. I was an active journalist for decades, covered several major international stories, received awards, and then made the conscious decision to leave the field. I was not the only one.

Many - and I mean many - of my close friends and colleagues had left journalism starting late 1980s and early 1990s. Basically, we had come to the mutual realization that American journalism had changed so much over the years that we did not really want to have anything to do with it. Between the skydiving advertising revenues - which led to ever - shrinking newsroom budgets that in turn resulted in editors caring less and less about international coverage of news, events, and trends - and the intrusion of Internet technologies into all aspects of our lives, there was little room left for those of us “foreign correspondents” who wanted to stay overseas and cover international affairs.

I did not completely break off with journalism, however. Partly by design and partly by accident, I ended up teaching journalism for a few years, including in Dubai. It was - and remains - the second most fulfilling profession I have had, after journalism itself.

The point I am going to try to make in this article is that while the world of journalism and, communication as a whole, has changed, this is a perfect opportunity for communication schools to redouble their efforts to attract students and train them for a different type of journalism.

Obviously, the world of teaching is not divorced from the realities of the job market, and students now are more tuned into the economic realities of the market than they have ever been. That means, sadly, that fewer and fewer students want to go into journalism. I probably had one student interested in journalism for every 10 keen on related fields such as public relations. But that was okay with me. If I could get one student each semester, or even each year, to become interested in exploring journalism - let alone commit to it - I was happy. And I cannot complain. I have not kept records, but I think I did achieve my goal.

The reason the confluence of the email and the location prompted me to accept the invitation to write these lines is to tell all readers - especially students - from personal experience that regardless of the changing nature of journalism, it is still - in my skewed and biased opinion - one of the most respected and needed professions in the world. It’s something to which students should continue to aspire. To badly amputate and cheapen the famous and beautiful John F Kennedy saying, “Ask not what journalism can do for you; ask what you can do for the world of journalism and communication as a whole.” Why do I say that? From personal experience. Please continue reading!

After I left journalism, I entered the world of “communications” and “public information,” primarily for the US Department of State and United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa. It was precisely because of those jobs that I am convinced communication schools and programs have a great

What I have realized in the past few jobs is that the gulf between journalists and “the other side” has remained as wide as it has been since the 1970s. And that is not good. That needs to change. I can’t tell you how many times I heard - and cringed - at the half - joke of my journalist friends asking, “so, you decided to join the dark side,” meaning the “government” side. And if I had a dime for every time one of my government or UN friends bad - mouthed journalists, I could probably retire rich. The state of affairs bothers me, and I think it is something that the new generation of journalists should try to address by making each side understand the real job of the other side.

To me, the job of a journalist, as opposed to a columnist, is to gather facts and figures and try to present the story in the fairest way to the reader so he or she can use that information and make decisions and opinions that are right for him or her. A columnist can opine and be one - sided, but a journalist should try to be as neutral as possible.

I always told my students that there is no such a thing as an unbiased journalist, only a fair one. As soon as a journalist starts writing a lead or zooming the camera, the bias comes out. And that’s okay as long as the journalist makes a fair attempt to present all sides of the story equally. I think what has gotten us - the journalism community as a whole - into trouble with “the other side” is that we have not got the “fairness mix” right.

Certainly in the United States - which has influenced the shape of journalism in many countries around the world - the scope of journalism changed when Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein helped untangle the Watergate syndrome. Between the 1970s and the 1990s, journalists considered their primary job to act as “government watchdog.” Again, I would argue that it is a matter of balance. I have no problem with journalists defining themselves that way but making sure government officials are “honest” should not be our only job. Our job should be to “introduce” government and society - writ - large - to each other, to be a social mediator - not an arbitrator - if you like.

For their part, our interlocutors in the government and international organization circles have the misconception that every journalist is “out to get them.” For all the training that large corporations, governments, and international organizations provide their public affairs, public information, and communications personnel, I have met a rare few who understand journalists, what they do, and what they are after.

And this is a lesson that journalism and communications schools and universities can also learn from. Looking back at the years I taught, sure, we taught a lot of journalism and a lot of public relations courses - this is the pool from which organizations usually hire their communication employees - but we rarely tried to teach one side what the other side really thinks, wants, and needs. In the years since I left active journalism and teaching journalism, I have come to realize how big a rift there is between these two.

The organizations want journalists to always reflect what their bosses do, what messages their superiors want to push, and what activities they want covered but don’t quite understand how to deal with journalists to make stories more attractive to them and get upset when they read something less than fully flattering. Organizations often make the mistake of hiring communications and public information officers who are not the least interested in the work and professional life of journalists.

In the two UN peacekeeping missions where I worked, neither of the spokespersons or heads of media relations units had regular “get - to - know - and - chat” meetings with journalists. Their only encounters were at official press conferences or when their boss had an off - the - record or for - background interview with a journalist or commissioned the communications person to have those meetings.

While people like me do have legitimate reasons for claiming that the Internet ruined our band of brothers, the professional, salaried foreign correspondents, the younger generation of students interested in communication and journalism should be heartened by the business they have found. This is a great opportunity to create, find, and work in the “kinder, gentler world of journalism.”

Not everyone has to work for the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, and not every story has to follow the “professional guidelines” or “newsroom mentality” of those organizations. The Internet has offered so many new channels of communication - and not all are shoddy operations - that it provides the new generation of communicators with far more avenues than we had.

Given how much mistrust and bad blood there is between journalists and official circles in numerous countries - from Russia and Kazakhstan to the United States and Iran - communication schools should consider it a mandate to attract more students only so that they can bring back the kind of civility needed in every democratic and even dogmatic society. There is a lot that is wrong with Russia, Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, China, and the United States - to pick a few - but there is also a lot that is right in those countries, a lot that even citizens of those countries don’t know about.

I think it is high time that communication and journalism schools took a second look at their mandate and the opportunity before them. Let’s take a leap forward and make 2013 the shining year for journalism and communication education. Become a journalist. Not only is it an honorable profession; it’s a much - needed one!

Constraints and Challenges of Political Reporting in Nigeria: A Survey of Print Media Establishments in Lagos

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Abstract

“The primary function of every political system is to cater for the socio - political needs of the individuals and groups found in the civil society” (Awa, 1992, p. 47). In Nigeria, according to Momoh (2010, p. 17), the press also has a constitutional obligation to monitor, for the people, the performance of the duties imposed on government in chapter 2 of the constitution. This obligation is so important that “what the press is called upon to do in section 22 is what the courts are barred from doing in section 6(6).” For the government to serve the best interest of the majority, the press must be active and willing to carry out its partnership duties with the government. However, much as the press should have worked for a better Nigerian society, a number of challenges and constraints have drastically reduced its performance and operational efficiency. This study documents some of the major challenges facing journalism practice in Nigeria, with special reference to political reporting.

Introduction

A fundamental problem confronting journalists in Nigeria covering the political beat is news sources’ slippery or cunning attitude toward reporters’ efforts to authenticate or confirm stories under investigation. “Media scholars estimate that 80 percent of the reporter’s working life is spent on interviewing people,” Agbese (2008, p. 49) observes. In their professional calling, journalists are to deal with facts, which are in the custody of the people. Important men and women in Nigerian society also make news when they open up to journalists. Yet Okoye (2012, p. 81) notes, “It has not been easy to book an appointment with these big men and women who are Chief Executives, leading to a situation whereby reporters must make do with their information ministers, commissioners, personal assistants, and media assistants.”

The problem is that, at critical moments, the so - called special assistants on media are not of much assistance to journalists. Okoye (p. 82) recalls an instance when Bayo Onanuga, the editor - in - chief of *The News* magazine and *PM News*, phoned Oluremi Oyo, President Obasanjo’s senior special assistant on media, to confirm a story. Quoting Onanuga, Okoye (p. 82) says:

The day Ijaw militia leader, Asari Dokubo, was flown to Abuja in a presidential jet to meet president Obasanjo, we called Mrs. Oluremi Oyo to confirm the story before PM went to bed. Mrs. Oyo said the story was not true and that she had seen the president’s schedule. Nowhere, she said, did a meeting with Dokubo feature. As it turned out, we were right and Mrs. Oyo was wrong. The meeting was held. The rest is history.

An incontrovertible fact deducible from the above scenario is that official secrecy is one of the major challenges facing political reporting in Nigeria. This problem is foundational. Omu (1996, p. 2) recalls that when *Iwe Irohin* - the first newspaper in Nigeria, established by Rev. Henry Townsend in November 1859 - began publishing, it was the same scenario. While noting that the paper devoted its pages to the campaign for a reading culture, “*Iwe Irohin* did pursue other campaigns of a purely political nature which aroused hostile reactions from the colonial administration in Lagos and foreshadowed the endemic confrontation between the press and government in Nigeria.”

Other major challenges facing political reporters in the country are irregular payment of salaries, which according to Okoye (p. 74) has engendered the notorious “brown envelopes” - i.e., bribes; job insecurity, and terrorism.

Objective

The objective of this paper is to foster greater understanding of the constitutional and professional role of journalists in Nigeria so that the press may serve the best interests of the people.

Research Questions

1. Does Nigerian society actually understand and appreciate the media's statutory and professional duties?
2. When information is concealed, can the mass media serve the public with basic information concerning what people should know as well as what they want to know?
3. Does "brown envelope" syndrome constitute a major challenge to the mass media's statutory and obligatory duties to society?
4. Should media owners/proprietors be held responsible for the spread of "brown envelopes" among Nigerian journalists?
5. What factors are responsible for the spread of "brown envelopes" among journalists in Nigeria?
6. What role could media regulatory agencies play in stemming the spread of "brown envelopes" in Nigeria?

Methodology

The study adopted the survey method in gathering data from respondents across the print media establishments in metropolitan Lagos. A simple open - ended questionnaire was administered to editors of newspapers and magazines. Open - ended questions were chosen so that respondents could express their opinions freely.

Sample Size

Respondents were chosen from a population consisting of 57 print media establishments in Nigeria identified by Akinfeleye (2003, pp. 47 - 57). From that list, the researcher administered the questionnaire at 20 media establishments in Lagos, Nigeria's economic capital, including newspapers with bureaus in Lagos:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. The Punch | 11. The Sun Newspaper |
| 2. This Day | 12. National Encomium Magazine |
| 3. The Guardian | 13. Vanguard Newspaper |
| 4. News Star newspaper | 14. Complete Sports newspaper |
| 5. The Insider Weekly | 15. Daily Independent newspaper |
| 6. Newswatch magazine | 16. Nigerian Tribune |
| 7. The Week magazine | 17. Champion Newspaper |
| 8. The Compass newspaper | 18. Alaroye Magazine |
| 9. The News Magazine | 19. PM News |
| 10. Tell Magazine | 20. Complete Football |

Conceptual Framework

Political reporting: Political reporting is a two - in - one concept, combining politics and reporting. Omolayo and Arowolaju (1987, p. 3) say politics "is essentially characterized by the struggle for power and influence, disagreement, bargaining or negotiation, reconciliation, resolution and consensus," echoing Harold Lasswell's definition of politics in terms of who gets what, when and how. To Lasswell power is the major ingredient in politics. It was his view that politics is essentially the struggle for positions of power and influence by which those who monopolize such positions and society are able to make decisions that have all - pervasive consequences. Appadorai (1975, p. 3), on the other hand argues that "politics deals with the state or political society."

One school of thought sees politics and government as inseparable; in this context, politics and government are synonymous. "Politics includes the events that happen around the decision - making centers of government," says Alfie de Grazia, in his book *Political Behavior* as cited in Akinboye and Popoola (2011, p. 55). Explaining what constitutes government, Isaak (1981, p. 17) says, "Government means something like the legally based institutions of society which make legally binding decisions."

Reporting, on the other hand, is simply to account. In other words, a person who gives an account is reporting, and is therefore described as a reporter. In media parlance, reporting means providing an account of events. However, to be a good reporter, it is expected that every journalist be adequately trained. Thus a reporter is defined as someone who has undergone training in the art of gathering information. The information, when packaged, is called news.

Thus, Akinfeleye (2011, p. 96) defined news as "an account of what the public wants to know, what they must know, what they ought to know . . ." Political reporting can therefore be defined as rendering an account of occurrences having to do with politics and governance.

The basic goal of political reporting can be deduced from Article 22 of the Nigeria 1999 Constitution, which explained the mass media's obligation to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in Chapter II of the Constitution, as well as upholding the government's responsibility and accountability to the people. The fundamental objectives, found on pages A882 - A887 of the Constitution, concerned the government's economic, social, educational, foreign policy and environmental policies.

Of special interest to political reporting is the need for every media establishment in the country to identify with the state's political objectives as contained in Article 15 (ii) of the Constitution, which states that "accordingly, national integration shall be actively engaged whilst discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, status, ethnic or linguistic association or ties shall be prohibited."

The media could demonstrate their unalloyed support for the realization of the political objective by educating and enlightening citizens about the government in particular and the polity in general. In doing so, public opinion could be articulated in the precincts of government with the aim of checking unpopular action. Thus, according to Justice Sawant (2000) cited in Popoola (2011, p. 107):

It is the media which enable the people to perform their three - fold functions in democracy, to participate in the day - to - day affairs of the society, to make informed decisions, and to keep a check on the authorities who rule on their behalf.

Brown envelope: This is a term describing bribery. Many communication scholars in Nigeria are of the view that irregular payment of journalists' salaries was responsible for the sudden rise of this unethical conduct in and outside the newsroom.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in the agenda - setting theory of the mass media. According to Burton (1995, p. 1), "the main power of the media lies in the fact that they can shape what we know about the world and can be a source of ideas and opinions." In the words of Trenaman and McQuail (1961) as quoted by McQuail (1987, p. 272), "the evidence strongly suggests that people think about what they are told but at no level do they think what they are told."

Dare (1997, p. 535) says:

Studies have indicated that the news media perform an agenda - setting function because those topics given the most coverage by the news media tend to be the ones audience identifies as the most pressing issues of the day.

In advanced democracies where adults' attitudes are mostly based on ideas gathered through the press, the press has overcome many of the challenges to carrying out its statutory and professional duties.

As a result of the lingering challenges, the Nigerian press's ability to set the agenda for societal discussion has been greatly threatened. Most Nigerians now prefer listening to foreign broadcast stations such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Voice of America (VOA) and Cable News Network (CNN) to for news about their environment.

Literature Review

The American President, philosopher and statesman Thomas Jefferson once said:

Were it left for me to decide whether we should have a government without a newspaper or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to choose the latter. (Cited in Popoola, 2009, p. 27)

Jefferson made the remark to emphasize the strategic role of the press. The basic philosophical foundation of the mass media in any society, according to Akinfeleye (2011, p. 12) is “to inform, educate, entertain, set the agenda for the people, monitor governance and make government accountable to the people.”

Quoting another scholar of communication, Wilbur Schramm, Akinfeleye (p. 13) said that “the structure of communication reflects the structure and development of any society,” adding that the media “can contribute to the people’s awareness of potentialities, dissatisfactions and desire to change positively or negatively.”

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria tellingly put the obligations of the mass media thus:

The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter and highlight the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people.

The American President Lyndon B. Johnson was quoted by Hawver (1978, p. 312) as saying, when he signed the Freedom of Information Act into law on July 4, 1966, “. . . a democracy works best when the people have all the information that the security of the nation permits,” adding, “no one should be able to pull curtains of secrecy around decisions which can be revealed without injury to the public interest.”

The challenges confronting Nigerian journalists, especially those covering politics, include government hostility toward the press; irregular payment of salaries, which has promoted the unethical “brown envelope” syndrome to what a communication scholar called “an uncontrollable level”; and lately terrorism, which has claimed the lives of several journalists and destroyed media properties worth millions of naira through sporadic bombings. In the words of Ben Charles - Obi, former editor of *Classique* magazine, “some journalists have been abducted, framed, eliminated, hounded into exile. Some have disappeared and others have been forced underground, all depicting a picture of Nigerian media under siege.”

While noting that such challenges have rendered Nigerian journalism uninteresting, Charles - Obi said some government leaders in Nigeria had termed the press “enemy number one that should not be spared if they the rulers are to have their way in their shameless attempts to pillage and loot the treasuries.” He added, “Buhari and Babangida in particular chastised the press with whips, but Abacha whacked us with scorpions. He schemed, kidnapped, framed, tortured and imprisoned journalists.”

Despite such open hostility toward the press, Charles - Obi stressed that “the media in Nigeria have been consistent in exposing corrupt and inept rulership, socio - political perfidy and primitive dictatorship.” In a retrospective analysis of what the press went through in Nigeria between 1983 and 1998, Charles - Obi declared:

Gen. Muhammadu Buhari’s much detested Decree No 4 of 1984 slammed two journalists into one sabbatical year in Kirikiri Maximum Security Prison. Ibrahim Babangida came with a tooth - smile initially charming the press to passivity. But as an alert and agile institution, the press got the jokes and the bag of tricks. He later showed his true color in the full glare of the skeptical world. He pounced on the vocal press, making the famous Dele Giwa of the Newswatch the first victim. Babangida was so enamored of himself as Nigeria’s Abdel Nasser that he styled himself Mr. President. He applied cunning and ruthless antics to achieve his obsessive ambition but he crashed like Humpty - Dumpty. (1999: 226).

In a related development, Dare (1997, p. 545) defined three distinct stages of the press under Babangida, each coloring media behavior in Nigeria. He stressed that the first stage, up to early 1989, “witnessed government establishment of the institutions of the transition with press behavior being by and large supportive.

“The second stage from 1989 until 1993 was marked by increasing disquiet in the media as to Babangida’s commitment to the transition. It witnessed the polarization of the press into pro and anti - Babangida camps.

“The third, from June 12, 1993, coincided with the unraveling of the transition and press coverage of the consequences therefrom.”

Ray Ekpu, editor-in-chief of *Newswatch* magazine, also lambasted the Babangida regime, adding that

The tone of press harassment set in the Babangida’s era, especially in the dying days of the administration, was high. For instance, on June 22, 1993, during the annulment saga, the administration enacted with indecent haste Decree 43, which sought to compel all news media to register their publications with a Newspaper Registration Board with draconian powers. This, in effect, amounts to licensing of journalists and newspapers and this license must be renewed periodically subject to good behavior. (1996, p. 52)

Writing on “Journalism: An Endangered Profession,” Ekpu (p. 48) says that right from the time when the military junta led by Buhari and Idiagbon took over the government, the regime made no pretense about its hatred for the press:

The new head of state, Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, in his first major interview . . . declared unhesitatingly that he would tamper with the press. His anger arose from what he perceived as the unfairness of the press to him when he was the minister of petroleum and the sum of \$2.8 million oil sales funds were alleged to be missing.

He did tamper with the press by enacting the invidious Decree 4 of 1984, the provision of which was that you could not publish even the truth if it was likely to bring the government or government officials into ridicule, disrepute or to embarrass them.

That same year, two reporters of The Guardian, Nduka Irabor and Tunde Thompson, were convicted under the decree and jailed for one year each while the newspaper was fined N50,000.

More calamities were to bedevil the press in subsequent years. For example, on April 6, 1987, the government proscribed the *Newswatch* magazine for six months under a hastily custom - made decree titled *Newswatch* Proscription Decree No. 6. The magazine’s offense, according to Ekpu (p. 48), was that “it published a report of the political bureau which was set up by the government in 1987 when the government had not officially released it. Since then, closure of newspapers and magazines by the government became a routine especially as the press became increasingly critical of the government’s gyrations on the transition program.

Between 1990 and 1993, there must have been very few newspapers and magazines that were not shut down. The ones that come to mind are: *The Observer*, *The Punch*, *Lagos News*, *Vanguard*, *Champion*, *Guardian*, *Concord*, *The Reporter*, *Abuja News Day* among others.

Ekpu (p. 50) further provided a long list of journalists arrested and detained under horrible conditions without trial during the period.

