INNOVATION IN MEDIA/JOURNALISM EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN GHANA

Martin Gyambrah, Ph.D.[5]

Priscilla Hanson[6]

Abstract

Rapid changes in the world today places a demand on journalism practice to take a new outlook that is underpinned by an innovative approach in its education and research. This study examined innovation in journalism education and research in Ghana. Qualitative approach to data collection and research was employed. Sample was selected using purposive and convenience sampling techniques. Sample consisted of journalism scholars and practitioners in tertiary educational institutions in Greater Accra region, Ghana. Data collected from the interview was analysed using thematic analysis. Key findings point to a disagreement in views regarding the gap between what is taught in the classroom and what is practised on the field. Journalism instructors were of the view that no such gap exists whereas the practitioners were of the opinion that a gap does exist. It is recommended that curriculum enrichment, teaching on line journalism, organizing workshops and seminars for students, involving practitioners in curriculum development be promoted.

Keywords: Education, Innovation, Journalism, Research, Tradition

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[5] Martin Gyambrah is the Director of the University of Applied Management, Germany (Ghana Campus) and a Consultant at the Bureau of Market & Social Research. He holds a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Munich, Germany. He also has certifications in Marketing, Business management, Project, Financial Management and Intercultural Communication. He is an educational psychologist and organizational development scientist with expertise in cross-cultural communication

[6] Priscilla Hanson is a research officer who works at the University of Applied Management, Germany (Ghana Campus). She holds a BSc degree in Psychology from the University of Cape Coast and an M.Phil. degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from the University of Ghana. Her research interests are in the areas of development, education, management and psychology.

Introduction

Journalism has been variously conceptualised as a profession, a craft, an industry, a literary genre, a culture, a social practice, a community or an ideology (Evans, 2014, citing Deuze, 2006; Mensing, 2011). McNair (1998: 4) defined journalism as a*ny authored text,* in written, audio or visual form, which claims to be a truthful statement about, or record of, some hitherto unknown (new) feature of the actual, social world. Journalism education is also described by Curran (2005, p.xiv) as improving the quality of journalism by improving the quality of journalists. It is perceived as "*one way in which society can intervene to influence the development of journalism*" (ibid). The ultimate goal of journalism education, regardless of its provider, is to empower not only the student but the field of journalism itself. The nature of rapid changes the world is experiencing places a great demand on all disciplines to research into innovative strategies for adaptation purposes. The Journalism industry is no exception. It is therefore imperative that the trend of journalism practice takes a new outlook underpinned by an innovative approach in its education and research.

Carpenter (2012) defined innovation as 'A change in a product offering, service, business model or operations which meaningfully improves the experience of a large number of stakeholders. The Innovation in Learning and Teaching in Health Higher Education project defines innovation as *"doing something new in teaching and learning"* (Lewitt, Snowden & Sheward (2014). Tveiten (2010) defined innovation in Journalism Research and Education (JER) as a re-orientation of basic assumptions underlying the study, practice, research and education in journalism. The literature depicts inconsistencies in the definition of innovation. The reason being that innovation means different things to different people. What one might described as innovative might be a common thing for another. How innovation is defined or perceived determines the activities, practices and approaches to employ. The present study conceptualises innovation in JER as a move from the conventional form of education and research to a more creative, practical and experiential one necessary to meet future demands of news consumers globally. In today's dynamic journalism environment, more

and more industry leaders are looking to journalism schools for new ways to tell stories and to disseminate those stories to the public (Barret & Austin, 2012).

The need for innovation in journalism education and research in Ghana
Since formal journalism education started in 1959 in Ghana (Boafo, 1988), the field has progressed tremendously considering the rapid technological advancement and changing preferences and demands of consumers. The curricula then offered courses in print, radio and television writing, public relations and advertisement. Today, journalism education is enriched with more courses such as Effective Public Speaking, Speech Writing and Presentation, Action and Strategic Planning, Events Management etc.