Journalists	Medium	Duration of Detention
Etim Etim	The Guardian	2 months
Tony Ukpong	Weekly Metropolitan	Not specified
Femi Aborisade	Labour Militant	7 months
Nduka Obaigbena	This Week	2 days
Lewis Obi	African Concord	Not specified
Chris Mamah	The Punch	61 days
Banji Ogundele	Sunday News	Several weeks
Sam Amuka	Vanguard	Several days
Chris Okojie	Vanguard	Several days
Nsikak Essien	National Concord	Several days
Willy Bozimo	News Agency of Nigeria	Several weeks
Emma Agu	Champion	Several days
Ikpe Etukudo	New Horizon	Not specified
Tunde Ogungbile	New Horizon	Not specified
Dele Alake	Sunday Concord	2 days
Dan Agbese	Newswatch	11 days
Yakubu Mohammed	Newswatch	10 days
Ray Ekpu	Newswatch	4 days
Soji Akinrinade	Newswatch	4 days
Mike Akpan	Newswatch	4 days
Tunde Asaju	Newswatch	4 days
Ade Alawode	Eko	2 weeks

Some of the detention cases, according to Ekpu (p. 50), were actually bizarre. He cited the example of Paxton Idowu, the editor of the newspaper *The Republic*, who published a news report on legal action instituted by a detained businessman, Bashir Mohammed, alleging corrupt practices and fraudulent business deals with the vice president, Admiral Augustus Aikhomu:

When the police went to Idowu's house to pick him up, he was not around. They arrested his wife, who was eight months pregnant, in lieu of her husband. She was detained overnight in a tiny dark police cell with a male suspect until her husband surfaced the next morning. (p. 51)

Under the regime of General Babangida, speculative journalism was a serious crime that could warrant outright proscription of the media (p. 52). When *The African Concord* published a cover story titled "Has IBB given up?" rather than admitting or denying the story or, better still, initiating a legal action in the court, the regime immediately responded with Decree 14 of 1992, titled "Concord Group of Newspapers publication (proscription and prohibition from circulation)."

Furthermore, dissemination of government information under the regime was extremely dangerous, no matter how authentic and credible. Ekpu (p. 52) recalled another instance in which a Lagos society lady, Jennifer Madike, leveled some allegations against the chairman of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Fidelis Oyakhilome:

The government decided, after pussy - footing for a while, to suspend him from duty. Nduka Irabor, press secretary to the vice president, telephoned the NTA giving them the story. The Director of News, Patrick Itohegh, and News Manager, Gold Oruh refused to broadcast the story, saying it could not be authenticated. They were fired.

Tony Ikekanam, the editor of the *Observer* newspaper, published by the Edo state government, was also demoted in September 1991 for using what was said to be an "unglamorous picture of the wife of the president, Maryam Babangida." In another instance, Jakande (1979, pp. 118 - 119) presented a story on the barbaric humiliation of Minere Amakiri, the Rivers State correspondent of the same *Observer* newspaper, who had his head shaved with "an old rusty blade," was stripped naked and received 24 strokes of the cane on his bare back on Aug. 2, 1973. His offense, according to Jakande (p. 119), was that he published a story on the planned industrial action by the Nigerian Union of Teachers' Rivers State branch on July 30, 1973. The publication coincided with the 31st birthday celebration of the state's military governor, Commander Alfred Diete - Spiff, which annoyed the governor and his close lieutenants.

Popoola (2003, p. 45) recalled other instances of government hostility toward the press. He cited an instance in 1994 in which the editors of *Newswatch* magazine, Dan Agbese, Yakubu Mohammed and Ray Ekpu, were arrested and detained for 10 days over an interview with David Mark, one of the former senior military officers who planned the Abacha coup. The editors were arraigned before a Magistrate Court before being kept in prison custody.

In the same year, Popoola (p. 50) says *The Guardian*, the flagship of the Nigerian press, was banned by the government. He writes: "It was a big puzzle that the action could take place as the publisher of the newspaper, Alex Ibru, was then a serving minister in charge of Internal Affairs in the country. By virtue of his portfolio, he ought to be in the picture concerning every government action. In this case, the decision to ban his newspaper was taken without his knowledge."

Data Presentation and Analysis

The research instrument for this study was administered to media establishments in metropolitan Lagos. Below are findings from the survey

Table 1, Question 1: Does the society understand and appreciate the media's statutory and professional duties?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	12	60%
No	8	40%
Total	20	100%

Table 1 above shows that 12 or 60 percent, of the respondents are of the view that the society understood and appreciated the statutory and professional duties of the media, while eight or 40 percent, disagreed. Even though some political pundits tend to make things difficult for journalists whenever they are approached to confirm or authenticate stories under investigation, there are news sources who appreciate the patriotic duties of journalists and are quite ready to supply necessary information that could help political reporters to unearth the truth, in a manner similar to that of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein of *The Washington Post* when they investigated the Watergate scandal during the tenure of President Richard Nixon in the United States.

Although many scholars of political communication contend that the Watergate scandal contributed to Nixon's downfall, his right hand man, John Ehrlichman, says, "as Nixon himself would say, 'It was calculated and deliberate. They hate me.'"

During the years I worked for him, Nixon was usually capable of a passionless and penetrating analysis of his press opportunities. He was a talented media manipulator. I often watched him successfully plan how he or his spokesmen could dominate the evening news, capture the headlines and right - side columns of the front page of The Washington Post or the lead story in Time or Newsweek. Richard Nixon could think like an editor. (1982, p.263)

Table 2, Question 2: When information is concealed, can the mass media serve the public with basic information concerning what people should know, as well as what they want to know?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	100%
No	-	-
Total	20	100%

All the respondents agreed that when information is concealed, it would be a Herculean task for the press to serve citizens with information they need either for planning purposes or to educate themselves or make themselves better informed. One of the editors, Casmir Ugboke of *The Punch*, recalled how the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) frustrated his reporters' efforts when they sought information through the CBN on the missing N2.8 billion Gulf War oil windfall. Another editor, Charles Okoro of the *Champion* group of newspapers, lamented that even with the passage and signing into law of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the trend has not really changed.

Table 3, Question 3: Does 'brown envelope' syndrome constitute a major challenge to the statutory and obligatory duties of the mass media in the society?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	80%
No	4	20%
Total	20	100%

Sixteen editors, or 80 percent of the respondents, agreed that "brown envelope" syndrome constituted a major challenge to the media's statutory obligation to society. They contended that the practice is fast eroding professionalism. Cashmir Igboke of *The Punch* specifically described the practice as pathetic, adding, "it has brought the profession into disrepute." Jab Osuji of *Complete Sports* says the practice is an everyday occurrence, pointing out, "it's no longer done in secrecy." Adebola Owolola of *News Star* newspaper described the practice as a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of journalism practice in Nigeria: "It is one of the most negative things that

diminish the practice of journalism in Nigeria. It has also made many stories to be painted in a particular fashion, leading to some people describing the practice as not only despicable but anathema because it beclouds a journalist's sense of fairness and objectivity."

However, 20 percent of the respondents disagreed. The editors in this context claimed that existing policy in their media prohibited any journalist from collecting brown envelopes. Chris Ajaero of *Newswatch* magazine says, "at *Newswatch*, there is no such behavior because our reporters do not accept brown envelope. Our editorial position is hinged on journalism ethics such as objectivity, accuracy, fairness and balancing, which could easily be questioned once journalists collect brown envelopes." He noted that the management had put in place a gate - keeping mechanism that will not only detect such stories but stop it.

Dipo Kehinde of the newspaper *Compass* admitted coming across such as stories once in a while. But he stressed that once such stories are detected, they are thrown into the trashcan, or the reporter is asked to go back and do a thorough job and present a balanced report.

Table 4, Question 4: Should media owners/proprietors be held responsible for the spread of brown envelope among journalists?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17	85%
No	3	15%
Total	20	100%

From **Table 4** above, 85 percent of the respondents are of the view that media owners should be held partly responsible for the spread of brown envelope syndrome in the media because of low salaries or irregular payment. "When you pay peanuts, you only attract monkeys as workers," says Dipo Kehinde. Chris Ajaero of *Newswatch* says, "If media owners put the right things in place, the practice of brown envelope would have been killed." Adebola Owolola of *News Star* added, "when salaries are delayed or unpaid, journalists tend to devise ways of survival through collection of brown envelopes." Solu Ogundipe of the *Vanguard* newspaper says, "Media owners who fail to pay their employees have no moral justification to condemn the 'brown envelope' syndrome." Casmir Igboke of *The Punch* argued, "some media owners do not pay a living wage to their staff."

Among the 15 percent of respondents who disagreed, Charles Okoro of the *Champion* newspaper says the global recession, not media owners, is to blame. "Regardless of low salary income, collection of 'brown envelope' depends on individual's discipline," says Jab Osuji of *Complete Sport*, adding that even when salaries are paid on time and journalists are well remunerated, "those who will collect brown envelope will still collect it." A similar view was expressed by Kunle Bakare of *National Encomium* magazine, who argued, "greed and unprofessional conduct are personal things that should not be blamed on media owners."

As other factors responsible for the spread of "brown envelope," the editors mentioned poor discipline or upbringing, individual attitudes, the high cost of running a media organization, depreciating real income, low moral and ethical standards, inadequate training, unprofessionalism, corruption all over the country, poor adherence to ethics of journalism, bad working conditions, lack of insurance for journalists, and social influences.

Asked what roles media regulatory agencies could play in checking the spread of "brown envelope," the editors recommended:

1. Media owners should insist on strict adherence to ethical standards established at Ilorin on March 20, 1998.
2. Journalists should be educated about the need to be morally upright.
3. Media owners could dismiss any journalist found collecting “brown envelope.”
4. Journalists should be encouraged and motivated in various ways to see collection of “brown envelope” as a personal embarrassment.
5. Media owners should improve their workers’ welfare by offering good working conditions, good insurance and payment of salaries when due.
6. Journalists who excel should be rewarded at the right time.
7. Media owners should pay journalists a living wage.
8. Publishers and editors should devise means of monitoring reporters’ professional conduct in and outside the newsroom.
9. Journalists should be retrained from time to time.

Conclusion

Although journalism has been practiced in Nigeria for about 153 years, the standard of practice is low. Consequently, journalists should align themselves to the recommendations put forward by the editors to raise the standard of journalism practice in the country.

Earlier, the study put forward six research questions. RQ1 asked “does Nigerian society actually understand and appreciate the statutory and professional duties of the media? Based on findings from the study, it was gathered that majority of the respondents, 60 percent, were positive while 40 percent disagreed.

RQ2 asked if the mass media could serve the public creditably well when information is concealed by news sources. All respondents were united in their declaration that it would be extremely difficult for the media to offer the public any meaningful information when those having information denied it to the reporters.

RQ3 asked does “brown envelope” constitute a major challenge to the media’s statutory and obligatory duties to society. The answer is positive. While 80 percent of the respondents agreed, 20 percent disagreed.

RQ4 asked should media owners/proprietors be held responsible for the spread of “brown envelope” among journalists in Nigeria. The answer is also in the affirmative. 85 percent of the respondents said that media owners are partly responsible while 15 percent disagreed.

RQ5 asked what factors are responsible for the spread of “brown envelope” among journalists in Nigeria. The respondents identified low salaries, poor discipline, global economic recession, individual attitudes, high cost of running a media organization, poor upbringing, low moral, unprofessionalism among others.

RQ6 sought to know what roles media regulatory agencies could play in checking the spread of “brown envelope”. The respondents put forward a 9 - point agenda which is listed above. The 9 - point agenda therefore contains the recommendations from this study.

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How Journalists from Egypt and the UAE Interact with Their Audiences By Andreas Straeter | andreas.straeter@uni - dortmund.de

Abstract

Driven by the political upheavals in the Arab world in 2011, the media in Egypt and the United Arab Emirates are on their way to finding new ways to deal with their audiences. This study explains why it is important to create journalistic transparency, more openness and a first, if flimsy, form of media accountability in the Arab sphere. Initial signs suggest that both Emirati and Egyptian media have drawn some first findings from the upheavals of the Arab Spring. This study draws some parallels between the "old" Arab sphere (Egypt) and the "new" Arab world (United Arab Emirates) to generate knowledge in an exploratory manner. Twelve journalists and media professionals from both countries were interviewed between November 2011 and May 2012.

Introduction

In journalism as well as in disciplines like politics, economics, and consumerism, transparency has become highly valued. Globalization, the Internet, and the first generation of digital natives are working as engines in this process. On hotel rating platforms, for example, transparency can be regarded as a business - promoting argument - or as the contrary. In any case, transparency creates accountability and reliability.

These findings are transferable to journalism, especially in a digital world. Transparency prospers in a linked medium, for you can literally see the connections between the final draft's contentions and the ideas that informed it. Paper, on the other hand, is a poor transmitter of links. You can look up the footnote, but that's an expensive, time - consuming activity more likely to result in failure than success. The present era can be described as the Age of Links, and transparency is the "embedded ability to see through the published draft" (Weinberger, 2009).

In a wired world of global connection and social networks, it seems almost impossible to suppress discussions and debates, to manipulate recipients or to censor information. Media users all over the world have received easier access to a fast, free and ubiquitously accessible discourse on the media and their contents via social media and Web 2.0.

Nevertheless, Arab journalists have to work within completely different conditions than their colleagues in the Western world. With the help of occasional self - censorship, they try to protect themselves against the regime, especially in Egypt. But despite the constraints, Arab journalists try to work as transparently as possible; they may be contacted by e - mail or telephone and receive feedback, comments and advice from their viewers, listeners, and readers.

Definition of journalistic transparency

The U.S. media scholars Stephanie Craft and Kyle Heim (2009) situate the debate on transparency in an interdisciplinary global discourse. They characterize the notion of transparency across all disciplines as "availability of information and as a disclosure of it." The U.S. political scientist Ann Florini (2002) describes transparency as the opposite of secrecy and confidentiality. She raises transparency to a desirable standard in a world of global integrity: "Secrecy means deliberately hiding your actions; transparency means deliberately revealing them. This element of volition makes the growing acceptance of transparency much more than a resigned surrender of the technologically facilitated intrusiveness of the Information Age."

The business analysts Don Tapscott and David Ticoll (2003) consider transparency from the perspective of economics and approach the concept in their first general definition: "Transparency is information about an organization that is available to people or other organizations." They describe transparency as an "Engine of Greatness," a force for innovation and future, and they rely on models of success among other platforms like eBay, where transparency and rates make sense.

From the perspective of media economics, transparency in journalism can be regarded as a strategic option of trust to retain recipients and to stabilize the media brand (Meier, 2010; Evers/Eberwein, 2011). Despite the high potential of transparency, journalists are often afraid to use tools to create transparency and publicity. Their ambition has never been to disclose how and under what circumstances a journalistic contribution has arisen (Meier/Reimer, 2011).

In comparison to the term “accountability,” the concept of transparency does not implicate the effect. In previous studies on the subject, a clear - cut delineation between instruments of transparency and the method of “media accountability” was missing (Fengler et al., 2011). The difference lies in the definitions, especially in the fact that transparency instruments themselves are descriptive, while “media accountability” is normative. The ethically desirable establishing of trust is not implied in the description of transparency instruments.

Craft and Heim (2009) describe “accountability” as the result of transparency and believe that transparency instruments ultimately help establish trust in the media: “This implied linkage among readers’ ability to witness, to evaluate, and, therefore, to trust, indicates the valued role transparency plays in facilitating journalistic accountability.”

A categorization of transparency tools

In journalism, various instruments for creating transparency can be found. Journalism scholars distinguish between journalism - internal and journalism - external instruments (Evers/Eberwein, 2011; Bettels et al., 2011). Internal instruments like the byline, deep links, or additional information are classified as transparency tools created by journalists themselves and that occasionally lead to more information on the editorial department, journalistic work, sources, and editorial decision - making (Bettels et al., 2011). External instruments like media journalism, academic research, blogs, media criticism in social networks or online comments also lead to a certain form of transparency (Fengler, 2008; Eberwein et al., 2012).

Moreover, the study distinguishes between simple and innovative instruments. Simple transparency instruments are easy to install and require little effort - for example, the byline, information on the author or the opportunity to comment. Innovative instruments at a higher level include self - reflection in blogs, descriptions of the news production process, or editorial blogs.

Transparency as a form of “window dressing”

Transparency in journalism should be considered more complex than one - sidedly positive, since a closer inspection illustrates pitfalls. First, the effectiveness of many transparency instruments has not yet been proven empirically (Craft/Heim, 2009) because the field of research in media science is relatively new. Second, some of these instruments can also have a slightly illusory effect and can be installed for publicity and marketing reasons (Fengler et al., 2011). They tend to contribute to transparency by their very nature although this is not intended. The tools are implemented mainly for business reasons to stabilize the media brand.

“Good PR for the journal, but little transparency for the reader,” says Susanne Fengler, a German professor of international journalism. As a result, there is merely an “illusion of inclusion.” Consequently, many accountability instruments simply lead to an increase in publicity, and, according to the Dutch media expert Yael de Haan (2011), “seem to be more a form of window dressing than a true attempt to restore trust in their performance.”

The idea of full transparency in the media and everything connected to them, such as audience participation, is still in its infancy in the Arab world (Lahlali, 2011). The news channel Al Jazeera was a pioneer in introducing call - in talk shows with participatory elements (Miles, 2005). Elsewhere, it is mentioned that the Internet could lead to spreading and compacting political discourse in the Arab sphere (Hafez, 2009). According to the social scientists Mahjoob Zweiri and Emma C. Murphy (2011), social media open a new world of dialogue and conversation in the Middle East.

Methodology

Comparing the United Arab Emirates to Egypt is appealing, as these countries are quite different even though they are both part of the Arab world. The discrepancies relate not only to the media systems, but also to the political and cultural development of the two states (Hahn/Alawi, 2007; Hermann, 2011). Both states possess media - science relevance, particularly since they boast reference media with an impact throughout the Arab World like Abu Dhabi TV and Al Arabiya in the UAE, and *Al Ahram* and *Al Akhbar* in Egypt (Rugh, 2004).

As communication science has no systematic knowledge about journalistic transparency instruments in the Arab sphere, knowledge and results in this study are generated in an exploratory manner by using a qualitative method. Twelve Arab journalists were interviewed with semi - structured qualitative guidelines, some in person, some via telephone or Skype. In either case, it was important to create an open atmosphere for conversation.

Results

One of the most obvious results is that there tends to be more openness toward innovative transparency instruments in the UAE than in Egypt. To strengthen their market position, the Emirates media use Twitter and Facebook to suggest credibility. A journalist working for Al Arabiya in Dubai says, “I think that Arab media have learned a lot of lessons from the Arab Spring.”

A journalist from Abu Dhabi points out the importance of the Internet and how journalists should deal with it. “The Internet will increase pressures on conventional media organizations to be transparent and clear, and not to hide information,” he says. “Audiences have other ways to obtain information and are able to bypass traditional channels. If you don’t watch out, you would be left behind . . . Online media are the future communication platform on which all traditional media will converge. If you don’t join the bandwagon, you will be the loser in this technological transition.” A journalist from the Egyptian newspaper *Al Akhbar* adds: “What you hid is going to be there. People want to have communication, so they start to communicate.”

The flare - up of journalistic transparency can be seen in the political context of the impact of the Arab Spring. These two phenomena have a consequence in common: all citizens are able to voice their thoughts. Transparency in terms of making editorial processes public seems only peripherally present because both countries need time to develop the idea of social participation - and the idea of a self - reflective journalism.

A journalist working for the Abu Dhabi - based newspaper *The National* reflects: “There has been a major change . . . Not just for stories, but . . . for journalism itself. There is now a higher connection between the people and journalists . . . They can comment everything I have written.” There has been a major change in the ways media deal with their audience, she says. “Everything is now available to everyone. They can comment whatever they think.” In the end, these comments lead to more intensive conversations with journalists and authors.

In comparing print and TV media in terms of journalistic transparency, it is striking that print engages much more in the use of transparency instruments than TV, although a general statement is hard to find in this context. Each medium should be analyzed on its own regarding transparency.

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Section II. Training Journalists

Are Lebanese J-schools Graduating Functional Illiterates?

By Magda Abu-Fadil | magda.abufadil@gmail.com

I'm disheartened, but not surprised, by comments from media executives who believe journalism schools and media programs in Lebanon are turning out functional illiterates. It's a familiar refrain. Editors, publishers, producers, web hotshots and countless others regularly complain that graduates come with inadequate job skills and are ill prepared to meet the challenges facing journalists today.

Depending on the institution in question and the resources available, would-be journalists often fall short of market needs because their universities denigrate the profession and don't place enough emphasis on what students should learn, as opposed to what their professors know (or knew from way back when) and impart, based on antiquated curricula.

The same applies to working journalists who need, but lack, regular training to ensure their knowledge and skills are up to snuff.

How do we prepare young people and train journalists for an honorable and misunderstood profession? We don't stop with a university degree. We continue learning.

Journalists are like emergency room doctors who treat and save patients, work on tight deadlines and can't afford to make mistakes. If they do, the results can be catastrophic.

We need media literacy programs in schools, solid media education, constant training, perseverance, patience, an enterprising spirit, and willingness to see and think outside the box. Unfortunately, critical thinking is not automatically factored into school and university curricula because many teachers refuse to evolve, thereby rendering a great disservice to our charges.

A global study (<http://www.pearson.com/news/2012/november/pearson-launches-the-learning-curve.html>) conducted by the Economist Intelligence Unit includes a new Global Index of Cognitive Skills and Educational Attainment, which draws on existing data from the international OECD-PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS assessments, as well as information on literacy and graduation rates.

I wasn't surprised to find Finland and South Korea topping the list of high performers, with Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore close behind. Tragically, no Arab countries figured into the equation.

There's also the notion that teachers know best, that learning is a one-way process. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Only recently have schools in some Arab countries jumped on the media literacy bandwagon; others depend on individual school initiatives. The more prosperous the institution, the more likely it is to be willing to experiment and venture into new learning models. It's going to be a long haul before more institutions are fully on board.

Academic Requirements

There is a disconnect between what is taught and what the market needs. The skills needed to function in a fast-paced, technologically transformed world amid a cacophony of languages and cultures are lacking.

It's rare to see Arab professors visiting news organizations to learn what they really need, and then to fashion programs and curricula accordingly, while maintaining high professional academic standards. Somehow the mix of academics with the right background and experience in media, not to mention integrated digital multimedia, seems a luxury at best.

In post-civil war Lebanon, for example, courses need a major overhaul. Its public university's faculty members are woefully underpaid. Classrooms and labs are poorly equipped, and newsrooms are wishful thinking. In fact, regular student newspapers and magazines are not the norm. Students in

the state-run Lebanese University's graduating class are usually required to produce a publication as a final project. So there's little room for initiative, creativity and follow-up of students by faculty members or advisers, if any exist.

Radio and/or TV studios are also hard to finance and maintain. They're capital-intensive, which is understandable, but with miniaturized digital equipment, the undertaking shouldn't be so difficult. Yet there's little support for ensuring their availability, since the journalism major is not considered as desirable as medicine or engineering.

Where broadcast media facilities do exist on campuses, their supervisors fall short of providing students with adequate professional journalism and news training. There is more focus on production and entertainment than on good writing, editing and packaging of information for multiple platforms.

The introduction of online journalism courses has also been rather slow - almost an afterthought - and few faculty members appreciate the importance or impact of social media and how they can be integrated into the news gathering process. It's no wonder, since so many journalism faculty members are not regular bloggers and find engagement with their students through social media "something for kids to do." In October 2008, Hugh McGuire wrote a brilliant piece, "Why Academics Should Blog" (<http://hughmcguire.net/2008/10/26/why-academics-should-blog>), that is just as valid today as it was then.

Academics also have trouble deciding classroom sizes, since attendance is optional for many subjects. Unfortunately, class sizes are often imposed on them, so quality control flies out the window.

On a trip to France to speak at two events, I met a media professor who had been tasked with establishing a partnership between her institution and the Lebanese University, whereby Lebanese students would follow (and be granted the requisite diplomas) through the License, Master and Doctorate (LMD) track. But the project was set back and frozen because of bickering and sectarian infighting on the Lebanese side. It went nowhere fast.

Private universities are not faring that much better in terms of learning outcomes, and employers continue to complain of substandard graduates whose command of Arabic is flimsy (even at institutions where it is the language of instruction), and whose knowledge of their supposed mother tongue is almost nonexistent where English or French is the language in which courses are taught. The journalism curriculum at Lebanese University is primarily in Arabic, with a smattering of courses in French and/or English; at most private institutions the main language of instruction is either French or English, with a few Arabic-language courses.

What's more pathetic is the sorry state of general knowledge, or the lack thereof, which is acquired through extensive reading, listening, watching, observing and browsing. Editors, publishers and producers I meet regularly complain that journalism students know little about the country in which they live, much less about the world.

Trying to help out

As a member of a committee of experts advising UNESCO on journalism education, I have been promoting our findings across the Middle East/North Africa region with the idea that they can be adapted, based on the context in question.

We produced a book titled *Model Curricula for Journalism Education* (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/model-curricula-for-journalism-education>) for use in institutions worldwide. It is available for download as a PDF file in nine languages. I hope we can update it to better meet the needs of journalism schools worldwide while fully appreciating the daunting task at hand.

We came up with a list of courses designed to develop competencies in each of three levels of journalism education: a pre-university non-degree diploma, an undergraduate university degree in journalism and a master's degree. Skills, capacities and knowledge in a journalism curriculum, at any post-secondary level, are built on these foundations:

1. The ability to think critically, including comprehension, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of unfamiliar material.
2. A store of general knowledge of one's own country and the world, in contemporary and former times, including understanding of important political, economic, social, cultural and scientific mechanisms.
3. Basic knowledge of research methodology, including arithmetical skills, computer skills, basic statistics and surveying methods, and an introductory understanding of the philosophy of evidence.
4. The ability to write competent narrative and explanatory prose.
5. Basic understanding of journalism's role in local, national and international political processes and its relation to democracy.
6. History of journalism, from the earliest newspapers to contemporary digital journalism.
7. Introduction to news media ownership, organization and competition, and to journalism as a profession and practice.

We proposed these courses:

1. Introduction to reporting and writing.
2. In-depth reporting and writing, including data-driven journalism (formerly CAR) and other research methods.
3. Specialized reporting and writing, in fields like politics and government, economics, business and finance, science and technology (or science and environment, or science and health), arts and culture, social issues (development, gender, human rights, public health, deprivation, identities, race, ethnicities, religion, minorities, child issues, violence), sports, international affairs, conflict and war, education and labor.
4. Broadcast reporting and writing for radio and television.
5. Online/multimedia journalism and digital developments.
6. Media law.
7. Journalism ethics.
8. Journalism issues, including news media organization, ownership and competition.
9. History of journalism, including examples of best practice.
10. Studio/newsroom internship in print, broadcast, multimedia/online journalism.

One area not given adequate attention is the learning of languages, as well as sensitivity to cultures and ethnic diversity. Journalists must be able to ask questions and understand answers in a second language. It is imperative that they be fluent in two or more languages, and it is a disservice to students who will have to work in a globalized, multilingual environment not to be immersed in language courses. Unfortunately, command of languages is not accorded the same importance as acquiring technical skills, and the errors journalists make based on their ignorance of languages are unforgivable.

On another front, many journalists I have encountered operate as if they know it all and, through their ignorance, misinterpret and miscommunicate information. Teachers have an obligation to infuse their students with doses of modesty and humility.

Journalists must also have highly developed observation skills to notice and remember things. They must remain observers and resist the urge to become players in stories they are covering - a principle they regularly overlook.

Training Requirements

Since much of my time is spent in training, I try to help reporters, editors and managers in print, broadcast and online media in the Arab Gulf to North Africa (and beyond) improve their operational skills. It's no easy task, since the Arab world is not monolithic and there are cultural, regional and linguistic differences even in the common classical Arabic. So I familiarize journalists with the latest developments in their specialties and conduct workshops and seminars that provide journalists with the tools they need in their daily work to upgrade and update their knowledge.

Nothing is taken for granted in editing exercises - basics of grammar, spelling and easily confused words. In Lebanon, a Francophone country, people assume French spelling is correct, when the English way of writing people's names could be the right way.

Countries change shapes and names; leaders come and go. It's part of evolution, or devolution. But journalists don't always worry about these details and instead regale us with major writing failures. So I try to drill into them the importance of history and geography, citing Philip Graham, the late publisher of The Washington Post, who said: "Journalism is the first rough draft of history."

We also go over media laws and ethics in every workshop and mini-course. Plagiarism, accuracy, balance, fairness, context, conflict of interest, privacy, the handling of minors, diversity and avoiding stereotyping are musts in any training.

Tied to context is hype - when one blows things out of proportion or gives them undue attention. We see a lot of that in Lebanese media, where issues tend to take sectarian overtones and everything is so highly politicized.

Not to be overlooked is mathematics. We have to deal with numbers and statistics, but reporters are not always taught and trained to think along the lines of data-based journalism. There's a natural aversion to figures, charts, surveys and the like, so detailed information involving statistics can be misinterpreted.

Thinking visually is another requirement I emphasize. A complex multimedia, integrated, converged journalistic world needs pictures, video, sound or a combination thereof in a cross-platform environment, which people in traditional media can easily miss.

But visuals must match content and context, another area given short shrift. Journalists working for Arabic-language newspapers regularly handle photos from international news agencies that may not have an Arabic or translation service. So, if they're not well versed in English, French, Chinese or whatever, they may write captions backwards and mismatch people's names and titles with their real positions in the picture lineups. The devil really is in the details.

While online journalism is helping redefine the profession, there's also fascination with community or citizen journalism, in which average citizens provide information to outlets or create their own media and cover their communities' affairs in more detail than traditional media do.

On another level, journalists today cannot always distinguish between their public and private personas in the use of social media and the ways they incorporate these vehicles into their coverage. That, too, is an area work on from various angles in our training workshops.

But perhaps a very elementary issue is the need to differentiate between hard news and editorializing. It's a fine line that Lebanese journalists often cross, to the detriment of their credibility. When confronted with the charge, reporters have told me it's part of the culture, it's become standard operating procedure, it's required by their news organizations, or any variation on this theme. Media have been accused of inciting violence, have been tagged as encouraging racism, have ignored diversity and have distorted facts.

Hence the importance of serious professional training as part of journalists' growth and development.

To that end, I suggest that training programs include:

1. Reviewing the basics in reporting, writing and editing.
2. Photography.
3. Training in, and updating of, online/digital skills, including blogging and social media.
4. Training in media ethics, history, geography, and mathematics.
5. Sensitivity training.
6. Upgrading of language skills.

Inadequate preparation of journalists is not limited to Lebanon but cuts across the board in most of the Middle East and North African countries I've visited, or whose media professionals I've trained.

Which brings me full circle to the issue of journalism curricula and training programs that need major revisiting, and faculty members and trainers who should also undergo major recycling, updating and upgrading of their own skills. It is unrealistic to expect students and trainees to benefit from teachers and trainers who have not worked in newsrooms, acquired years of field experience or evolved with the times. And yet that's what many of our journalists face today

This is a never-ending and exhausting process. But if journalism schools and programs are turning out these functional illiterates, a lot of the blame rests with the institutions and teachers.

Journalism Education in Ethiopia: A Case Study of Bahir Dar University

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Abstract

This paper examines the journalism curriculum offered by the Department of Journalism and Communications (JoCo) in Bahir Dar University (BDU) in Ethiopia in the context of global trends of journalism education and stakeholders' expectations. It paints a picture of what JoCo education should look like in Ethiopia

Introduction

After the fall of Ethiopia's military government in 1991, the right to freedom of thought, opinion and expression was written into the Constitution, and the First Press Law (No. 34/1992) was promulgated. This led to rapid growth in private press and mass media establishments (Birhanu, 2009).

Most journalists then had no formal training in journalism and mass communication (PMC, 2006). Journalistic practice was poor, mainly because journalists were underqualified. Shimelis (2000) interviewed 31 journalists in Ethiopia, of whom only 5 percent had bachelor's degrees and 43.5 percent had no previous media experience.

The Ethiopian Mass Media Training Institute (EMMTI) pioneered a formal training program at a postgraduate diploma level in 1996. Since then, journalism education has expanded to other universities in Ethiopia: Bahir Dar (2003), Addis Ababa (2004), Mekelle (2004), Dilla (2006), Wellega (2007) and Jijiga (2007). All offer education in journalism at the B.A. degree level. Some private universities and colleges – Unity University, Rift Valley University College and New Generation University College – now also offer journalism courses.

The expansion of journalism education in Ethiopian universities is a response to the critical shortage of formally trained journalists (PMC, 2006). This paper examines BDU's JoCo curriculum in light of continuing discussions about how journalism education and training at the university level is meeting industry needs in Ethiopia.

The BDU Department of JoCo began in 2003. In 2008, a needs assessment was conducted to review the curriculum at the behest of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education. All universities throughout Ethiopia (Zelalem, NAC 2008). The "new" curriculum is a three-year B.A. program in journalism and communication. It aims "at producing professional journalists who are intellectually rigorous and critical of mind, respect fundamental rights, are tolerant and respect diversity in society, are committed to social justice in theory and practice, and are dedicated to integrity and high ethical standards empowering them to use interpersonal and technically driven communications in a multi-cultural world."

The other aim of the department is to train qualified public relations officers and communication specialists (BDU JoCo curriculum profile, 2008).

The UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education for Countries of Developing and Emerging Democracies provided a framework for developing a set of questionnaires that were administered to stakeholders. As follow-up, the stakeholders – students, teaching staff, media practitioners and relevant officials in Bahir Dar – were interviewed to obtain a picture of what they think universities should be offering to journalism students.

Seventy-six people from different fields of journalism were interviewed and given the questionnaires. The 20 media practitioners interviewed included a newspaper editor, Hessian Osman of *Tana Times*; the program deputy head of the News of Amhara Mass Media agency, Mazmur Ahwaz; the head of Amhara Television, Mekeha Engdayehu; the head FM Radio and Theme coordinator, Birfukan Atinkut; and 16 reporters and editors from print and broadcast media. Five government communications officers were also interviewed. In addition, 16 journalism teachers and 35 students were consulted.

The discussions were held in one laboratory room with two groups of third-year (20) and second-year (15) journalism students at BDU in May and June 2011, near the end of the academic year. The students gave suggestions on the courses they had taken.

Literature Review

Media courses in Ethiopian universities are offered in various programs. For instance, at Addis Ababa University (AAU), media-related subjects are offered in the Institute of Language Studies and the departments of theater arts, education, and political science and international relations (PMC, 2006). Graduates of these programs are usually employed in the Ministry of Information and established Ethiopian private presses. However, many media professionals see this multidisciplinary model as arid (Boylan et al., 1988) and filled with “useless theory” (Kamps, 2004).

Industry-academic collaboration: Third World countries face economic problems and unemployment. Institutions of higher learning should assist economic development by integrating vocational education (Amare, 2009). Education should act as an instrument for dealing with a nation's problems (Taba, 1962). Universities need to work in collaboration with the society lest they be useful only to elites (De Burgh, 2003).

Considering journalists' role in serving public interest, their education must strike a balance between the academic and professional aspects (Starck, 2000). A bachelor's degree in journalism that balances industry-specific practical courses with the liberal arts can produce graduates who write informed articles and make authoritative comments about their surroundings (Mencher, 1994). Journalism must integrate other fields of knowledge into its own. “The ‘subject matter’ of the journalists' activity is precisely that which forms the content and subject matter of other fields of knowledge, much as in philosophy” (Cohen, 1992).

Theory and practice balance: Graduates should have a balanced approach, with intensive practical training and adequate theoretical knowledge of the liberal arts, as recommended in many UNESCO documents, seminars and conferences (*Communication Training in Africa: Model Curricula*, 2002; UNESCO, 2005; 2007). University journalism education should be a negotiated enterprise (Starck, 2000). Walter Lippmann, after graduating in political science, proved an excellent opinion writer. Lincoln Steffens, who had employed him to help in his magazine, said: “Give me an intelligent, college-educated man for a year, and I will make a good journalist out of him” (Winship, 1988).

The UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education for Developing Countries and Emerging Democracies (2007) places journalism curricula into professional practice, media studies, and arts and sciences courses. The balance for a three-year degree program is at 40, 10, and 50 percent respectively. This is a generic model that can be adapted according to each country's needs (Singh, 2008). By analyzing the descriptive nature of the courses (Adam, 2001; De Burgh, 2006; Print and Web Journalism Department, AAU, 2008) in this model, it can be inferred that 40 percent of practical and 60 percent of academically inclined courses is an apt balance for undergraduates.

Convergence and specialization: One hotly contested topic among journalism educators is media convergence (Castaneda, et al, 2005). “Converged journalism indicates reporting news for multiple media platforms - television, newspaper, the Internet and radio” (Huang et.al, 2004).

Rapid changes in technology, the economy and media ownership have made convergence a revolutionary form of journalism globally (Quinn and Filak, 2005). A U.S. national survey (1998-2002) revealed: “Sixty percent of journalism schools had adapted their curricula or developed new courses to prepare for convergence” (Huang quoted in Quinn, and Quinn-Allan, 2005).

Many criticize convergence as helping “media conglomerates expand their market share” (Macdonald, 2006). News is subordinated to revenues, advertisers and consumer preferences, and newspaper companies are run by corporate boards of directors and chief executives sharing a “commitment to shareholders and stock value, not news and readers”.

Social relevance: Curriculum development has to encompass social needs. The media's public-service role is a necessary support to democratic society (French, 2006; UNESCO, 2007). Journalists should “serve the society by informing the public, scrutinizing how the power is exercised, stimulating democratic debate, and aiding political, economic, social and cultural development” in an informative, educative and entertaining manner (UNESCO, 2007).

African context: Wimmer and Wolf analyzed 19 African journalism curricula and found that they were “largely Western in their outlook” (cited in Skjerdal and Ngugi, 2007). Journalism education in Africa is criticized for its dependence on Western textbooks and ethics (James, 1990). Curriculum development for education in Africa follows Western models and practices of colonial days, far from the African point of view (Salio-Bao, 1989). This undervalues “Africa's insistence on the indivisibility of person and community” and hampers development (Amare, 2009).

The curricula of Ethiopian universities, too, are dominated by Western ideals of education, neglecting indigenous knowledge (Amare, 2009). The training programs sponsored and delivered by international organizations could have their own impact. From 1991 to 1999, there were training programs for Ethiopian media practitioners, all by Western organizations: the Thomson Foundation, the British Council, the USIS Media Training Project, and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung of Germany (Shimelis, 2000).

Recognizing service to society as the basic goal of journalism, the curriculum of journalism education has to base its premises on the contextual political and social theories and themes (French, 2006). In general, the media landscape and other general contexts in which the journalism curriculum is to be implemented must be assessed and considered (UNESCO, 2005).

In a workshop organized by UNESCO and the African Council for Communication Education to develop model curricula for Africa (Cape Town, November 1996), the participants reiterated (Boafo and Wete, 2002) that:

1. African journalism courses should discuss the development problems facing the countries. The curricula must equip graduates with intellectual competence and technical skills to comprehend the situation. Students need to be grounded in basic social sciences, particularly economics, politics, sociology, history and cultural studies, to understand African and global conditions.
2. The curricula should include courses on traditional African communication systems and intercultural communication, be gender-sensitive and include gender-related courses. Journalism programs also need to include at least one indigenous language and national development should be the forward thrust of these countries' policies (James, 1990).

Development journalism: There is high interest in Africa in adopting development journalism (Skjerdal 2009). Wimmer and Wolf, after analyzing 19 African curricula, found that most programs had incorporated development journalism (DJ) in different forms (Skjerdal and Ngugi, 2007).