Despite the progress so far, journalism education is beset with many inhibiting challenges such as the need to enrich its practices to withstand threats posed to the existence of the traditional news outlets such as newspapers, radio and television as newer distribution platforms like the internet and mobile phones are now occupying center stage (Chibita, 2009). Pearson (2007) highlighted that the challenge for journalists and journalism educators is to think about ways to create a dynamic curricula to enhance the practice of journalism. According to the author, this will require the development of new and closer partnerships among journalists, technology specialists involved with communication tools, economists looking at new business models and educators working with the next generation of potential journalists. Journalism training institutions therefore need to involve or partner with technical and scientific research experts in designing enriched curriculum geared towards innovative education and research practices (Pearson cited in Nieimans report, 2007). Also, Mensing and Ryfe (2013) indicated that re-connecting with communities as participants rather than professionals, teaching students the skills of community, applying facilitation and moderation, experimenting with small entrepreneurial businesses, collaborating with computer scientists, artists, and urban planners may help journalism programmes contribute

to research and development that will be more valuable to the long-term future of journalism.

Newton (2012), on the other hand, indicated that Journalism studies need to pay more attention to the transfer of knowledge generated by scientific inquiry to the fields of journalism education and practice. Furthermore, journalism studies ought to engage in more exploratory studies that go beyond mere description and conduct more systematic and truly longitudinal studies that carefully track changes in journalism over time. From the aforementioned, it is evident that the continuous dependence on conventional methods of teaching and research will be detrimental to the journalism industry. If the practice of journalism continues to follow the traditional pattern, they are going to be rendered obsolete and eventually lose space in the media landscape.

De-westernisation of journalism education curriculum
It has been generally held that the Western-driven nature of African educational system has made our educational system less reflective of the African culture and beliefs. That is, journalism in Africa has been criticised for being less attuned to the African tradition and culture (Tapfumaney, 2013). Based on this premise, there has been a clarion call from scholars for attention on the educational system in Africa to integrate some local contents into them which would make education, Journalism for that matter, relevant within the African continent. Scholars such as Harold (2001) have opined that there should be a blend of local and foreign content when it comes to journalism which leads to journalism being locally impacting, this he referred to as globalisation.

The present study is guided by the teaching hospital model by Lemann (2009) and entrepreneurial model of journalism education by Mensing and Ryfe (2013). Newton (2013) gives a definition of the teaching hospital model as a learning-by-doing that includes students, teachers and professionals working together under one 'digital roof' for the benefit of a particular society. Rosenstiel (2013) further explains concerning the teaching hospital metaphor that students produce journalism for public and not classroom consumption under the watch of a skilled professional editor as the teacher. In so doing, the journalism

they produce is better, more digital, more connected to the community, and helps make up for some of what is disappearing from commercial newsrooms." According to Mensing and Ryfe (2013), the teaching hospital model can be seen as relying on a "supply-side" theory of journalism: society will improve if the supply of high quality, credible information is increased. In this model, the purpose of journalism education is to teach students how to produce more and better content by learning from experienced professionals. The theory assumes that democracy will be served, if only journalists can supply the public with enough complete, well-sourced stories. According to Ryfe (2012), this model, if practised by many journalism schools, could actually hasten the response to change.

The entrepreneurial model was propounded from the critics of the hospital model by Mensing and Ryfe (ibid). According to this model, journalism education should be more focused on the demand side of journalism, addressing the needs of citizens, consumers, and publics. According to this model, the purpose of journalism education is not primarily to serve the news industry. Rather, it is to serve the journalism that comes next: the organizations and institutions springing up to compete with the existing news industry and to contribute to new forms of democratic practice. If journalism is going to have an institutional identity in the future, it is likely going to be different from the institutional identity it has now. Journalism education can help bridge this transition by supplying students who are equipped to work and lead in both worlds in institutional organisations as well as the new organisations participating in journalistic acts that have yet to be invented. This model proposes new values, such as transparency and engagement, new practices, such as community organising and facilitation, redefined old values, such as authority and trust, and have gravitated to a new set of tools, from Facebook to Twitter, Tumblr to Google maps, to decipher the question journalists have been asking themselves for 300 years: how can they add value to democratic community (Mensing & Ryfe, ibid).

The present study is based on the premise that journalism education and research in Africa and for that matter Ghana, must be modelled on an integrative form of teaching and learning, experiential learning as well as a model that equip learners with the requisite competences needed to meet future demands of news consumers globally. The study highlights some vital ideas and strategies that can be incorporated in the curriculum for its enrichment. It also informs the government and other stakeholders on the need to support the modernisation of the curriculum and training to meet new demands.

Statement of the problem

Notwithstanding the progress made so far on the frontier of Journalism Education and Research (JER), in Ghana there still remains a lot to be achieved. Journalism education globally has become an issue of concern based on the reasoning that it was conventionally established upon the traditional approaches that generally incorporated journalism knowledge and skills training (Bachovska & Pandeva, 2012) which does not adequately meet the demands of today's environment. The need for innovation in JER demands that journalism institutions take a relook at their model to enable them meet the changing demands of consumers and the world at large.

Yet, not much research attention has focused on this perspective of JER, particularly in the Ghanaian context. This study is, therefore, a contribution toward enhancing JER in Ghana and beyond. Notwithstanding the calls for a relook at the current model, this study is informed by the consideration that a paradigm shift from the conventional approaches to JER to a modern and more innovative approach would not be a smooth one. Therefore, there is the need to strike a balance between Africanising our educational approaches (Tapfumaney, 2013) and at the same time meeting both local and international news consumers' need.

Research objectives

The main aim of this study is to examine innovative approaches to Journalism Education and Research (JER) in Ghana. Specifically the study seeks to:

1. Identify the current formats of JER
2. Find out the challenges expected to be encountered with the current formats of JER
3. Ascertain gap (if any) between what is taught in the classroom and what is practiced on the field.
4. Recommend innovative approaches to JER.

Research methodology
The study employed a qualitative research design in collecting and analysing data. Phenomenological research approach was used as the researchers were interested in finding the individual journalism scholars and practitioners' views and experiences on the phenomenon under study. Phenomenological methods are particularly effective at bringing to the fore the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own perspectives, and therefore good at challenging structural or normative assumptions. Adding an interpretive dimension to phenomenological research, enabling it to be used as the basis for practical theory, allows it to inform, support or challenge policy and action (Husserl, 1970, Plummer, 1983; Stanley & Wise, 1993).

Sample and sampling procedures
The population of the study comprised all journalism training institutions in Ghana. However due to the difficulty in accessing all the institutions, five (5) institutions were sampled using a convenience sampling approach. That is, the study focused on institutions which accepted and were willing to partake in the study. These were Jayee University College, University of Ghana Department of Communications, National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI), Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, and Omni Media Limited (Citi Fm).

For phenomenological studies, Denzin and Lincoln (1994), Kuzel (1999) and Morse (2000) recommend a sample size range of approximately 6, 6-8 and 6-10 respectively. A sample size of 10 was derived from a population of journalism scholars and practitioners in the various journalism institutions and media houses in Ghana. The sample size composition consisted of one (1) Head of Department of Jayee University College, two (2) journalists and lecturers of Jayee University

College, one (1) lecturer of University of Ghana Department of Communications, the Head of the Broadcast Journalism Department of National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI), two (2) journalist from Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), the Manager of Unique FM (GBC), one (1) journalist of Jicord Mediaworld Limited and one (1) professional from Citi Fm. Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were employed to select the sample for the study. The rationale was to solicit for opinions on the phenomenon under study from available and willing experts who agree to participate in the study (Latham, 2007).

The study utilised an interview guide for the data collection and analysis. The interview guide was designed based on the study's research objectives and was used to guide the researcher in sampling the right data for the study. Data was analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis. The outcomes of the study were presented in a more narrative manner.