The concept of DJ began in the 1960s by taking development and improvement of people's lives as its core principles. Shah (1996) notes the idea was associated with “independent journalism that provided constructive criticism of government and its agencies, informed readers how the development process was affecting them, and highlighted local self-help projects.”

According to Everett M. Rogers (1962), development communication is an engine of change from the traditional to the modern. This approach looks to the mass media as an institutional nexus of modernizing practices and institutions, functioning as watchdogs, policymakers and teachers for change and modernisation (Shramm 1964).

Ethiopian media: Ethiopia is a federation of more than 80 different ethnic groups and languages, with some 200 dialects. After the change of government in 1991, pre-publication censorship was outlawed, private individuals were allowed to own presses and press freedom was legally guaranteed (Shimelis, 2000; Birhanu, 2009). After this followed the emergence of a large number of tabloid newspapers, many of them short-lived, as they started without adequate research (PMC, 2006). In 1993 there were 118 registered private and government newspapers and magazines; in 2008 the number crossed the 1,000 mark. In 2009 registered private and government newspapers and magazines fell to 113.

Electronic media in Ethiopia did not mushroom as print did (PMC, 2006). Television remains under government monopoly. Radio stations are also under monopoly of the government except for four private FM radio stations: Sheger, Zami, Afro FM and Fana. Licenses have been given to two radio stations with national coverage, Fana and Voice of Woyane, and seven community radio stations, some which have yet to start (*Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority, Yearly Magazine*, 2009). A Fana radio reporter said: “Our working environment permits little autonomy or originality of ideas if judged controversial. Private radio licensing involves a process, and violation of prescribed guidelines may lead to cancellation of the license.”

Online journalism in Ethiopia has yet to take shape (Gezahgn Berhie, JoCo, Jijiga). Little work is produced online, according to Mazmoor Ahwaz of the Amhara Mass Media Agency, Bahir Dar, and it will take time before “we register in this regard.” Mekonnen Hailemariam and Mogus Abraham, teaching Online Journalism at BDU, confirmed that there is scant literature available on the subject by Ethiopian writers: “Our interaction with students is based solely on books by Western writers.”

Official media policy: The government media policy is to practice development journalism. A 2008 government manual, *The Democratic Developmental Media Philosophical Foundations and Missions*, prescribes the major goals of developmental journalism: “strengthening democracy and sustaining development by telling success stories and also exposing development failures through investigation and indicating solutions for problems, and creating national consensus on basic issues.”

According to the government education policy, institutions of higher education are to help promote economic development by producing competent workers and good entrepreneurs. The curricula of higher-learning institutions “shall aim at enabling the learner to acquire pertinent knowledge, independent thinking, communication skills and professional values that together prepare him to become a competent professional” (*Federal Negarit Gazeta*, 2009).

How does BDU JoCo fare?

BDU’s JoCo program prescribes a major in print and electronic media. Elective courses are drawn from other departments (BDU JoCo curriculum profile, 2008). Almost all the print and electronic streams teach writing and reporting (De Burgh, 2003). Then there are common courses: Online Journalism, English for Journalists, and supportive courses like Media Translation, Information Communication Technology, Advanced Writing Skills, and Structure of Amharic. These provide skills in language and Internet technology, as well as transferable skills for media use.

Vocational and transferable courses are professional, as they train graduates in technical competencies. They teach them to report, write, edit and use media technologies, as well as preparing students for a career in journalism (UNESCO, 2007). The following courses are treated as the professional/practical part of the journalism curriculum at BDU.

Print

1. Feature Writing
2. Magazine Production
3. Newspaper Production
4. News Writing and Reporting for Print
5. Photo Journalism
6. Publication Layout and Design

Credit Hours: 17

Electronic

7. Broadcast News Writing and Reporting
8. Introduction to Broadcast Media
9. Radio Documentary
10. Radio News Production
11. Television Documentary
12. Television News Production

Credit Hours: 16

Common

13. English for Journalists
14. Internship
15. Online Journalism
16. Spoken English
17. Sophomore English

Credit Hours: 12

Electives

18. Information Communication Technology
19. Advanced Writing Skills
20. Structure of Amharic / Communicative Grammar

Credit Hours: 09

Total 54

Thus 54 credit hours out of the 112 total are required for professional courses (48.21 percent). Media studies, communication studies and courses from other departments are academic in content.

Introduction to Journalism emphasizes the philosophical issues and the media's multidisciplinary function. Media Law and Ethics emphasizes legal and ethical issues, as well as media's socio-economic and political role. Survey of Ethiopian Mass Media familiarizes students with the media environment in the country. Communication courses including Public Relations, and Advertising and Social Marketing are theoretical in approach.

BDU's JoCo program also aims to produce communication specialists and public relations officers. Its curriculum includes seven relevant courses. The academic offerings are:

1. Advertising and Social Marketing
2. Communication and Conflict Management
3. Communication Theories
4. Development Communication
5. Development Journalism
6. Entrepreneurship
7. Intercultural Communication
8. International Communication
9. Introduction to Civics and Ethics
10. Introduction to Communication
11. Introduction to Journalism
12. Introduction to Public Relations
13. Introduction to Statistics
14. Investigative Journalism
15. Media and Communication Research Methods
16. Media Law and Ethics
17. Media Management
18. Media Translation
19. Public Relations Theories and Practice
20. Senior Essay
21. Survey of Ethiopian Mass Media

Total 58

Thus 21 courses with 58 credit hours (51.78 percent) out of the 112 total concentrate on theoretical media aspects and liberal arts. The remaining 20 professional courses share 54 (48.21 percent) of total 112 credit hours.

Stakeholders' expectations

The 25 journalists and 16 academics interviewed expressed a consensus that journalism should play its development role, including that of watchdog - for instance, exposing corruption among public servants and others in authority. Gezahgn Berhie from Jijiga University says, "DJ is not limiting journalists to writing success stories," but rather is critical and crucial.

Fourteen stressed that media in Ethiopia should follow and help the government discharge its responsibilities in alleviating poverty. Ten noted that the journalists' role is to provide the truth to the public responsibly. Nebieu (FANA Radio) said journalists must report the truth responsibly. Aderaw Genetu (BDU) held that DJ be defined in relation to the country's realities. Although its objective is investigative reporting, its primary focus is development. The official policy at the state-owned media is that DJ be repeatedly indicated in their editorial policies and training manuals.

How is journalism education at BDU addressing such contexts?

Biset Ayelew (JoCo), who teaches Development Communication to undergraduates at BDU, contended that the course familiarizes students with the role of media in development. However, the prescribed outline of the DJ course shows that it only makes students aware of government development agendas, being more general with scant specifics. It is only about development models, concepts and related issues. Except for the introductory treatment of development communication, how to practice developmental journalism generally and its relevance to Ethiopia in particular are not defined.

Teaching approach

All 41 journalists, media government officials and teachers were asked about the approach to teaching in terms of specialization and convergence.

Four journalists and 12 academics recommended that the curriculum strike a balance between theoretical and practical knowledge of journalism. Four more journalists recommended that the teaching and learning process should concentrate on theoretical knowledge. Teaching and learning should focus more on practice, noted 17 stakeholders and three academicians.

During discussion, 23 journalists and media-related personnel and 13 teachers recommended an integrated or converged approach to media education. According to Gezahgn Berhie (JU), technology is pushing media jobs to the Internet, and graduates will have better chances of employment. Two teachers and two journalists expressed a preference for specialization. Belaynoe Worku and Biset Ayelew (JoCo, BDU) said they thought each medium required specific skills and curriculum should provide accordingly. All 35 students in the two focus groups supported convergence because of their employment concerns.

Amhara Mass Media Agency in Bahir Dar employs 130 journalists. According to Mezmur Ahwaz, converged university journalism education helps: "Students with university education are well informed, pro-active, flexible, and well exposed. To make up for their practical experience, the agency organizes a month long pre-service training that helps acclimatize them to new discipline."

Regional languages: The multilingual nature of African states makes it important for those facilitating development to be competent users of one or more of indigenous languages (James, 1990). The existing curriculum includes courses in advanced writing skills in English and Amharic. Considering the multi-ethnic and multilingual nature of Ethiopia, such courses are valuable. All 35 students said the language courses inspired them to read more related materials.

Education policy and job creation

According to Ethiopia's education policy, higher-education institutions should help boost economic growth by producing competent civil servants, and entrepreneurs who can create jobs (Amare, 2009).

Creating job demands entrepreneurial ability. Many of the newspapers that mushroomed after Media Proclamation No.34/1992 died soon after because of inadequate homework (PMC, 2006). Thus, training those who start their own media businesses is important. BDU's journalism program offers an entrepreneurship course, and all 35 students expressed keen liking for it. Entrepreneur course is a positive response to the national call.

Multi-disciplinary issues

Ethiopian higher-learning curricula "shall aim at enabling the learner to acquire pertinent knowledge, independent thinking and communication skills, and professional values that help him become a competent professional" (*Federal Negarit Gazeta*, 2009).

In building democratic and ethical culture, Civic and Ethical Studies is among the recommended courses to be given across all programs (Ministry of Education, 2005). In BDU curriculum, Civic and Ethical Studies is incorporated into an attempt to build democratic and ethical culture, a course recommended across all programs of higher learning (Ministry of Education, 2005). The course examines many contextual issues.

Contextual knowledge and curriculum

University media education normally has to be organized with contextual knowledge of journalism that emphasizes social, economic, political, cultural, legal and ethical aspects of its practice both within and globally (UNESCO, 2007).

BDU JoCo curriculum has Media Law and Ethics and Survey of the Ethiopian Mass Media courses. The media law course includes the Right of Thought, Opinion and Expression (Article 29, Ethiopian Constitution; Ethiopian Press Proclamation No.34/1992; Ethiopian Broadcasting Proclamation Service No.533/2007). The mass media course has the historical analysis of media development in Ethiopia.

Courses like Development Communication cover such topics as democracy, good governance and the media's role in emerging democracies, etc. Scholars and international agencies concerned with Third World issues agree that national development should be the forward thrust of these countries' policies (James, 1990). The course also introduces students to community-based communication for development in an Ethiopian context. Other courses like Media Management and Intercultural Communication are relevant to the political, cultural and economic contexts of Ethiopia. However, turning them into context depends on the teachers' knowledge and initiative. During discussions, 29 of the 35 students rated only 50 percent of the academic staff knowledgeable and dedicated.

Besides general understanding imparted through these courses, students need to know general history, politics, economy, philosophy, law, sociology, psychology, statistics, linguistics, religion, literature, logic, music, etc. (Katzen, 1975; Adam, 2001; Mencher, 1994). These disciplines prepare critical journalists, lay a foundation for specialized journalism and qualify students for postgraduate study (UNESCO, 2007).

In group discussions, 31 students recommended general courses like logic, sociology, psychology, economics and history. The curriculum has no such courses. Only the Civics and Ethical Studies course introduces Ethiopia's historical forms, polity structure and Constitution, democracy and human right issues. But with two contact hours in a week for only one semester, is it adequate? All 35 students said no.

How to achieve a balanced journalism curriculum?

The UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education for Developing Countries and Emerging Democracies (2007) is designed for journalism schools in developing countries and has a rational, practical and workable approach. A generic model, it can be adapted according to each country's specific needs (Singh, 2008).

BDU's three-year journalism program has 21 academic courses with 58 credit hours (51.78 percent). The rest, 20 professional courses, share 54 of the total 112 credit hours (48.21 percent). But theory courses in the UNESCO Model Curricula exclude communication studies, public relations and advertising, which should be offered separately. BDU's curriculum has seven communication courses with 19 credit hours. If excluded, the academic courses are left with only 39 credit hours (34.82 percent). Thus, judged by the UNESCO model curriculum, the BDU composition looks deficient in academic content.

The UNESCO model curriculum notes that education with theoretical and practical balance develops students' professional standards, knowledge of media's role in society and exposure to the liberal arts tradition. It aims at producing analytical and critically reflective journalists who also have production skills. BDU's journalism education is short of academic courses, which could be taken from other departments.

Scope for Further Research

The analysis has indicated there are courses addressing contextual knowledge. But the adequacy of treatment of socially relevant issues discussed in those courses and their appropriateness need further investigation. Whether the contextual elements raised in the curriculum are sufficient is another concern.

Excepting the general treatment of development communication, the curriculum does not address the role of development journalism. How to practice developmental journalism in general, and its relevance to Ethiopia in particular, are not defined.

UNESCO's Model Curricula for Journalism Education for Developing Countries and Emerging Democracies (2007) is appreciated by many for a practical and workable approach. It has been called a generic model that can be adapted according to each country's specific needs (Singh, 2008). It is now six years that the UNESCO prescriptions were issued. It is time to take stock of how the recommendations have been adopted and if some need modifications or alterations. Seminars and conferences in universities and research studies all over the Third World can provide good feedback and help to understand the situation at the grassroots level.

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The Lab Paper Maurice Odine | Modine@gust.edu.kw

Abstract

The article examines the role of the laboratory (lab) newspaper in journalism education, emphasizing students' writing skills across the curriculum. To instill requisite technical skills, faculty members have incorporated information technology into teaching. Cognizant of the sometimes disparate nature of vital resources, campuses have welcomed media convergence in reporting. Meanwhile, college media programs have established partnerships with local media such as newspapers to give students opportunities for experiential learning through community service. Thus, young journalists learn newspaper decision - making while college media advisers struggle to balance objectivity with institutional loyalty. In the meantime, professional journalists render invaluable service by way of win - win beneficial residency.

Introduction

College News (2012) applauds the fact that media education programs focus on writing across the curriculum. This pedagogical approach is based on the belief that writing is relevant in all courses and all disciplines. One justification is the belief that writing is a mode of learning and that communication is important in laying the foundation for acquiring and understanding knowledge. "The widely discussed 1975 *Newsweek* article 'Why Johnny Can't Write' made institutions think strategically about teaching students to write well," said Dara Regaignon, a co - author of *Writing Program Administration at Small Liberal Arts Colleges*, the first empirical study of writing programs at 100 small private liberal arts colleges in the United States.

Learning from this observation, Pomona College in Claremont CA, requires that all first - year students take a course called Critical Inquiry, a writing - intensive seminar, during their first semester. The seminar is taught by faculty members from various disciplines, rigorously concentrating on writing, as well as critical-thinking and analytic skills.

In journalism education, writing skills and writing newspapers are not mutually exclusive. The former is the foundation upon which the latter flourishes. Teaching writing through journalism education has developed an unwelcoming fever of its own. An anonymous professor wrote of her guilt about teaching journalism when newspapers are in decline. In a "Dear Cary" letter to Cary Tennis, Salon's advice columnist, dated March 17, 2009, the professor writes:

The problem is this: I feel like I'm teaching them something that will be as useful as Sanskrit when they graduate. I am trying to get them involved in learning the latest technology as well as teaching them important writing and life skills, so they will be employable. But every morning I read stories about how huge, venerable newspapers will likely be shuttered by the end of the year, and it absolutely freaks me out. What the heck am I doing? I feel like I'm a participant in the theater of the absurd.

Dan Reimold (2011) argues that newspapers may undergo a turbulent period but have the capacity to reinvent their existence because the tenets of quality writing, reporting and editing will continue to yield dividends. He explains his love for teaching this way:

I will always consider myself lucky to teach journalism students a bit about that. The best journalism students are not just the future of journalism. They are its present. Don't be surprised if they teach you a few things. And don't feel guilty about that! The best teachers should always be open to learning along the way.

Methodology

Primary and secondary sources were used in addressing the topic. Primary sources included journalism faculty members versed in theory and practice within the discipline and with wide experience advising college/university lab newspapers. Secondary sources included library holdings, newspapers, magazines and select journals. Secondary sources were used for data analysis and interpretation. Select journalism/mass communication curricula were examined as well.

Purpose

The present research set out with a fourfold purpose:

- To determine the future of journalism education in a transitional phase of information technology.
- To identify the practical imperative of the campus lab newspaper in journalism education.
- To highlight the advocacy role of the lab paper within the campus and the local community.
- To bring to light innovative methods in inculcating writing skills in students, particularly in a period of constantly changing technology.

Theoretical Considerations

A number of theoretical considerations came into play as part of the research, with a view to adding a hands - on perspective to content learned and taught in the classroom. For instance, the inverted pyramid theory was examined in the work of students researching and writing stories for publication; the gatekeeping theory underscored the importance of news judgment and significant decision - making; and the “news hole” was analyzed as to how the lab newspaper adhered to it. Furthermore, the research looked at such aspects as “yellow journalism,” objectivity, fairness, ethics, accuracy and bias. Issues of press freedom, including prior restraint and reporting pertaining to campus press, provided additional scrutiny.

Future of Journalism Education

Future generations must be served through journalism, despite recurring worries about the journalism industry. Larry Atkins, who teaches at Temple University in Philadelphia PA., states: “In light of the decline of newspapers, you would think that college students would be staying away from the field of journalism in droves. Thus far, that’s not the case. But will university journalism schools change their approach in the way they teach future journalists?”

The trend in journalism education is to get students out of the classroom and involved in community journalism. This is typically characterized by media convergence where students gain experience in print and broadcast news production, the Web and digital media. At Temple, students at the media center write stories on underreported urban neighborhoods. In fall 2008, La Salle University launched a capstone community journalism course that engaged students in multi - media reporting in Germantown, Pa.

Students are not on the sidelines. Nor are they entirely abandoning the major. Rashad Mulla, a George Mason University student who completed a journalism internship at the Newspaper Association of America (NAA) Foundation, wrote from a student’s perspective in 2009.

“Even during these bleak times for the newspaper industry, I am not second - guessing my decision to pursue a journalism degree,” he wrote. “The writing, researching and technology skills I am learning as a student and an intern will benefit me no matter which career path I decide to follow. It’s not my professor’s responsibility to land me a job, only to prepare me as much as possible so that I can land one myself.”

David Offer is a retired executive editor of *Kennebec Journal and Morning Sentinel* in Maine. In the 2009 article “Wanted: Future journalism students; must read, write, blog,” he writes about a friend who reacted to his plan to teach journalism in Alaska. His friend wrote, “You and I have talked about the failing newspapers and agree that the Internet is the main reason so many newspapers are struggling or shutting operations. The economy and lower advertising revenue are only exacerbating the problem.”

Offer, however, optimistically believes there will always be a job market for gatherers of information that people need, who can write it in a manner that people can trust and find interesting. “Clear writing will remain basic; the written word is important on the Web as it is on paper. Today’s students need to be competent in all methods of presenting news, including print blog, podcast and video.”

Middle East Perspective

At Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in Kuwait, the mass communications department published the first edition of *Yoom Afdal*, envisaged as a monthly lab paper, in January 2011. A multidisciplinary unit with concentrations in journalism, visual communication, advertising/ public relations and radio - television, Yoom Afdal afforded students a unique educational experience by enhancing their training in writing and reporting. In the first issue, all but two stories were written by students.

The author’s previous experience includes serving as professor and associate dean for language and communication at United Arab Emirates University (UAEU). From 2004 to 2006, he led the mass communication faculty in publishing *Al Fanar*, an English - language campus lab paper. “Al Fanar has enabled students to develop superior writing skills by participating in writing across - the - curriculum,” said James Ayers, chief operations officer for humanities and social sciences.

In Cairo the journalism and mass communication program at the American University houses *The Independent* lab paper. Founded in fall 2009, *The Independent* is a weekly that publishes both English and Arabic editions. Ray Weisenborn, a journalism professor who served as the paper’s adviser, puts forth a strong argument, recalling his experience and looking forward: “I think the lab paper is important. It’s imperative. It’s necessary. And I think that any department that teaches journalism should have a functional lab newspaper.”

Ali Dashti, professor of mass communications at GUST, also holds fast to the principle that journalism requires blending theory with practice. Dashti firmly states: “The lab paper is very essential to teaching journalism. From my experience, the one important thing we must emphasize is for students to acquire practical experience. I think having the lab paper is the most important element of teaching journalism.”

Practical Imperative

It is a truism that the absence of a community newspaper deprives residents of vital information they need to make decisions about their lives. Shapiro (2003) describes news as “what the people need or want to know, whatever interests them, whatever adds to their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.” In Shapiro’s opinion, news is a product that is gathered, processed, packaged and circulated to readers.

According to Stanley Walker, editor of *The New York Herald Tribune* in the early 20th century, even personal information is important to readers, emphasizing that “in an educational environment, students who do well want to read about their progress in the newspaper, and other students want to emulate the success of their peers.”

Carter (2011), who writes for major print and online newspapers, is a lab paper enthusiast who understands the “fright” of beginning journalists. He lists “steps you’ll have to take to make that goal a reality”: amass writing samples, gain experience at any local newspaper, follow up if you hear from the editor, do not expect quick professional miracles, be available, take all jobs you can

consider every assignment the most important thing in the world, read the paper for which you write (and others), and buy or have access to the Associated Press (AP) stylebook.

Collins (2009), a journalism professor at North Dakota State University in Fargo, recalls his experience at *The Spectrum*, where he trained students in preparing content accurately, compellingly and quickly. Colya Tompkins Lynne, a *Spectrum* writer, said she learned valuable leadership skills and teamwork along with developing journalism skills. “The great thing about a student paper is that it provides a nice training ground to make some mistakes and learn from them (with minimal risk),” she says, adding: “Learning how to work and collaborate with other people with different roles (photographers, designers, writers, editors) also helps set you up for success in the real world.” The *Spectrum* instills in students the importance of experience in securing that entry-level journalism job.

With young writers in mind, Carter (2008) proposes a formula for writing a newspaper article, feature story or press release, all intended to make the writing interesting and easy to read. The lead, Carter insists, should typically be the first paragraph. It should provide a clear and concise overview of the main point(s) - that is, who, what, when, where, why and how. This formula conveys to readers what they will learn in the article.

According to Brady (2004), a journalism program that teaches the fundamentals should have in place a structure to instill multiple journalism skills. In other words, students should be enabled to acquire skills that they can apply when working in professional journalism. Journalism skills should consist of appropriate levels of experience and know-how. These skills, Brady notes, include production and journalistic skills for working journalists and youths. “Journalism education requires transformation in our media, our journalism, and our journalism training,” he concludes.

Successful journalism programs have campus newspapers, most with a faculty adviser. The campus newspaper staff mainly comprises a few paid student positions, including the editor, production/layout manager, photographer and sales manager, with volunteers making up the rest of the staff. Journalists-in-training must become proficient in English, a skill that is greatly enhanced by the lab newspaper.

De Wolk (2000) says, “There’s a new generation out there that would readily accept a new way of handling news, and they’re not being served.” Will Bunch, a *Philadelphia Daily News* reporter who writes the popular blog “Attywood,” believes journalism schools need to continue teaching the traditional core values of reporting, adding that journalists must report fairly and with integrity.

Advocacy Role

So much has been said about the impending demise of the newspaper printed on paper. Yet certain quarters are not convinced that the day will come when there are no more hard-copy newspapers. On June 4, 2009, *The San Francisco Chronicle* ran a story by C.W. Nevius with the headline, “Why we need newspapers - yes, made of paper.” It was about a homeless man who was trying to work his way off the street by shining shoes. Just when he had saved enough money for a room, the city’s Department of Public Works informed him that he owed \$491 for a street vendor’s license. So he started saving for that and continued living on the street. After the story broke, complaints rained down on the hapless bureaucracy. By that morning, the \$491 demand was deemed a “misunderstanding” and the homeless man was front-page news, assurance that the hard-copy newspaper’s service to community is far from extinction.

In 1996, *The Campanile*, a lab newspaper in Palo Alto, Calif., published an investigative story that made big news locally and resulted in some significant resignations. The story was about a topic that most college journalists would find boring: a school board meeting. However, it became anything but boring when student reporter Ben Hewlett uncovered some shocking facts. In reviewing the minutes of the meeting, he questioned why the board had reopened a closed board meeting at 10:30 p.m., kept it open for only three minutes and passed several resolutions within the three-minute period. All the resolutions pertained to salary increases for district office administrators.

This opened the gate for questions. What was the board discussing in closed session for several hours before reopening the board meeting at 10:30 p.m.? Why was it passing financial resolutions with no prior discussion? When Hewlett looked carefully at the minutes, it appeared the board had been discussing financial issues behind closed doors, a violation of California’s Brown Act, which requires public entities to hold open meetings when discussing financial issues.

After further investigation, Hewlett wrote the story, and it was published in *The Campanile*. Within two days of publication, the board held an emergency session and retracted the raises. Within two months after the publication of an investigative follow-up story, the superintendent resigned, and within a year, other district officials also resigned. The day after the story was first published, it was picked up by *The San Francisco Chronicle* and *The San Jose Mercury News*, as well as television Channels 4 and 5. Meanwhile, the local press, *Palo Alto Weekly* and *The San Francisco Chronicle*, published supporting editorials.

The Palo Alto student lab newspaper had previously been active in carrying out the role of advocate. Before 1996, *The Campanile* published an exposé about the ineffectiveness of the counselor program at the school; within a few months, it was dismantled and replaced with a “Teacher Adviser” program, which still exists and is nationally recognized for excellence.

Wojcicki (2010) believes in empowering students by giving them the writing skills and tools to express their views, and the platform to be heard. She proudly says, “The philosophy . . . is that students learn by doing, not by watching. . . . Students get passionate about journalism and writing when they are given the freedom to write well and become more interested in the world around them.”

Teaching and Community Service

In examining the role of the learner versus the role of the teacher, McAdams (2008) makes the case that students learn far more by doing than by sitting in a classroom listening to a teacher. This is certainly not news, but it is a reality not always accepted. As McAdams puts it: “The best way to learn is by doing. That’s what I’ve concluded, and I know that it’s not earth-shattering - but some students (and journalists) are dead set on what they think of as ‘being taught.’ They want to sit in a room and have someone transmit knowledge to them right there.” The real challenge in teaching journalism, she argues, is coming up with meaningful assignments that will truly test whether the students have learned what the teacher has taught them in the classroom.

The best journalism teachers are those who understand that talking is not teaching. Conversely, the best journalism students are those who realize that listening is not learning. Good journalism education needs teachers who incorporate information technology into instruction. By the same token, journalism students need to supplement classroom instruction with practical experience, particularly at the readily available campus lab paper or community newspaper. Optimally, knowledge and skills and putting that knowledge into practice on the other need to merge and take advantage of modern information technology. The lab newspaper is one excellent teacher-learner merger environment in which teaching places emphasis on harnessing learned skills to practical settings.

Ron Kochendoerfer, Ohio State University’s director of housing administration, makes the following notation on newspaper readership:

Higher education aims to inculcate students into a community and culture, providing them with the skills, strategies and context for becoming contributing members of a democratic society. I strongly believe providing students with access to daily newspapers provides a structure and context for students to transfer classroom lessons into dynamic real-life applications . . .

Frank Parker, Sam Houston State University's vice president for student services, agrees that newspapers are a valuable resource for students in his school's Freshman Leadership Program. He requires them to stay informed local, regional and national current events and always tells them that they cannot be responsible leaders if they do not know what is happening in the world.

Another truism is that journalism education cannot thrive without meaningful partnerships with the industry. Establishing relations is most beneficial to students because it gives them a unique opportunity to learn and work under the supervision of experts. Indeed, some journalism programs have established mutually beneficial relations with local media designed to improve the quality of the lab newspaper and to introduce and/or teach courses in the discipline.

John Duchneskie, graphics editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, is a resident professional at the University of Missouri - Columbia School of Journalism, where he teaches information graphics. He also serves as graphics editor for *The Missourian*. "If you're trying to explain process, you've really got to know it," he said. "It takes all the skills of a journalist and a lot of technical know-how." Needless to say, students learn much thanks to the industry/journalism program partnership. Professionals at The Winston - Salem Chronicle in North Carolina have donated their time as adjunct journalism faculty at Winston - Salem State University.

Instruction and Community Journalism

The University of Alabama (UA) encourages students to participate in community journalism, otherwise known as "ComJ." The program enables students to explore new ways to serve communities through the evolving practice of journalism and to think critically about the role news plays in the community. ComJ students develop writing and editing skills in print, visual and digital media, produce and test prototypes for innovations, and complete newsroom internships at the acclaimed *Anniston Star* in just one year.

ComJ students also take two semesters of coursework at the AU campus in Tuscaloosa, then immerse themselves in a three - month professional journalism experience at *The Anniston Star*. The program has an impressive record of job placement. In the first three years of the program, more than 80 percent of UA journalism graduates were working in journalism full time or furthering their education within six months of graduation.

The teaching newspaper is described as a glorious vehicle for community journalism. In one instance, the fellows' newsroom production class also worked on a special project: Friday - night football as an archetype of community culture. The newspaper's editors and photographers collaborated on the team - reporting project in a bid to further improve service to the newspaper readership and production goals.

The fall - semester course load is divided among courses in journalism history, the First Amendment and mass communication theory. The program's hallmark is a one - credit course, "Grand Rounds in Community Journalism," in which *The Anniston Star* becomes the textbook for scouting the departments that showcase the opportunities and frustrations of business, editorial, production and administration in the changing media climate.

Because community journalism is the most stable platform for sales, circulation and relationships with subscribers, the teaching newspaper prepares students who are trained for success and not fearful of the future. They spend time in newsrooms as reporters, photographers and editors. A prospective intern submits a statement of purpose and an essay detailing how the internship would contribute to the applicant's journalism education and career objective. The transition from journalism education to the teaching newspaper, and then to the news business, is seamless.

Students have interviewed union members on picket lines; learned about volunteer firefighters; investigated payday loans; written about threats to close inner - city recreation centers vital to

disadvantaged youth; attended rallies; proposed initiatives such as parks for dogs and their owners; written appreciations of country and classical music; rhapsodized about autumn in southern Appalachia; pondered the fairness of public funds for a Confederate monument (whereas there is no civil rights memorial); and jumped to the beat of breaking news (yet felt the steady rhythm of normal everyday life). The practical newspaper experience students acquire is valuable to their journalism education and their aspirations as journalists.

La Salle University in Philadelphia PA., works with two local communities, without a newspaper Germantown and Mt. Airy, so that students working on the lab newspaper fill a vacuum. Huntly Collins, professor and former *Inquirer* reporter, says, "Ironically, this comes at a time when Germantown has lost its community newspaper (*The Germantown Courier*) and when nearby Mt. Airy has lost its paper, the *Mt. Airy Express*. I would love to see our students help fill the vacuum . . ."

First - year students at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism now take "Multimedia Storytelling" and "Introduction to 21st Century Media." In the fall, journalism students at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, take "Communication, Business, and Entrepreneurship."

Technology in Teaching

Journalism education cannot go on as usual, and must embrace new technology. Tim McGuire, journalism professor at Arizona State University, was standing in front of 13 students in fall 2006, teaching "The Business of Journalism," when his inner voice interrupted. "You dummy," he recalls thinking. "You're teaching a history course." Actually, he was explaining the collapse of the print classified advertising market.

That was when he realized that the course was in desperate need of revision. McGuire, a 23 - year veteran of *The Star Tribune* in Minneapolis, needed re - education himself. He immersed himself in Internet business models, started a blog and renamed the course "Business and Future of Journalism." He learned quickly that today's journalism students do not enroll to hear about "old newspaper farts telling them the business is doomed."

Schreiner (2010), a freelance writer and teacher who speaks highly of the positive impact of technology on instruction, observes that in many classrooms, the dusty, low - tech chalkboard has been replaced by sleek, highly interactive technology, with Smart Board being a popular choice. Using a Smart Board, teachers create technology-rich lessons that captivate and educate their pupils.

Elsewhere in Philadelphia, Drexel University is offering global journalism as an undergraduate degree program in which students are taught journalism skills they can use globally, and Arcadia University, which emphasizes study - abroad programs, recently started the Visual Culture in India Project, in which journalism students travel and create multimedia projects that are published in the lab newspaper, among other media outlets.

In a Sept. 1, 2009, article titled "Teaching Twitter at J - School," Liz Weber reported that DePaul University in Chicago started teaching journalism students how Twitter can be used in the classroom. The course objective is to teach future journalists to sift through all information available through Twitter, especially as it relates to uncovering breaking news and verifying the authenticity of amateur sources. Alumnus Craig Kanalley, a digital news intern at *The Chicago Tribune* and founder of the Web site Breaking Tweets, teaches the course.

Should Lab Papers Go Online?

Murley (2009), assistant professor of new and emerging media at Eastern Illinois University, finds it hard to believe there are still student newspapers with no online presence. At a recent workshop of the Associated Collegiate Press, he asked for a show of hands from students whose newspapers did not have web sites. In two sessions, several hands were raised. Although Murley refuses to say which schools, he is surprised that a lab newspaper would be without an online presence.

Editors, including those from prominent metropolitan newspapers, yearn for future journalists who possess skills applicable to online publishing. Sean Gallagher, an editor at *The Los Angeles Times*, spoke about “Getting Serious about Your Web Site” at the annual College Editors Boot Camp, sponsored by the California College Media. He told participants to try online publishing, adding that students should develop skills in database - building, Flash, and other news media tools. “The old model of ‘to them’ is dead,” he said. “Now it’s about blogs, Flash, other multimedia presentations.”

Challenging Management

More often than not, the adviser is expected to wear two hats, teaching and producing a good product, and protecting the university. The arduous task causes headaches for the adviser and/or institution, depending on the balance between them, and whichever way the head that wears the hats leans. The arduousness sometimes brings about a rift or even a parting of the ways between the adviser and institution.

Ron Feemster taught journalism and advised the 116 - page bimonthly lab newspaper *Northwest Trail* at Northwest College in Powell WY. He came to Northwest to lead students in writing and reporting news. What he did not anticipate was the battle to uphold journalistic standards and values. “I write here because what I learned may prove useful to other colleges struggling to find the right role for a student newspaper,” he stated in a report. “Good student journalists, like the ones I advised, will uncover facts that make college administration squirm. But if a strong press is sometimes a nuisance for administrators, a timid self - censoring student paper is an educational fraud.”

One student journalist, relying on public records, investigated the distribution of salary increases among non - faculty campus employees. Human Resources documents strongly suggested that top earners, and certain favored individuals at the college, were receiving bigger - percentage raises than the rank - and - file. *Northwest Trail* elevated the debate. But in the end, the college administrators blamed the messenger. The adviser is frank when he says: “My vision for student journalism seemed inextricably at odds with the administration’s view of the college paper. A deep, mutual distrust set in.”

The cardinal sin of *Northwest Trail* was not that it broke big stories. Rather, it was the paper’s failure to be “positive” and to “support the college.” Feemster heard criticism from faculty members, vice presidents, administrative staff and the men’s basketball coach, who complained in writing that the paper was not “on the same team” as his players. “At Northwest, a critical story was a disloyal story,” he concludes.

At Craven Community College in North Carolina, a 2005 attempt to resolve debates over a proposed policy of prior restraint of the lab newspaper began discussions to outsource *The Campus Communicator* to a private publisher. Craven’s administration made the proposal as a “compromise meant to end the dissent and threat of lawsuits” by student journalists. The proposal was to grant a one - year license to an outside body that would also be in charge of *The Campus Communicator*’s editorial content.

It all stemmed from a sex advice column, “Between the Sheets,” in the campus newspaper, which gave suggestions to help people deal with their sex lives, including “dancing,” or “stripping” or “role playing.” The editor said the newspaper was “flooded” with complaints during the next three days. Angry readers also complained to the college administration, threatening to withdraw donations and saying they would not send their children to the college. The lab newspaper canceled the column, apologized and “made it known publicly that the column would not run again.” An advisory committee was set up to “advise the staff on questions related to unprotected speech such as libel, obscenity, invasion of a fellow student’s privacy, and matters disruptive to the college educational mission.”

In California, journalism students at College of the Canyons are still angry about losing their First Amendment Rights when their school newspaper, *The Canyon Call*, was shut down in 2009. One editor said the paper was always at loggerheads with the administration. “They would be upset at commentaries,” he said. *The Signal*, a local newspaper, published an opinion piece headlined “One cut schools can’t afford.” It took the position that despite a 31 percent jump in enrollment, the college eliminated its award - winning student newspaper. Elsewhere in California, Dominguez Hills College and Cerritos College in Norwalk had their papers shut down, although Cerritos was resurrected after mass protests.

Conclusion

While journalism education lays a theoretical foundation, its real meaning comes when that theory is actually put into practice, with expressive writing as the backdrop. An opportunity to acquire the art of reporting at the lab newspaper is ideal. In fact, successful lab newspapers reflect adaptation to information technology or, better still, work within media convergence environments, given that multi - skilled journalists are the wave of the future.

Teachers who are slow in adapting information technology for instruction should acquire the vital technical and technological skills so important in training young journalists. A journalism teacher who cannot even save a file or attach it to e - mail using a modern computer is doing a great disservice to students. As one anonymous professor put it, “It’s tantamount to committing a crime against the students.” Today’s effective journalism teachers embrace modern media technology and pursue faculty development to empower students and enable them to achieve their fullest potential.

From a teacher’s perspective, journalism education is helping students become more aware of current events and develop strong technical skills. But teachers, too, must be trained to incorporate news literacy into their teaching. Traditionally, schools have focused on the teaching of fiction, five - paragraph essays and poetry, neglecting the teaching of nonfiction or journalistic styles. Since teaching is interdisciplinary, the issue needs to be addressed to complement critical writing.

Students should learn theory, but they need to supplement it with practical experience through service on campus media such as the lab paper. Meanwhile, successful lab newspapers reflect adaptation to multimedia platforms; after all, one medium complements another. Thus students should be able to write and report, but they also need the skills to package content for supporting media. Competent multi - skilled journalists will continue to thrive. Even newspaper executives have noticed the wind of change. For instance, thanks to an \$8 million grant from former newspaper executive Leonard Tow, journalism programs at Columbia University and the City University of New York have created media innovation centers.

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Section III. Social Media and Marketing

**The Earning Power of 'likes' and 'tweets':
An evaluation of social media in marketing in the UAE
Dr. Swapna Koshy | SwapnaKoshy@uowdubai.ac.ae**

Introduction

The Arab Spring brought a lot of attention to the use of social media in the Arab world. Whether social media were one of the catalysts or the sole agent of the socio - political movement has been a subject of endless debate. Nevertheless, it can be agreed that use of social media has increased in the region and is paving the way for enduring changes in all spheres of public and private life. Globally, social media are increasingly being used as a marketing tool replacing traditional media.

In the Arab world, however, businesses seem wary of using them. This reticence could be due to the negative sentiments created by the use of social media against establishments during the Arab Spring. In addition, social media are late bloomers in the United Arab Emirates. The public, as well as firms, needs time to warm up to social media.

This paper explores the use of social media - in particular, Facebook and Twitter, two of the most popular social media in the region - as marketing tools by businesses in the UAE. Restrictions on sites like Orkut and VoIP (voice over Internet protocol) systems like Skype may have contributed to increased traffic on these social media sites.

Social media as a marketing tool

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as “a group of Internet - based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.” The exchange of content and the possibility of interaction with other users and the company/brand make social media an ideal tool in marketing. It is this advantage that has allowed new media to outperform traditional marketing communication media. Despite the low cost of implementation, the output is disproportionately higher, and the possibility of timely direct contact with consumers makes social media an attractive option for firms.

In the last decade, consumers of all ages have increasingly used social media to empower decision - making. All aspects of social life, including the consumer facet, have been affected by increasing virtual communication. This has led to greater power for consumers through multiple, credible information sources within their online network and through virtual advertisements. Customer exposure to product/brand information through online channels, both formal and informal, has increased staggeringly. Disgruntled voices also reach multitudes of ether friends, who pay more attention to them than to formal advertising channels. Customer feedback through the same channels resonates to marketers. Today, customer - generated content and buzz have much more value than company - created hype.