Data analysis procedure
Data received from respondents were analysed thematically. Specifically, the inductive approach to qualitative data analysis was utilized. This enabled the researcher to code and develop themes based on the content and depth of information received from the respondents. The inductive approach also aided the researcher to appreciate the diversity of information received from respondents due to the diversity of ideas. During the analysis, five phases that developed over time (Ely et al., 1997) were followed by the researcher. A brief discussion of the phases is listed below.

Familiarity and transcription of the data: After the interviews, there was the need to transcribe data into written form. To begin, the data collected was subjected to a proof reading to understand the context in which the data was collected. Verbatim accounts of all verbal cues were considered. The aim was to facilitate the close reading and interpretative skills needed to analyse the data (Lapadat & Lindsey, 1990).

Generating initial codes: At this stage, initial codes were produced from the data. The coding was made manually by writing notes on the texts that were being analysed.

Searching for themes: Here, codes were sorted into potential themes. This was also done purposely to identify whether there were any other potential themes besides what was expected based on previous studies.

Review of themes: Themes which were developed were re-examined for coherence and clarity. This was necessary because it enables the researcher have a clear idea whether data collected were relevant to the research questions asked.

Defining and naming themes: At this point the researcher identified the essence of each theme in relation to the others to determine the aspects of the data that each theme could capture. This was done by revisiting the collated data extracts for each theme to organize them into coherent and internally consistent narrative. This was to avoid too much overlap between themes.

Results and Discussion
The findings are presented according to the study's objectives. Verbatim quotes from the study participants are used to support the researchers' observations.

Approaches/Formats of Journalism Education and Research
Evidence from the data point out that journalism institutions in Ghana employ theoretical and practical approaches to education and research. The theoretical approach consists of knowledge and concepts as written down by scholars and practitioners where students are taught the history, ethics, etc. of journalism. The theoretical approach employs lecturing, group discussions, presentations, and other active learning instructional strategies. A respondent indicated that: *"The theory involves background knowledge and practices written down by scholars, where students are taught in the classroom in a form of lectures and presentations"* (**R1J, Accra, September 14, 2015**)**.** Another respondent also mentioned that: *"For the theoretical aspect students are taught*

creative writing, formatting, editing, social media platform (Skype, twitter etc.), news gathering, TV news processes, story idea generation, reporting skills, team bonding skills radio-interviewing and personal performance skills, ethics etc." (**R5N, Accra, October 7, 2015**).

The practice approach on the other hand varies in its application. For instance, some institutions offer opportunity for students to go for internship whereas other institutions rely on their own well-equipped studios to practice. For instance **R1J (Accra, September 14, 2015) indicated that "The practice involves students demonstrating what they have learnt in class by putting stories/materials together in a way of newspaper, radio and TV presentation using the schools studio."** Another respondent, **R2J (Accra, September 16, 2015), indicated that journalism as a practical profession requires students to go out there to show what they have, hence they are equipped with the practical skills.**

Other institutions employ an experiential training model where students are not fed with notes in a way that encourages rote memorization, but rather made to understand the concepts and immediately given a hands-on training affording them an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learnt in a real life setting. This was evident in the response of **R4JJ (Accra, September 23, 2015), who indicated that "I employ the experiential training format, here students are trained in hands on format where students grasped the concept and situate it. Students are taken to the studio after tuition in class."** In general, the researchers argue that journalism schools must have equipped studios where students can practice. This format is much effective as compared to practice through only internship since not all organisations give students the opportunity to work with the needed tools and equipment used in the field. These findings can be discussed in relation to the hospital model of journalism education which is based on experiential learning and focused on teaching students how to produce more and better content by learning from experienced professionals as well as providing news not only for the classroom but also for public consumption (Newton, 2013). From the researchers' perspective, schools must use a combination of practising in school (using well equipped

studio-TV, radio, newspaper, online) and on the field (internships) under the supervision of experienced professionals. These two approaches must be a requirement for a successful completion of the schools' programmes.