Laroche et al. (2013) draw attention to the role of social media in information - sharing and customer relationship marketing by boosting brand trust and loyalty. Brand communities generated by social media help consumers interact with the product, brand, firm and other consumers, enhancing brand loyalty. As mentioned earlier, consumers convey candid opinions to their virtual friends. Researchers can collate valuable data from fan pages, number of friends, likes and other virtual interactions.

However, as Patino et al. (2012, p. 235) point out, accurate demographic information on respondents is not always available. Ardent fans can post multiple entries on Facebook and blogs, making it difficult to estimate opinions accurately. Lipsman et al. (2010) identify two cohorts of audiences for Facebook accounts of firms : “Fans of brands on Facebook (those who have explicitly ‘liked’ a brand)” and “Friends of fans,” a much larger group than the first one. But as Brian Wallace, then vice president for global digital media and marketing at Research in Motion, cautioned: “A Facebook fan has no value. Getting a Facebook fan to do something does” (cited in Creamer, 2010).

New media gaining popularity in the UAE

New media, including Facebook and Twitter, are growing in popularity the world over as well as in the UAE. Facebook broke the 1 - billion - user mark in mid - 2012 (Vance, 2012), while Twitter has a half - billion accounts (Lunden, 2012), making these the most popular social media globally. The July 2012 edition of *Arab Social Media Report* stated that Facebook had attained 30 percent penetration in the UAE (the US penetration rate is 52.9 percent) with 3,293,660 followers, of whom 54 percent are between the ages of 15 and - 29 and 46 percent over 30. Twitter penetration reached 3.25 percent, with 263,070 active Twitter users, and Arabic continued to be the fastest - growing language on Twitter.

A 2010 worldwide survey by Robert Half, a recruitment firm, concluded that “professionals from the UAE are among the most active users of social and professional networking sites like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter” - more than their European counterparts. While the global average was 49 percent, a majority of UAE respondents (66 percent) indicated they were active users of social or professional networking sites. “Only respondents from Brazil (75 percent), Spain (72 percent) and Ireland (70 percent) were more likely to identify themselves as more active users than those from the UAE,” despite high restrictions imposed by employers (UAE professionals active social media users, 2010).

However, a majority of more than 900 IT professionals questioned in a survey by Gulf Business Machines said they had partial or complete social media restrictions at their workplaces. Of these respondents, 35 percent stated that they had a complete ban on social media sites, while 33 percent said they had partial access limitations; 32 percent said they had no restrictions on social media activities (Pascal, 2012).

Religious and cultural factors and the regulations imposed by the telecom regulatory authority are important reasons for reticence in use of new media. These types of websites are blocked in the UAE:

1. Internet content contradicting the ethics and morals of the UAE, including nudity and dating.
2. Internet content containing material expressing hate toward religions.
3. Internet content that is not in line with UAE Laws.
4. Internet content related to gambling.

(Internet censorship in Dubai and UAE, 2013).

Customers' use of new media as a marketing tool in the UAE

The role of traditional advertisements in customers' purchase decision process is rapidly giving way to popular social media. A 2010 survey by YouGovSiraj confirms that 80 percent of consumers in the UAE used social media to inform their decision - making process (ameinfo.com, 2010). Of the 750 individuals surveyed, 41 percent confirmed that they used Facebook and Twitter to interact with their favorite brands.

A recent survey of 15,758 respondents in 12 countries by Bayt.com on corporate use of social media in the Middle East and North Africa revealed that 46 percent of respondents believed that firms were not using social media effectively. An explanation could be seen in the opinions of 82 percent of respondents, who said they believed in the potential for negative word - of - mouth. However, 51 percent confirmed that the firms where they work use social media; 47.5 percent said they believed that use of social media had increased traffic to their company's website, and 38.2 percent reported that fans of their company's social media were converted into customers (Sahoo. 2012).

Research conducted by Barry and Bouvier (2011) shows that respondents from the UAE said “exchanging information” was one of the key motives of Facebook users. The *Arab Social Media Report* (2012) confirms this and adds, “we now see a wider scope of uses for social media in the

region, ranging from civic engagement and political participation to business entrepreneurial efforts, and social change.” A recent survey by Zarca Interactive and Golin Harris of 444 UAE consumers, of whom 51 percent were under age 41, reports that on car purchases only 10 percent said they were affected by TV advertisements, 5.4 percent by billboards and 2.7 percent by radio advertising, while 26 percent based their decisions on online media. It is an anomaly that the UAE automotive industry's spending on traditional media like TV, radio and outdoor advertising in 2011 amounted to AED 161 million, while only AED 24 million was invested in online platforms (Zarca Interactive study reveals insights from brand and type preference to color and country of origin choice, 2012).

A comparative study of social media users in the UAE and Saudi Arabia found that logging on to their Facebook accounts is the first Internet activity for a majority of UAE users, and 52 percent confessed they could not live without Facebook. One - third of users also admitted using social media during office hours (Infographic: Social media usage in UAE, Saudi Arabia. 2012), despite restrictive conditions in UAE offices, 17 percent higher than the global average of 37 percent.

But compared to their peers in Saudi Arabia, UAE users were reticent about using social media to obtain brand/product information: the figures are 54 percent for Saudi and 23 percent for the UAE. While for 20 percent of Saudi respondents liking or following a brand is linked to buying it, the rate is only 10 percent in the UAE. However, 72 percent confirmed that social advertising increased their interest in brands or products. Use of social media helps firms develop interest in the brand, creates brand familiarity and generates positive word of mouth (Skaff, 2011).

The study of social networking sites by McKechnie et al. (2012, p. 60) indicates that social media were being used in Dubai primarily as a communication tool specifically to “keep in touch” with family, not for business purposes. The 26-to-34-age group was recorded as using social media the most for building business and relationships (54 percent) and as a key tool for advertising and promotion (69 percent). Facebook was considered the most secure site.

Use of social media by firms in the UAE

The marketing activities on social media most frequently used by firms in the UAE have been identified “increasing brand awareness; advertising; giving feedback on products or services; promotional offers; directing to the organization's website, and inexpensive reach of potential customers and market intelligence gathering” (Al Tenaaji and Caader, 2010). This study also confirms that Facebook and Twitter are the most popular social media sites for these marketing activities. The researchers point out that the predominant use of social media to advertise “products, services and events” seems to deter prospective customers from active engagement with the media.

Research by DLA Piper (2011) also shows that the main use of social media in the Middle East is for communicating with customers, raising brand awareness and marketing. More than half the firms used social media to advertise corporate events. Only 41 percent of UAE businesses use social media, and even they are not exploiting the benefits.

The digital media agency Grafdom conducted a Social Media Brands Index for the UAE including 100 social - media - savvy brands and individuals with a total of nearly a million followers. The indices show that some industries are more successful at using social media than others. For example, Communications and Technology was the most active category, while Real Estate was the least active (UAE - social - media - brands. 2011). This may indicate that social media were used more for low - involvement products than for high - involvement products.

Identifying factors that inhibit social media use

A survey by Bayt.com revealed that 80 percent of firms in the Middle East are reticent to use social media because they fear possible damage to reputation from customer comments. The CEO of Bayt.com, a company that actively engages in social media marketing and has more than 70,000 Facebook fans, commented that customers had many alternatives online to post negative comments. He

recommends training staff to handle online interaction with consumers and carefully planning the implementation process (Bayt.com, 2012). Firms were also not convinced that engaging with social media could affect the bottom line.

Posting the right content online and responding to customer posts are other challenges (Sahoo, 2012). Another factor is the power of social media to inform public opinion and affect the course of history, as seen in Arab Spring (Prasanth Kumar, cited in Sahoo, 2012), creating a latent fear of possible negative word - of - mouth in new media. There is also reticence in using media to interact online for cultural and religious reasons. Added to this are the complete or partial restrictions on use of social media in the work place, reducing the time available to spend on social media for business purposes.

Fewer than half of UAE firms use social media, but their overt use of them to promote products and brand cause customers to distrust the media. Nor are they taking advantage of social media's relatively low cost. Customers also seem to engage less with the media for high - involvement and high - risk products like real estate and vehicles, but they use them for less expensive, less risky products like electronics and consumer goods.

What's Next?

Social media are late bloomers in the UAE and are primarily used not for business purposes. As social media use catches on among the population, the purposes of use will also become more diverse to include the exchange of commercial information. Companies should not hold back, but should continue to invest in social media not just money, but also time and dedicated personnel.

Internal marketing is necessary to educate staff about the importance of interacting with customers online sensitively and sensibly. Attempts at overt marketing and creating hype should be contained, as they do not build customer confidence. Negative comments should be seen as creative feedback for further improvement. Employees need to be trained on legal issues pertaining to use of social media, and in dealing with negative feedback. Once customers and firms are convinced of the benefits of social media, it will be a win-win situation for both entities.

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A Comparative Analysis of Mobile Marketing: A Case Study Approach

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Abstract

The telecom industry has flourished in the last few years: by the end of 2011, 6 billion people worldwide used mobile phones. Penetration is greater in emerging and developing nations such as China and India, which account for 30 percent of all mobile subscriptions. India had 884 million mobile phone users by the end of 2011 - 73 percent of its population. To understand mobile phone use in India, the United States and Germany, the authors undertook case studies of several brands that have used mobile phones to market their brands and products, comparing the studies and developing a framework to allow Indian marketers to use mobile phones for effective marketing.

The authors used the theory of reasoned action as their theoretical framework, as it provided the right framework to understand consumer attitudes and behavior effectively. When consumers evaluate the brands positively, they develop an affirmative attitude toward mobile marketing, the authors found. This result can be easily managed through innovative and engaging strategies. Moreover, the authors concluded that Indian marketers need to develop distinct, customized and engaging mobile campaigns for the niche set of consumers based on their needs, expectation and desires.

Introduction

In today's world, the telecom industry has prominently become the most flourishing sector. By the end of 2011, global cell phone penetration reached around 6 billion subscribers, or 87 percent of the world's population. In 2011 sales of mobile handsets increased by 11.1 percent over 2010. Both developed and developing countries drove the market. However, developing countries seem to be the flavor of the season, as markets in developed countries are reaching a saturation point. China and India, the two most populous countries, lead the demand and together hold 30 percent of world subscription. With the number of subscribers growing rapidly, both countries are nearing the 1 billion mark. By the end of 2011, India recorded 884 million cell phone owners, or 73 percent of the population. In 2011, 154 million subscribers were added from the previous year, which is indeed remarkable and impressive. Thus India is emerging as the fastest growing market worldwide (Jain et al., 2011).

Moreover, with the advent of 3G mobile services, marketers and advertisers are leveraging this direct link to reach their customers through mobile marketing via diversified channels, such as SMS, MMS, Mobile Web, Internet Marketing and Mobile TV, among several others (Deshpande, 2010). This is possible because mobile communication is a reasonable, measurable, interactive and customized approach to disseminating information in the various markets (Pant & Jain, 2012). However, the Indian marketers need to home in on mobile phones' ability to reach the target consumer efficiently using creative mobile marketing campaigns.

Purpose of the Study

The primary objective is to understand the use of mobile phones to market brands and services in India, the United States and Germany; the authors used case studies of brands that employ mobile phones to engage consumers and influence their perceptions toward the brands. The second objective is to compare Indian and other case studies in the hope of proposing a practical framework for Indian marketers to employ mobile marketing strategies. Finally, the study proposes to understand how consumer attitudes and behaviors are shaped with the help of theory of reasoned action. This theoretical framework, along with the lessons learned from the case studies, may help Indian marketers develop communication campaigns that strategically target the intended audiences - consumers - and effectively market the brands.

Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) was introduced by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) to understand individuals' behavioral intention. The model (Figure 1) suggests that individuals' actual behavior is determined by their behavioral intention, which is jointly influenced by the individual's attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Attitudes indicate whether we are excited by something, depending on our own pre-existing notions about the world we live in (Severin and Tankard, 2001). The individual's attitude toward certain behavior includes the behavioral belief, evaluations of behavioral outcome, subjective norm, normative beliefs, and the motivation to comply. If an individual thinks a certain behavior will lead to a positive outcome, then the individual's attitude toward that behavior will be positive.

The most basic proposition of the TRA is that behavior is determined by behavioral intention, which is in turn postulated to be a function of the individual's attitude toward the act and the social norms (Bauer et al., 2005). Whether the attitude toward the act or the social norms exert the greater influence on the behavioral intention depends on the individual and the decision object (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

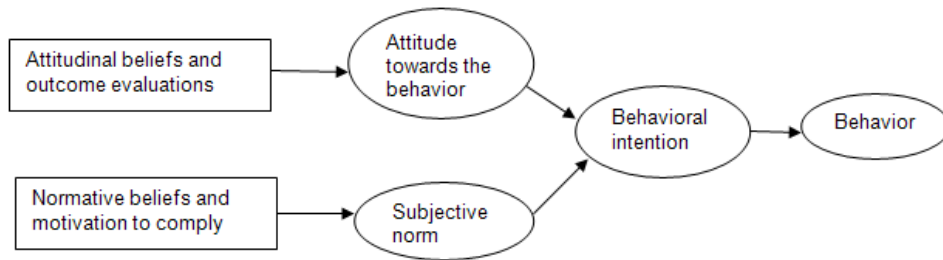


Figure 1: Model of Reasoned Action Theory

Source: Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975

Several previous studies have used the theoretical framework of TRA to map out the relationship between attitudes, subjective norms and behavioral intention in the case of mobile marketing (Amin et al., 2011; Ramayah et al., 2009; Hong et al., 2008; Md Nor and Pearson, 2008). Recent study by Schierz et al. (2010) and Tsai (2010) also proved that an individual's attitude has a direct positive relationship with his or her behavioral intention. The finding of this study proves that attitude has strong relationship with intention, compared to subjective norm. This outcome is consistent with the finding by Ramayah et al. (2009), which used the same approach. In fact, Amin et al. (2011) suggest that there is a "relationship between the consumer's attitude and the observable behavior. Attitudes, perceived usefulness of the mobile service, perceived ease of use (behavioral control) and peer pressure (subjective norms) influence intentions, which are an antecedent of behavior" (p. 11).

According to the case study on SMS advertising, SMS in India is an underexplored medium of communication and is not being used effectively for mobile marketing. While a communication campaign is designed to market a product or service, SMS can be customized to reach the target consumer directly and efficiently. However, organizations can provide the "opt-in" facility by which the consumers may control the messages ("SMS Advertising", n.d.).

Method

To understand the status of mobile marketing in India and to compare it with use in other developed countries, the authors analyze a series of case studies from India, the United States and Germany. These comparisons help the authors understand the potential of mobile marketing and its use in emerging economies such as India's and position it against developed economies.

The Multiple Case Design method has been used to study how mobile phones can market goods and services. Multiple cases have been used to arrive at critical results that help in offering compelling arguments (Bonoma, 1985; Eisenhardt, 1989). The primary unit of analysis is the use of mobile phones by various companies to market their brands. After surveying different databases such as EBSCO, WARC, ABI INFO and PROQUEST, the authors found only 10 cases related to India and 20 cases related to developed countries. They discovered there were few studies in India that discussed the role of mobile technology in marketing, as mobile marketing is still an emerging area of research.

For this study, the authors chose three Indian cases and five global cases, all of which include the elements of mobile marketing, innovation in communication campaigns and consistently positive impact on consumers. These cases are Aircel, McDonald's and Reebok in India and Yamaha, Pizza Hut, Domino's, Volkswagen and Adidas in the United States and Germany.

While the cases are unique in their intent to use mobile technology for marketing, the Adidas case is extremely useful in understanding the impact and effectiveness of mobile phones in marketing the brand. The parameters that differentiate Adidas from other cases are innovative mobile strategies, use of mobile apps across different countries, and integration of mobile technology with other traditional media. These selected cases were analyzed to comprehend mobile marketing in the three countries by specifically understanding how mobile phones are used to market the brands, the innovations the companies used to sell their brands, and their overall impact on the consumers.

Indian Cases

Aircel

Aircel used many innovative strategies - among them location-based services, phone banking, music connect for songs, and voice updates on Facebook - to attract young consumers. In 2009, Aircel collaborated with different companies and organizations: ibibo.com for social gaming; Apollo Hospital for solving health-oriented problems through mobile phones; Blyk for mobile messaging; and Infosys for downloading applications on mobile phones. Through these strategies, the company was able to generate buzz and engage young consumers in India ("Aircel's Promotional Strategy: Differentiating through Innovation", n.d.).

McDonald's

In 2011, McDonald's launched McSpicy in India with two special flavors, using traditional and new media to promote the brand. Before the launch of McSpicy, McDonald's issued cards to their customers that carried Quick Response (QR) Codes for smartphone users, which included the website and other promotional campaigns. This helped generate interest among consumers, who were strongly attracted to the brand ("Marketing McDonald's in India," n.d.).

Reebok and IPL

Reebok was the official sponsor for four IPL teams and used mobile communication to enhance the IPL merchandise. The objective was to create buzz in the market. It had engagement programs including refer-a-friend, send-a-wallpaper and gift-a-jersey. The viral effect was developed, and the jersey download rate was 53 percent; located stores, 14.6 % and downloads of wallpaper, 41 percent. Thus the company was able to involve consumers in this communication campaign ("Reebok Rides the High Waves of IPL," n.d.).

5. Global Cases

Yamaha

Yamaha launched an SMS sweepstakes and WAP as a mobile marketing campaign to engage target consumers. Participants could enter the sweepstake and opt for the campaign by sending text messages. When participants chose to opt in, the Yamaha Water Craft website was displayed on the mobile phone, and information related to race, incentives, promotions, accessories and prizes was disseminated. The consumer response was tremendous: users increased by 400 percent; and one consumer opted into the sweepstake every eight minutes ("Yamaha Water Craft Case Study", n.d.).

Pizza Hut

Pizza Hut wanted to create a buzz about its new product, the Hershey's dunker. Pizza Hut collaborated with Cox Media and broadcast TV commercials that asked viewers to SMS "HUT." All consumers who sent the text received one free pizza every month of the year, and those consumers who opted in twice received additional marketing messages and offers from Pizza Hut. Within two weeks of starting its campaign, Pizza Hut received responses from 2,000 consumers, and 54 percent of them opted for double opt - in services to receive more benefits ("Pizza Hut turns to Ping Mobile to generate Buzz", n.d.).

Domino's

Domino's integrated with Ping Mobile and Cox Media to increase traffic and to enhance brand awareness. Television viewers were asked to send an SMS to receive Domino's coupons on their mobile phones. When consumers produced the coupon at the Domino's outlet, they received a free - oven baked sandwich along with the purchase of a new "Legends" pizza. This "Ping Mobile" campaign received excellent response: within first few days, 150 consumers sent texts to receive the coupons ("Ping Mobile helps Domino's drive Foot Traffic", n.d.).

Volkswagen

Volkswagen collaborated with the agency Ad Mob to increase awareness of the Volkswagen Golf. The primary objective was to involve high - net - worth and tech - savvy German consumers on the mobile site, where they could download video and gather information about the Golf car. The company used geo - targeting techniques to concentrate their campaign on the German consumers. It was an efficient and cost - effective mobile campaign, increasing the click by 1.7 percent and attracting 25,000 consumers to the mobile site ("Case Study Volkswagen AG," n.d.).

Adidas

While each of these case studies is relevant and pertinent to understanding mobile marketing outside India, Adidas stands out for its creative and strategic approaches ("The Brand in the Hand: Mobile Marketing at Adidas," 2005).

Adidas wanted to target consumers in the 12-to-24 age range, who use new media extensively for instant messaging, downloading music and communicating with their friends. The company launched a campaign called "Impossible Is Nothing," an inspirational and emotional narrative. The company adopted an opt - in facility for consumers, along with the 3G technology by which consumers could browse the websites, watch movie clips and sports, download music and play games. It helped the company give consumers "brands in hand."

Adidas collaborated with some regional players to increase brand preference. It integrated with MTV, the television music channel, which has a wide audience and global reach that helped Adidas grow further. Adidas entered into MTV programming where the songs and the tones were mixed with the mobile applications. Consumers had fun using the applications and dramatically created a viral.

Eventually Adidas shifted from text messaging to other forms of mobile applications, such as ringtones, wallpapers and video games. In 2002 Adidas developed its first interactive mobile campaign in Sweden, known as "Colors." Consumers were supposed to click on the icon to download the wallpaper with the Adidas logo. The number of clicks was huge, so the campaign proved successful.

In the United Kingdom, Adidas allowed users to download the ring tones on their mobile phones after paying a small fee. The company advertised this program on the interactive TV for 10 days. There were 600,000 downloads from the users. However, the company had small profit, but the program helped in creating brand awareness.

Moreover, Adidas realized that people 12 to 24 are fascinated with video games. The company hired a software development firm to develop an arcade - style soccer mobile application, with a download fee of 1.99 pounds. There were different levels of play, and users could proceed to the next level as they played effectively. Ideally, the game created a comprehensive brand experience for users, as it was connected with brand icons like David Beckham.

Adidas launched a campaign known as "Road to Lisbon " for the European Cup, which sold a million tickets in 100 countries in 2004. A short film was created, featuring 13 soccer stars in different locations. The company promoted this campaign extensively on television, the Internet and mobile phones and through this campaign sold 2.5 million Euro 2004 jerseys.

The campaign primarily had three stages: impact, engagement, and activation or action. It had a huge impact on the audience, who could download wallpapers and ringtones and buying the company's products. This was the direct impact. Moreover, the company developed a "Road to Lisbon" website to support this campaign. It enabled users to download polyphonic music ringtones from Adidas's television advertising. Adidas charged less than US\$1 one for every ringtone. Consumers downloaded 10,000 ringtones in the first month.

Adidas developed another interactive Java-based mobile application for Euro 2004 known as "Ticket Applet," which users could download on their mobile phones. It provided scores of the matches played in Euro 2004. In the United Kingdom, this application was also promoted through the website football365.com. Additionally, the software was available in five languages. Vodafone also promoted this application to its subscribers and encouraged them to use more multimedia messages. This software exceeded pre-launch projections, attracting more than 63,000 subscribers.

Another program launched for the sporting event was "Match Centre," which provided the latest scores of all the regional leagues, such as U.K., French, Spanish, Italian and German. This application was promoted through the websites. Users clicked on the banner to reach the instruction page, which told them how to enter the text code into their mobile phones. When users entered the code, the link was sent to them for downloading. Adidas charged nominal fees for downloading this information, which became part of the users' monthly mobile bill.

The company also provided users with real-time basketball scores and other information about basketball on a mobile Java ticker. It used mobile phones as the marketing tool because Americans considered basketball very cool and were very excited to receive this information on their mobile phones. Consumers wanted customized and personalized messages that the company sent them. Adidas also worked with the mobile manufacturers and identified the preferences of the mobile features by the target segment. After comprehending all the insights Adidas developed sports tickers, games and ring tones for their consumers.

Adidas roped in Missy Elliott, a five-time Grammy nominee and female hiphop star, to promote her own apparel and footwear with Adidas. Mobile technology was used along with other media. As it turned out, mobile communication was a very reasonable medium for the company to market this concept, as the primary objectives of mobile marketing were to portray product categories, create demand, increase retail traffic, and assist consumers in identifying appropriate products,

5. Global Cases

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increase Elliott's fans, inform them about the creative product lines and help users download the content on their mobile phones. Consumers started sharing the information with their friends and portrayed Adidas as the cool brand. Finally, Elliott created an outstanding buzz about Adidas, as it was also promoted at the different blogging sites.

Findings

When mobile phone use for marketing brands in the Indian case studies was compared with the other case studies, it was noted that while mobiles were used rigorously by Indian consumers, the marketers were unable to optimize their potential. It was found that mobile phones were consistently integrated with traditional media for communication campaigns, but the integration was not well planned and impeded the impact.

It was also noted that in India, the communication objectives for the campaigns were very broad, whereas in the other two developed economies these objectives were much more focused. Messages in the Western case studies were customized, as they appeared to be very innovative and interactive; in India messages were broad and general in content and scope. The authors also observed that opt - in facility was provided to Western consumers but not to Indian consumers. Finally, while the impact of mobile strategies was high in India, it was more effective in Western countries (See **Table 1**).

In the case of Adidas, integrating mobile phones with other media had high impact because the integration was done keeping in mind the consumers' lifestyles, needs and aspirations. Several innovative mobile applications were developed to provide a complete brand experience that induced excitement and thrill among users, resulted in greater consumer involvement with the brand.

Table 1: Comparison of Cases of Mobile Marketing

S. No.	Parameter	India	Elsewhere
1.	Communication objective	Focused	Very focused
2.	Message	General	Customized and creative
3.	Media	Traditional and new	New
4.	Use of mobile in mediamix	Integrated with the traditional media	Exclusive campaigns developed only for mobile phones
5.	Target consumers	General	Very niche
6.	Opt - in facility	Not Given	Given
7.	Impact	High	Very high

The authors propose that Indian marketers needs to utilize the potential of mobile phones and should work on the missing links. Indian marketers should focus more on their communication objectives, provide opt-in facilities to consumers, develop customized and unique messages, and target niche segments of consumers with their mobile campaigns (See Figure1).

Figure 1: Proposed Framework for Mobile Marketing in India**Implications for Mobile Marketing:**

Researchers and industry professionals need to understand that consumers should accept mobile marketing as a way of creating a better impact on their mindset. The theory of reasoned action helps in identifying consumers' intentions and behavior to use mobile marketing (Ismail and Razak, 2011). The theory states that consumers evaluate the outcome before they develop their attitude and behavior.

The authors found that if the evaluations are positive, then consumers develop an affirmative attitude toward mobile marketing. As seen in the case of Adidas, consumers identified with the brand because of innovative mobile marketing strategies that led to intense engagement with the product and affirmative positive attitudes. The authors also identified that consumers' intentions are closely associated with attitude rather than subjective norms. However, if the subjective norm differs, then behavior of mobile users also varies.

When consumers are affected by the family norms, they demonstrate conventional behavior toward mobile marketing. If marketers associate the subjective norms with the peer group, positive behavior toward mobile marketing could be developed. This nature of peer-induced subjective norm was observed in most cases, leading to the conclusion that when an immediate reference group is targeted with a mobile message, the message's credibility is intensified. This leads to a higher impact on the mindset of the consumer, who is compelled to pay attention to the message(s) mediated through mobile phones. This is further simplified by the intrinsic utility of the mobile phones among the young consumers.

Indian marketers must develop exclusive mobile communication strategies with advanced mobile technology, as Indian consumers extensively use mobile phones. Indian marketers need to identify very niche market segment and should create mobile campaigns according to their needs and desires for effectiveness. Indian marketers need to develop new and personalized messages for mobile communication so that they can change the attitudes and behaviors of consumer accordingly. Lastly, Indian marketers need to increase consumers' involvement by including them in the production and dissemination of messages via their mobile phones.

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Section IV. An Arab Model of Public Relations

**Bridging the Cultural Divide with an Arab Theoretical Model of Public Relations:
A Case Study of Education, Gender and Distance Learning in the
United Arab Emirates**

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Abstract

This research argues for the metamorphosis of an Arab theoretical model of public relations - a model unique and apart from Western models - that has grown along cultural lines and continues to evolve with new media, social media and the Internet. Past research has examined the development of “excellent” public relations according to James Grunig’s Western model. This theoretical approach traced the growth of public relations in the Middle East from infancy to its current state, including examination of the roles of propaganda, publicity, advocacy and two-way symmetrical communication.

Several studies have called for the founding and development of an Arab theoretical model of public relations quite different from a Western model. The Arab model, researchers have argued, has grown as a result of cultural differences focusing on ethical standards and political changes caused by various instabilities in the region. The application of the Arab model - specifically looking at gender roles as a cultural value - was examined from an academic viewpoint. A qualitative study, including case study analysis, examined differences between the Western and Arab models, with specific application to online learning via distance education.

Introduction

The practice of public relations in the Middle East is often compared to Western theoretical models and rated as less “excellent” or modern than American counterparts. International public relations research has focused on James Grunig’s situational theory of publics; unfortunately, it has seldom taken into account differences that may play a major role in the political, economic and socio - cultural environments in which public relations operates in the Arab world.

Public relations in the Middle East has continued to grow despite recent incidents that tarnished the region’s image. Since September 11, 2001 (commonly known as 9/11), Arabs and the Middle East have suffered from stereotyping or what is called “culturalism” in public relations circles. “The Arab World suffered from a huge campaign of accusations, stereotypes and misconceptions. Arabs and Muslims have been portrayed as initiators of terrorist acts and responsible for all the ills that target the West. The event painted the entire Arab World with a broad brush of terrorism, the region seen as a war zone, and Al Qaeda as dominating the region’s perception” (Kirat, 2005, p. 324).

Conversely, the growth of public relations in the Middle East has been fueled by a somewhat vibrant economy based on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) of oil - producing nations. Since the region is rich in cultural differences from the Western theoretical model of public relations, several scholars have called for an Arab model more appropriate to the Middle East. Vujnovic and Kruckeberg’s imperative for an Arab theoretical model of public relations included concern for cultural values:

Much of this process involves communication as a social ritual, rather than communication as transmission of information; it involves interpersonal communication, rather than mass communication. It involves relationship building as opposed to persuasion. Of course, much of this process exists traditionally in Arab culture, and these rich traditions should be recognized and examined for their utility and value in developing an Arab model of public relations to help resolve the plethora of 21st Century issues that threaten global stability and ultimately the well - being of all cultures and societies (2005, p. 342).

The development of public relations in the Middle East has paralleled education and training in the profession. University students are taught the theoretical paradigms used in the professional practice of public relations. University curricula lay the foundation on which “excellent” public relations is later practiced. A case study analysis of higher education in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) - where public relations continues to develop rapidly alongside a growing economy - reveals how cultural values, particularly gender roles, should be considered in the development of an Arab theoretical model of public relations.

With political, economic and cultural challenges so different from the Western models of public relations and higher education, the advantages of online and distance learning should be considered. For example, the Arab Spring instability revealed opportunities for universities to capitalize on refining the curricula to include modules for crisis management, along with the importance of research and planning - often excluded from public relations curricula and thus less practiced professionally.

Zamoum (2012) critically assessed Arab university curricula in public relations/crisis management, which should include “good education, training and qualifications for students” in theoretical components, planning components, practical components and an internship component” (pp. 2 - 3). Out of 24 colleges of mass communication, Zamoum found in a quantitative survey that only seven departments (29.16 percent) “teach crisis management within other courses of public relations,” although organizations are subjected to both internal and external crises involving political and economic instability, along with cultural differences.

As global instabilities increase, online media continue to grow. Universities and other educational institutions that focus on continuing education for professionals have homed in on the opportunities presented by distance and online learning. This study argues that cultural value differences in the Arab world, particularly the role of gender, can be advantageous to the growth of online learning.

Literature review

Researchers often point to James Grunig’s model of “excellent” public relations as the international standard, as almost every study based in the Middle East attests. Few studies have focused on the “Arab” model, and none have addressed the cultural value of the roles gender plays in the development of public relations theory in the Middle East, which offers unique cultural, political and economic challenges.

Evolution of the “Excellence” Model in International Public Relations: James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt developed what are known as the four models of public relations: press agency, “aimed solely at attaining favorable publicity for an organization in the mass media” (1993, p.143); public information, “similar to press agency because it is a one-way model that sees public relations only as the dissemination of information” (p. 144); two-way asymmetrical communication, “social science research to identify attitudes and to develop messages that appeal to those attitudes that persuade publics to behave as the organization wants” (p. 144); and two-way symmetrical, “public relations that is based on research and that uses communication to manage conflict and improve understanding with strategic publics” (p. 145). Press agency and public information are both one-way models, asymmetrical because they look to change the behavior of the public and not the organization.

Grunig believed that the quality of an organization’s relationship with its publics depends on the model practiced. “At first glance, asymmetrical - and unethical - public relations seems to have been prevalent in international public relations throughout history, especially during times of conflict. Propaganda - defined here as one-sided, usually half-truthful communication designed to persuade public opinion - is not a new aspect of warfare or of international politics” (p.147). Grunig attributes the international practices of press agency, public information or two-way asymmetrical models to the fact that many practitioners have backgrounds in other areas, such as journalism or politics. Two-way symmetrical communication is the most ethical form of public relations and in Grunig’s eyes “excellent” public relations.

From Infancy to Adulthood, Public Relations in the Middle East: Educators (Creedon, Al - Khaja and Kruckeberg, 1995) date public relations history in the Middle East as far back as “the early leaders of Babylonian culture and the ancient Pharaohs who used persuasion to convince others to agree with their personal and societal ambitions” (pp. 59-76). Kirat (2005) says public relations was practiced in the Arab world as long as 1,200 years ago, in the Prophet Mohammed’s era, to disseminate messages. Public relations promoted Islam in its infancy - a new religion with “a new way of thinking, behaving and living peacefully with others” (Kirat, 2005).

The oil industry coupled with OPEC nations - the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE - fueled the growth of public relations. Several professional organizations sprang up in the region along those geographic lines. First, the Middle East Public Relations Association (MEPRA) was established in Dubai, UAE, in 2000 (Barrage & Sunil, 2004). According to the MEPRA website, the not-for-profit organization represents practitioners throughout the Gulf region and “endeavors to highlight the strategic role of public relations and help set high standards for quality and ethical conduct by all practitioners” (www.mepra.org).

The International Public Relations Association (IPRA), formed in 1955 and headquartered in London with about 1,000 members from nearly 100 countries, has a Gulf Chapter. IPRA-GCC was formed in 2003 with the support of Saudi Aramco and has more than 350 members from GCC countries with headquarters in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia ([www.ipra - gc.com](http://www.ipra-gc.com)).

Public relations departments and agencies have been around for only about 30 years, “not long enough to have a well-established culture of effective, responsible and powerful public relations in the Arab World” (Kirat, 2005, p. 325). In addition, he argues, “public relations is highly tied to government institutions and is looked at as a tool of publicity, manipulation and protocol” (p. 325). In the private sector, Kirat says, top managers look at “PR as a tool of executing protocol tasks, publicity functions and secondary roles. This leads us to raise the issue of poor professionalism and the lack of ethics” (p. 326).

Kirat elaborates on what he calls “the current realities of public relations in the Arab World,” where the profession suffers from a wide range of “problems, malpractice, and misconceptions” (pp. 326-27). He lists “drawbacks and problems” that demonstrate that PR in the Arab World “shows that the profession is still in the early stage of its maturity and formation” (pp. 327-28) because “most public relations departments are characterized as Grunig’s one-way model/propaganda type model.”

The presence of oil helped develop the modern practice of public relations in the Middle East. In the UAE - the epicenter of public relations in the GCC today - hundreds of multinational and foreign companies established headquarters, “opening their doors to the emergence of the public relations industry (2006, p. 255). “The country has attracted huge foreign investments and has been able to be a regional center for trade and business because of its oil resources, open market economy and rational management” (p. 254).

The UAE stands at a commercial and cultural crossroads between Asia, Africa and Europe. The seven Emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain, Fujairah, and Ras Al Khaima) emerged from British protection in 1971 as a loose federation. Kirat said of public relations in the UAE: “In a country where expatriates form two-thirds of the population, and where there are over 160 nationalities and thousands of foreign and international companies and firms, efficient communication and relations between various bodies and organizations in the country are a must” (p. 254).

Much of the profession’s expansion in the UAE came in the 1990s with the growth of the media. The UAE has become a regional and international hub for many media organizations, including MBC, Al-Arabiya, CNBC, CNN and Reuters. Several havens for the media and the Internet were built, including Emirates Media Inc. in Abu Dhabi, as well as Dubai Media City - which attracted more than 24 Arab and international broadcasting firms - and Dubai Internet City (Kirat, 2006). The

Emirates Public Relations Association (EPRA) was established in 2002 in Abu Dhabi with the intent of “developing the profession and setting professional standards and a code of conduct” (p. 257). Kirat argued that “liaising with the media is the number one function of public relations” in the UAE, “as well as receptions, protocol and social activities, special events, advertising, promotion and public service campaigns” (p. 258).

Although Abu Dhabi is the UAE’s capital, Dubai has been called the Manhattan of the Middle East because of its phenomenal growth, including one of the world’s largest dry docks, a free-trade zone and one the region’s busiest airport. The growth of Dubai’s own international airline, Emirates, has contributed greatly to the growth of the profession. The airline, world renowned for top-quality, award-winning service, has one of the most extensive, experienced public relations departments in the Middle East. The evolution of the Western (primarily American and British) practice of public relations has mimicked Dubai’s emergence along socio-economic, educational and cultural development lines. Many international, Western-style public relations agencies have selected Dubai as their Middle East headquarters.

The public sector also focused on the importance of public relations in the Emirates when it announced in 2007 the official launch of A’Sidrah Public Affairs, the region’s first specialist consultancy, dedicated to providing government-related communication. “The agency’s mission is to provide our partners in the government sector with sound strategies to enhance their communications with key stakeholders,” said Mona Al Marri, who chairs Media Services Group (MSG), the parent company of A’Sidrah, which she serves as C.E.O. (<http://www.ameinfo.com>). “Our role is to help those entities analyze their internal and external environments, and develop and channel clear messages at local, regional and international levels.

The Arab Theoretical Model: Public Relations has entered a new era in the Arab world apart from its development in the West, “which is based upon certain assumptions about behavior and cultural understanding. It is not surprising then that such concepts as Broom’s role-models theory, developed in the West, do not perfectly explain the profession as it is practiced in Saudi Arabia. Still Broom’s models provide a useful general analytical tool applicable across cultures” (Culbertson and Chen, 1996, p. 254).

A 2009 survey of Middle Eastern journalists found, for example, that “an increasing number of Middle East businesses and organizations have adopted public relations as a significant part of their marketing mix, and the region has become more PR-savvy” (<http://www.middleeastmediaguide.com/survey.htm>). The MediaSource/Insight Middle East Journalist Survey 2009 canvassed 219 working journalists for Arabic- and English-language print, broadcast and online media in 13 Middle Eastern countries, covering several public relations topics, including press releases, press conferences, PR practice and the sources journalists use for stories.

Kirat (2005) argues in his critical assessment of the practice of public relations in the Arab world that the profession is still seen as a “tool for the organization to foster its image through public information, publicity and propaganda. Planning and research are badly missing mainly in public - sector organizations. In spite of these drawbacks, public relations is the profession of the future in the Arab World. It is growing and expanding rapidly in all sectors of life” (p. 323).

With the advent of globalization, information technology and the information and digital society, organizations whether private or public are giving more importance to their public and public opinion. The democratization process is underway requiring more transparency, two-way communication and dialogue. Universities and colleges are responding to the new demands of the job markets. Schools and departments of journalism, mass communication and public relations are mushrooming in the region (p. 325).

Some scholars have even gone as far as to say there should be an Arab model of public relations. Vujnovic and Kruckeberg (2005) argue that for Arab culture to keep its identity, organizations should practice an Arab model of public relations. This model would begin with the assumption “of the moral/ethical validity of Arab culture as well as a corollary respect for cultural traditions that are to be valued. A human’s belief and faith in his or her own culture and values is essential to his identity, his belief and value systems and, indeed, his very humanness” (p. 340).