Challenges expected to be encountered with the current curriculum
Considering the changing nature of news demands and mediums in accessing news items in the contemporary world, the field of journalism education is on the heat of meeting up to the demand so as to survive in the media landscape. In view of this, respondents were asked about their views on challenges they believe journalists are likely to encounter in the future considering the current curriculum used in instructing and bringing up students. Excerpts from two (2) respondents areas follows:

- *Considering the restructuring of the modules, I do not think any of our courses are obsolete. In view of this we do not perceive any challenge (R5N, Accra, October 7, 2015).*
- *We incorporate online journalism in our teaching and practice and we also incorporate new areas to our research, with this, we do not perceive any form of challenge as a result of outdated curricula (R6UG, Accra, October 16, 2015).*

Besides the above, respondents indicated that being aware of the dynamic nature of journalism, they are always on their feet to make new changes where necessary, hence always putting measures in place to enable them constantly modify or update their programs to meet contemporary demands. For instance, *R3J (Accra, September 14, 2015)* mentioned that, *"Ever since I came to this institution four years ago, the curriculum has been reviewed three times to infuse new practices observed in the market."* Also*, R2J (Accra, September 16, 2015)* mentioned that, *"As and when there is any new mechanism or ways of doing things in the industry, we don't waste time, we put things together to incorporate them".* In the same way, *R5N (Accra, October 7, 2015),* held that, *"We are still working on our curriculum, and we intend to keep developing and updating it in order to have new ideas*

and theories incorporated since journalism is dynamic". R6UG (Accra, October 16, 2015) also mentioned that *"We have the requisite faculty and facility and we always try to be up to date technologically."*

Further, one respondent indicated that in terms of challenges likely to confront JER, one critical factor that needs to be considered is reporting news in the African way. According to her, journalism literature and practice is plaque with foreign issues and practices which she believed, if not looked at could create a challenge in future journalism. She held that, *"I believe in presenting news in the African perspective not the foreign approach. Let us ask ourselves, what is news to the African and what is news to foreigners? What is news to Africans might not be news to other foreigners. It is observed that our literature is foreign and we need to make it more African to meet contemporary African consumers demands" (R5N Accra, October 7, 2015).*

This challenge indicated is in direct response to Tapfumaney's (2013) assertion that many scholars in recent time are in a supportive view of de-westernising the African curriculum. Considering the rapid transformation of the world into a more global village, it will be a challenge to future journalists if journalism training and education is localised as mentioned by the respondent. Neglecting the culture, belief and needs of local consumers on the notion of internationalisation, however, could also create a challenge for local consumers. In view of this, the researchers are of the view that in order to prepare future journalists for the global world and at the same time meet the needs of local consumers, JER must be "globalized" (Harold, 2001) instead.

Further, one respondent indicated that some of the teaching and learning styles employed by some journalism tutors and students respectively are obsolete and needs to be changed. According to him some tutors in this contemporary world are still dictating notes to students, which further encourages student to rote memorise to pass their examination. This practice, if not curtailed, will render future journalists more theoretically oriented than practically oriented *(R4JJ Accra, September 23, 2015)*. His response is supported by Finberg's (2013)

assertion that, "Journalism education will undergo fundamental shifts in how journalism is taught and who teaches it. Those who do not innovate in the classroom will be left behind, just like those who chose not to innovate in the newsroom."

In general, journalism is a dynamic field as consumers needs and demands change with time. It is therefore imperative for journalism institutions to be abreast of what is there now and what is yet to come in order to remain in existence. From the analysis, it is observed that none of the respondents is oblivious of the dynamic nature of the field and its consequences to future journalists. The researchers are of the perspective that although respondents believe that they have put up adequate measures in place to meet current and future demands, more effort and resources need to be put in place to enable the institutions adapt to changes even as they encounter it.