For Arab organizations to thrive, an interpersonal model of public relations “consistent with Arab culture promises to provide better answers,” say Vujnovic and Kruckeberg. They suggest using the Johari Window model - developed in the mid 1950s by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingram to address moral/ethical cultural traditions and values - because of self-disclosure in communication, which can be both beneficial and risky. They also argue that the two-way flow of information causes a “battle of messages” where understanding of a message can be “limited by the things that are unknown to us about each other,” meaning cultural differences and disclosed information. Vujnovic and Kruckeberg offer a three-step process of public relations that would help solve many public relations problems:

(a) recognize the importance of professional public relations practice to resolve relationship problems with their publics; (b) examine their own history and traditions to develop a theoretical foundation to create an Arab model of public relations; and (c) actively practice such a model, supporting its practice with high - quality education of the aspirants to this professional career as well as continuing education for those engaged in diplomacy, corporate public relations and the practice of public relations for nongovernmental organizations (p. 342).

Recent studies have outlined an international theoretical model of public relations, which the authors call “the circuit of culture, basis for the cultural - economic model of international public relations practice” (Al-Kandari & Gaither, 2011, p.268). In 2007, Gaither and Curtin explained their cultural - economic model and how it applied to the development of international public relations theory:

The circuit presents five moments of sites where meaning is constructed: representation (the “texts” of a public relations campaign), identity (the segmentation of publics and creation of organizational image and national identity), production (the work of public relations practitioners), consumption (how publics makes sense of campaign materials), and regulation (the cultural values that underlie how public relations campaigns are produced, packaged and consumed). (p. 288, Fig. 1)

Al-Kandari and Gaither (2011) applied the model developed by duGay et al. at the Open University (1996) as “the cultural - economic model to study Arab culture,” in which “five primary cultural values emerged: commitment to religion, devotion to group, recognition of hierarchical order, resistance to change/attachment to history and sense of pride” (p. 268). They identified these various Arab cultural value orientations to “present implications and guidelines for non-Arab practitioners and scholars wanting to understand the Arab world” (p. 268). Their study is a step in the direction of development an Arab theoretical model of public relations.

Al-Kandari and Gaither (2011) contended that “relative power, including the nationality of the communicator, their role in society, Arabic language skills and dialect and gender” would offer “additional insights into the many hidden webs of culture that guide Arab society” (p. 270). Finally, their study sums up why an Arab model of public relations should be different from a Western model:

The cultural-economic model provides a way of viewing Arab culture emphasizing power, identity and culture. By applying the model, it becomes apparent all three factors are particularly salient in Arab culture. Power and gender are inherent in the patriarchal structure and the Arab social system which favors those with social prestige. Arab identity is fractured along religious, tribal and geographic considerations, drawing attention to Arab language and history as cultural indicators. The model provides some guiding principles forcing practitioners

to carefully examine the nature, function and purpose of public relations practice in the Arab world and the relationship among cultural value orientations that might be viewed as disparate in the west but are related in Arab culture (p. 272).

Gender Roles in the Development of the Arab Theoretical Model: This study argues that another Arab cultural value should be included as a primary consideration in the development of an Arab theoretical model of public relations: gender roles, especially since public relations has developed as primarily a female profession throughout the Middle East, especially in the United Arab Emirates.

AlSaqr (2008) examined the role of female practitioners in neighboring Bahrain. The qualitative “open interviews” recommended that Arab women should examine “social and organizational reforms, in addition to empowering women to utilize their personality traits, communication behaviors and management styles” (p. 77). Bahraini women, similar in culture and tradition to other GCC Arabs, stressed that culture was their main challenge while “talking about cultural stereotypes, the cultural influence on the relationships among colleagues, the cultural role of women as mothers and the conflict with their roles outside their houses” and “cultural understanding of the experience of female practitioners in an Islamic Arab culture” (pp. 78 - 79).

In 1995, 20 female students were admitted into the newly designed public relations major at United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) in Al Ain. The program was based on the American model/curriculum for undergraduates in public relations (Creedon, et al, 1995). Kirat (2006) noted that public relations continues to be a popular major for female students: “In the academic year 2004-2005, 164 female and 90 male students were registered in the PR track in the UAEU” (p. 256). Creedon, Al-Khaja and Kruckeberg (1995) said female students made up about two-thirds of total enrollment in public relations programs at UAE universities.

The Development of Arab Public Relations in Higher Education: According to Creedon, Al-Khaja and Kruckeberg, higher education has had an influence on the development of public relations in the Middle East. In the 1970s, Cairo University first recognized public relations as an area of study separate from journalism. By the mid-1970s at least one Saudi Arabian university, King Saud University in Riyadh, had a public relations department, from which more than 150 PR majors graduated from 1979 to 1988.

In 1978, the first public relations course was offered at UAEU, and in 1993 the first public relations degree program was offered (Creedon, et al. 1995). Institutions of higher education continue to grow in the UAE, with the establishment of Zayed University, the University of Sharjah, American University in Sharjah, American University in Dubai, the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) and Ajman University of Science and Technology - all offering education and training in public relations. “These universities provided over the years the job market with hundreds of PR graduates. Enrollment in public relations majors in various colleges and departments has increased over the years. This reflects the importance given to this emerging profession and the need for professional and qualified practitioners” (Kirat, 2006, p. 256).

e-learning in the Middle East: Distance learning is a worldwide phenomenon. This study highlights the Middle Eastern experience of this educational tool. In his study *Virtual universities for African and Arab countries*, Dr. Wolfram Laaser presents five different cases of distance learning programs, three of which cover Middle Eastern countries. The author starts by pointing out that the Arab world could be considered a “late-comer in developing net based educational systems” (2006). The research discusses various projects that rely on distance learning and online classes as their primary educational tool. Internet and technological access are among the factors taken into consideration when studying these projects. The Virtual Arab University “planned to set up regional branches in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt, the headquarters being in Kuwait.” The article concludes by stating, “Arab countries with a common language seem to be ideal candidates for distance education and may be even for web-based education.”

In another study, Aisha Al-Harhi (2005) looks at Arab students taking online courses as part of their curriculum at American universities. The author states: “Distance education has a short history in

the Arab world. For many, it has not been visible, even as a back door to higher education. This is quickly changing, however, with the escalating need for national higher education.” Al-Harhi expounds on the field’s progress, including the technological improvements that came with time. The third-generation distance education “that uses electronic media is being slowly adopted by the previous open universities as well as traditional universities, which until now mainly use such technologies to supplement face-to-face courses. In the Arabian Gulf region, they include Zayed University in the UAE, Sultan Qaboos University in Oman and the University of Bahrain (2005).

Methodology

Public relations scholars gravitate toward quantitative research methods, though *Public Relations Review*, an academic journal, has called for qualitative, “anthropological approaches to public relations” that “have the capacity to generate deep understanding into the ways in which public relations work negotiates complex relationships within and between multiple shifting organizational, socio - political, ethnic cultures in a globalized context” (editorial, 2012, p. 520). The scholarly journal devoted an entire special issue or section to ethnographic research methods.

To delve deeper into the complex relationships between the role gender plays as a primary cultural value in the Arab model of public relations and distance learning, a qualitative case study analyzed the public relations programs at the national universities in United Arab Emirates: UAEU, Zayed University, and HCT. Growth was analyzed along with leadership, student enrollment, and curricula.

This type of qualitative case study analysis is particularly appropriate in following the development of public relations in the region from the genesis of the professional at the higher education level where processes are studied and formulated to be practiced later in the profession.

The following hypotheses were tested using a case study analysis: that gender roles are a primary cultural value in the theoretical Arab model of public relations, and that Arab culture and environment positively influence the use of distance learning tools.

The Case

UAEU and Zayed University are the two oldest of the three government-sponsored institutions of higher learning; the third is HCT. Since these universities admit primarily nationals and some students from other GCC countries, it is only natural to wonder: where does the Arab/Middle Eastern cultural and theoretical direction lie? How does the cultural focus aim at such a specific targeted audience of students? What sort of curriculum promotes those cultural values that must have a profound bearing on the student body?

Looking at public relations education in the Middle East, Creedon, Al-Khaja and Kruckeberg studied UAEU in Al Ain. They started by surveying public relations practitioners in 65 organizations. In 1984, when their survey was conducted, the authors found that “only 2 percent of public relations practitioners had any formal education in public relations. Approximately 32 percent had a university degree, 39 percent had a high school education, 20 percent had not graduated from high school, and 8 percent had no formal education at any level” (1995).

At the time, hardly any of the practitioners were actually working in a public relations department. Actually, “one of the most astonishing findings of the survey was that none of the practitioners thought that public relations was a communication function! This result is thought to be related to the central issue revealed from survey data - a lack of understanding of the public relations function based on a lack of education.”

At the time, the authors established four goals for this new public relations education undergraduate program:

1. To prepare students to enter the UAE labor market with a broad range of knowledge.

2. To produce students who can adapt to rapid change in governmental, commercial, industrial and cultural institutions.
3. To present courses of study oriented toward the future and excite and motivate students.
4. To strengthen cultural traditions of UAEU by preparing students with the full range of knowledge appropriate for family, cultural, religious, civic and national values.

In 1993, a committee of five academics took an eight-day trip to the UAE to develop a proposal for an interdisciplinary program in public relations. The program “emphasized interdisciplinary, liberal arts orientation and suggested that the major be administered by the Department of Mass Communication” (Creedon et al., 1995). The program adopted the community-building model as well as the two-way symmetrical model as the main theories of public relations studies.

The authors took into consideration the role of women in the public relations industry as well as gender separation, given the 1971 elimination of sex segregation in education and workplace law. The future of public relations education looked promising, and considerate of cultural differences. The curriculum was designed by a heterogeneous body of scholars with clear objectives that promised a balanced teaching of public relations focusing on awareness of cultural differences and gender roles.

In 2013, public relations education on the undergraduate level has greatly progressed from the 1995 version. Public relations programs have advanced and considerably grown at all three universities (although the curriculum is not always labeled “public relations”). The College of Communication and Media Sciences at Zayed University is now one of 54 programs worldwide accredited by the International Advertising Association, and the college is applying for accreditation from the American-based ACEJMC (Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication).

Zayed’s undergraduate bachelor of arts program in communication and media sciences with a specialization in integrated strategic communications presents students with an interesting, dynamic and multilayered curriculum. Figure 1-1 shows the courses required, ranging from Arabic Concepts, Islamic Civilization I & II, and Media and Cultural Criticism to more basic courses like Media Planning and Management, Principles of Public Relations, or Advertising.

To say that the curriculum is completely balanced between Western and Middle Eastern theory and practice would be misleading. The few first semesters offer some general knowledge on what could be considered relevant to the Middle East or culturally aware classes. It must be recognized, nonetheless, that there is a clear shift once those requirements have been met: the curriculum is identical to most Western universities’ undergraduate curriculum.

Actually, in many cases, Western programs push for the development of more complex and topic-specific courses usually intended for juniors and seniors. Third-and fourth-year students enjoy a more personalized and specialized experience, and teachers increase interest in their specialties.

Figure 1-1 (Retrieved From <http://www.zu.ac.ae>)

Year	Semester 1			Credits	Semester 2			Credits
1	COL 111	Mathem.Modeling with Functions		3	COL 110	Mathematical Modeling w. Data		3
	COL 120	Colloquium		3	COL 105	Career Exploration		3
	COL 130	Arabic Concepts		3	COL 135	Islamic Civilization I		3
	COL 140	English Composition I		3	COL 145	English Composition II		3
	COL 150	Global Awareness I: Emer Civ		3	COL 155	Global Awareness II: Imp Enc		3
		Total		15		Total		15
2	COL 230	Islamic Civilization II		3	COM 210	Media Storytelling 1		4
	COL 240	English Composition III		3	COM 230	Public Speaking & Persuasion		3
	COL 250	Global Awareness III		3	COM 240	Communication and Media Ethics		2
	COL 260	Environmental Science		3	COM 281	Com. & Media History		2
	COL 270	Intro to Info Technology		3	COM 280	New Media		3
	COM 200	Com, Media & Society		3	ARA 240	Media Storytelling in Arabic I		3
		Total		18		Total		17
3	COM 231	Media & Cult.Criticism		3	COM 311	Zayed Media Lab I		1
	COM 351	Principles of Public Relations		3	COM 353	Writing for Integ. Strg.Com		3
	COM 352	Principles of Advertising		3	COM 360	Com&Media Research Analysis		3
	Selective				Selective			
	Selective				Selective			
		Total		9		Total		7
4	COM 451	Integrated Strategic Com		3	COM 356	Media Planning & management		3
	COM 312	Zayed Media Lab II		1	ARA 340	Media Storytelling in Ara II		3
	COM 441	Communication & Media Law		2	COM XXX			
	Selective				COM 490	Internship		3
	Selective							
		Total		6		Total		9

At UAEU, the bachelor of humanities and social sciences in mass communication program has a similar, slightly more comprehensive curriculum.

Figure 2 - 1 (Retrieved From <http://www.uaeu.ac.ae>)

MSC643 - Modern Comm.Tech.in Arab World	(3 credit hours)
Readings for this course will focus on Communication Technologies and Arab civilization with emphasis on the role of communication technology in UAE. Readings will also cover the impact of communication technology on public and private institutions and on the social , cultural, and political environment.	

Figure 2-2 (Retrieved From <http://www.uaeu.ac.ae>)

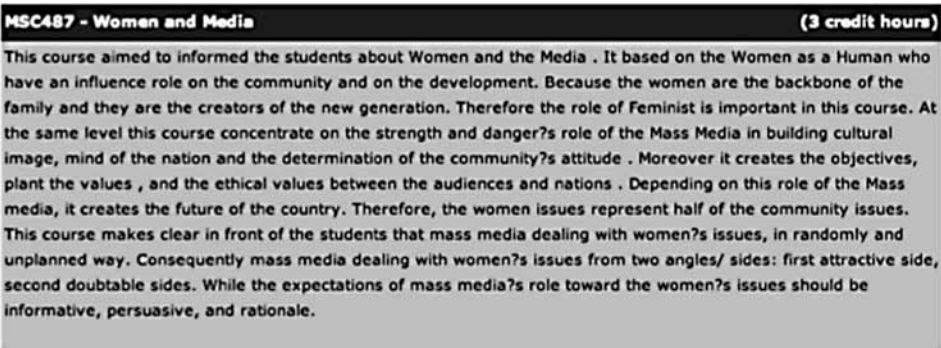


Figure 2-3 (Retrieved From <http://www.uaeu.ac.ae>)



Figures 2-1, 2-2, and 2-3 display three different courses that UAEU offers undergraduates. Only three of a total of 46 courses actually contain any sort of direction leading toward a specialization in world, Middle Eastern or women's communication.

On the graduate level, Dr. Marilyn Roberts, Dean of Communication and Media Sciences at Zayed University, states the following in her letter to prospective students of the master of arts in communication program with a specialization in strategic public relations:

There is a growing demand in the United Arab Emirates and the Gulf region for skilled communication professionals who can advance strategic public relations' role and responsibilities to foster effective communication and actions. The Strategic Public Relations master's degree program is designed to develop skilled strategists, media advisors, and future communication managers who assist in developing strong organization - public relationships. Students develop skills on how to think more critically, analyze problems, and develop solutions to advise and implement programs that help to achieve organizational goals. Strategic Public Relations examines a variety of topics such as how new media technologies can enhance engagement with important stakeholders. Learning about best practices in corporate and crisis communications allows future industry leaders to write and communicate with both local and international audiences.

In an address titled "Education for Future Leaders," Dr. Roberts declares that the study of public relations at Zayed University provides "future communication professionals with skills that improve organization/public relationship quality and cultivation. Understanding how organizations can contribute in socially responsible behaviors and actions is a strong focus of the program. The specially designed courses allow students to explore the impact of effective message design and evaluation on group/community/organizational culture" (<http://www.zu.ac.ae>).

In comparing the curriculum proposed by this program to the project designed in 1995, it is clear that the design followed does not take into consideration many factors that were proposed. The program is divided into two years, for a total of 36 credits. Classes range from basic courses

such as Public Relations Principles, Foundation of Communication Studies, and Introduction to Communication Research to more specialized courses like Strategic Public Relations, Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethics, and an Applied Research Seminar.

It must be highlighted that the course in Cross-Cultural Communication Applications seems to follow a more specialized and culturally aware educational format.

At HCT, the largest national higher education institution in the UAE (18,000 students and a staff of almost 2,000), with 17 campuses, the applied communications program "provides a blended learning environment which is student-centered and project-based; where practical project work is contextualized and supported by theoretical knowledge" (www.hct.ac.ae/programs accessed 1/11/13). HCT offers a bachelor of applied sciences program in corporate communication at Dubai Women's College. Apparently, this degree, which most resembles a public relations specialization, is popular with female students.

Although women have acquired by law equal status to men in education and work, the Emirati universities' web pages are filled with links to women's campuses and men's campuses, especially at HCT. The same classes are usually taught for both, in separate- but-equal settings.

Online/hybrid classes are almost nonexistent in the programs, except in Zayed's graduate program, where "faculty members utilize a mix of in-classroom and distance learning instruction that demonstrate the flexibility needed to accommodate experienced working graduate students. The in-classroom instruction for each course is conducted during two evenings on weekdays over a six - week period." There is mention of some online classes in the master's program at Zayed.

Distance learning would seem to make a perfect learning experience in this society, still somewhat traditional and aware of gender roles. The Arab model of public relations was designed with digital communication in mind. This new model highly emphasizes distance learning, which allows students to master computer skills that are not being taught in traditional learning institutions. The model also considers gender roles and incorporates techniques that educators can use to overcome generic and inappropriate universal use of the Western model.

In 2013, any communication student, scholar or practitioner surfing the websites of Zayed University and UAEU would be very proud. The layout of the websites, as well as ease of access, could stand up to the website of any major western institution.

Conclusion

This case study analysis revealed that higher education in the UAE has held to those standards set down in 1995, including cultural diversity and focus on gender roles. However, the Western model has infiltrated the system although the new Arab model of public relations theory can be seen developing in the public relations curriculum at all three universities. Many other institutions of higher learning in the UAE are mimicking American or British standards; however, these governmental institutions of higher learning seem to lean toward the Arab model, making special concessions for cultural concerns including religion, language and the inclusion of women.

As for distance learning, Zayed University's master's degree program in communication with a specialization in tourism and cultural communication (note the word cultural) uses online courses combined with traditional classroom instruction for a hybrid type of teaching. In 2012, all three universities combined to host the first Global Mobile Learning Congress, which featured a symposium on using mobile media-smartphones, iPads, etc. - to carry learning with students wherever they go, labeled as the "m-learning revolution."

This study is a start on research in this ever-growing and changing field. Further research on the professional practice of public relations in the Middle East needs to be conducted. A quantitative survey method could reveal how practitioners are applying theoretical models, whether Western or Arab, and how their education has shaped their public relations practices and roles. Practitioners

in the Middle East could be surveyed via MEPRA to determine their interest in distance learning for continuing education opportunities. In addition, interviews with Arab university students could be conducted to measure their interest in application of theoretical models and distance learning opportunities. Female students would be of particular interest, given the roles they play in the cultural values outlined in this research. Finally, further studies could address how online learning might help those with cultural differences - especially female students in Arab culture - be privy to changes in global public relations. Distance education could add diversity to any public relations curriculum anywhere.

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FILE 230: CHAOS

CLIENT ARCHIVES 2011

COMPANY: MIDRANGE TRANSGEARS INC
TASK: STAKEHOLDER'S GALA
DATE: 4 DAYS TO EVENT

Amina, where's the creative?
 I already emailed it to David
 Call him in
 He's at the procurement meeting
 Then have Ravi download the file
 He doesn't have the software
 Get Nisha to do it
 She's meeting suppliers
 Is the event agenda ready?
 Lorna's supposed to do that
 How about press coverage?
 We haven't called the media yet
 And the event branding?
 Actually... the logo is a tad off colour
 Didn't Luciano supervise it?
 Abdullah has the brand guidelines
 Why is everything so last minute?!
 Because John's is in Muscat, Mahra is in training and Georgina is...
 Call BrandMoxie!
 Huh?
 GET ME BRANDMOXIE NOW!!

BrandMoxie
When the proverbial hits the fan

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