Gaps observed between what is taught in the classroom and what is practised on the field

Many articles have been published in regard to bridging the gap between theory and practice, which suggests there is a substantial gap between the transitions from university to the workplace (example, Hays & Clement, 2012; Fred, Meredith & Foreit, 2011; Savage, David & Miller, 2009). This occurs in all industries. The gap between what is taught in the classroom and what is practised on the field has raised an issue of concern over the years. *Business recorder* (2000) reported that a prominent scholar, professor Shariful Mujshad has spoken of a growing gap between the theory and practice in journalism education. Respondents' views on this issue was solicited. A discrepancy was observed in the views of scholars and practitioners on this issue. All but one of the scholars were of the view that no gap exists between what they teach the students and what is being practised on the field. According to them they have the requisite equipment same as that used on the field. Some of the responses are as follows:

- *No gap has been found between journalism practiced in the industry and what is been taught in the classroom. If there will be any gap at all, then it might be a new environment, working with new people etc. in terms of knowledge impacted and training, there is no gap. I have been to joy FM before and I observe that we have the same facilities as them" (R2J, Accra, September 16, 2015.*

- *No GAP-what we do here is adequate enough to prepare students for the field of work (R5N, Accra, October 7, 2015).*

On the other hand, all the practitioners believed that a gap still exists between what students are taught in the classroom and what is practised on the field. One respondent indicated that, "*industries have been complaining about the kind of graduates being produced. Some complain that newly graduated journalist even have difficulties writing simple stories which they expect at least for them to be conversant with" (R4JJ, Accra, September 23, 2015).* Wood and Kaczynski (2007) cited in Hays and Clement (2012) study, made a particularly strong case for graduates' lack of work-readiness. They state categorically that: "Few university graduates are prepared for the realities of work, with even fewer displaying the skills necessary for success in gaining employment" (p. 94). In their study, Hays and Clement (2012) indicated that a key practical concern is the conclusive body of evidence indicating that university graduates are simply not prepared for today's workplace or to assimilate quickly to immediately contribute to an organisation's objectives (Frawley & Litchfield, 2009; Grealish & Trevitt, 2005; Hays, 2012; Raybould & Sheedy, 2005). The practitioners' responses are as follows:

- *A gap does exist between what is taught in the classroom and what is being done on the field. I believe this gap can be closed by making journalism education and research more practical, teaching students how to present themselves well, knowing the right costume for*

the right news presenting, facial expressions etc." (R7G, Accra, September 29, 2016)

- *I have observed that there is a gap between what is being taught in the classroom and what is done on the field. For instance in school, we are taught what we need to do on the field yet what is been practiced is different from what is taught. For instance in the classroom, we are taught that it is not professional to sing when playing music, show wounds of accidents victims, show faces of children when they are being interviewed, etc., however, on the field otherwise happens, all these are ignored which brings about the question of ethics. This I believe is because many of the journalist are awarded for hard work without considering how ethical or professional their practices are, and because consumers tend to applaud such practices and hence continually vote for such journalists, they continue with the trend" (R10UfG, Accra, September 21, 2015).*

- *Yes, there is a gap between what we practice here and what they teach the students. Not all that we do here is been taught in the classroom, for example infographics is an area which is not taught in the schools and new journalists have to come here to be taught and trained in this area" (R9C, Accra, October 9, 2015).*

- *Yes there is a gap. This is not only in journalism. In Ghana most industries complain about this gap. It will be best if institutions will invite senior editors from industries to make input in the curriculum" (R4JJ, Accra, September 23, 2015).*

In the view of the researchers, this discrepancy in position requires an examination of the factors that account for the differences in the perception between academics and practitioners.

Although the complaints of practitioners about students' transition from school to work are not recent, the issue still persists.

According to Hays and Clement (2012), transition is an important and neglected area of attention for educators as well as those concerned with professional development in employing organisations. What are educators and practitioner doing about this? From the practitioners' perspective, these gaps observed can be closed by involving professionals from the media to teach and organise workshops for students and also make inputs in the curriculum development. However one scholar indicated that **"a vice chancellor of one of the public institution in Ghana stated that during their curriculum updates they invite professionals from the industry but they do not honour their invites"** *(R4JJ, Accra, September 23, 2015).* From the researcher perspective, this is a critical area that needs research attention.

Innovative strategies

Adapting to a progressive JER model requires innovative journalists who can think outside the box, adapt to changes easily and always being ready and prepared to meet demands as and when they arise in a more ethical and professional manner. This calls for equipping students with the requisite knowledge, skills and practices that would make them well equipped to survive on the media industry. In order to come up with ideas to achieve this, respondents recommended diverse strategies such as technology training, more field work, frequent reviewing of the curriculum, etc. Below are some of the innovative strategies recommended by respondents:

1. *Reviewing some of the practices and curriculum to meet up with contemporary demands. Further, in order to ensure professionalism and ethics in the field of journalism, during awards, these elements must be considered, this will put other journalists on their feet to practice what is right (R10UfG, Accra, September 21, 2015).*
2. *In a digital era, we need to use digital equipment and mediums, current editions of literature, current search engines for information and train students as specialised journalists' not general journalists (R4JJ, Accra, September 23, 2015).*

3. *Journalists like other professions such as medicine, must be licensed. In view of this, before one can practice journalism as a profession, one must after school, practice a while then, take an examination organized by a journalism body before given the license to practice. The license must be renewed, say, every 2 years. This I believe will bring prestige to the journalism profession (R5N, Accra, October 7, 2015).*
4. *Training and refresher workshops, participating in seminars, internships, hiring qualified people to teach, commitment to improve training and education process yearly, incorporate practical aspect of the profession (R6UG, Accra, October 16, 2015).*

Summary/Implication

This paper primarily focused on enhancing innovation in JER for the future. The paper draws attention to the current situation in terms of journalism education and training, and the need for journalism institutions to employ a new outlook in terms of education and research. It comes at a time when journalism education globally is undergoing significant changes especially following the ongoing technological evolution, global financial and economic situations and social transformation. It reveals important challenges for journalism education and how such challenges could be taken on board in, particularly, a strategic rethink of journalism curricula. These if not taken seriously, will have dire consequences for media practice, journalism education and research in the country. Key strategies such as re-orienting the current approach to journalism education were proposed. Beyond the proposed strategies, constant stakeholder engagement and support is needed to ensure the full adoption of this new outlook by journalism educational institutions.

Recommendations

Given the findings so far and the conceptualisations of the teaching hospital and entrepreneurial models, it is imperative that due consideration be given to the following for the improvement of innovation in journalism education and research. First, there should be a curriculum enrichment. There is the need to emphasize a curriculum in

which digital technologies serve as a foundation and emphasise the basic skills of writing, reporting and editing (multimedia, mobile writing and reporting, digital media law, the culture of digital media, values, ethics and purpose, Interviewing skills etc.). Second, new concentration that focus on multimedia, programming, social media, and storytelling need to be considered. Contemporary classrooms must also take on board particular literacies of Science communication, journalism incorporating ethics, Data mining, human trafficking, gender, humanitarian journalism, Intercultural journalism, Community radio journalism, Global journalism, Safety and journalism, etc. Third, experiential learning must be enhanced. This will create a platform for digital media student to gain experience by covering universities activities and local events to build their experience component. Fourth, the need for innovative didactic approaches that incorporates innovative practices in journalism, interactive presentations that focus on the adoption, adapting or designing of innovative ideas and practices needed to meet the aging demands of the economy. Fifth, Journalism institutions must encourage practical application of knowledge and ideas through practice and capstone projects, etc. Arrangements should also be made for exchange programmes and visits to innovative centres within and outside the country. Furthermore, journalism institutions must liaise with international partners to enable students visit innovative centres either within or outside the country to broaden their knowledge base and embracing different perspectives in journalism as a whole. Six, journalism institutions must ensure the continuous education and development of faculty. Faculty should be trained and re-trained to be abreast of new and modern knowledge, ideas and experiences needed in the journalism industry as the world evolve. Seven, avenues should be created to promote and encourage innovative research geared towards addressing practical problems and challenges in the journalism industries. Resources should be invested in these areas. Last is the promotion of specialised journalism. Journalists should have a post graduate level of education within the field of investigation. This is to enhance their ability to conduct thorough research and analysis for their writings and presentations.

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