

LANGUAGE, CULTURE, COMMUNICATION

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION-SHARING SYSTEMS

Abdullayeva Shahnaz

Postgraduate Student at the Department of International Journalism
Baku State University, Azerbaijan
orcid.org/0000-0003-3831-6396

Summary

Social life has been in constant change throughout history. Economic, political, technological and cultural advances have affected all societies at different times. Journalism, too, is a profession that emerged in this change and was renewed within the framework of these changes, and it has a very important role in terms of democratization of society. Over time, factors such as the formation of the capitalist economy, the importance of public opinion and the press, the emergence of the press as a sector and its rapid growth, together with the practical education concern for the field, created the necessary social framework for the emergence of communication science and the establishment of journalism schools.

Until today, the number of journalism schools in the world and in Azerbaijan has increased continuously in line with the development of the industry. This increase shows the high demand for journalism education.

First, journalism is a social phenomenon and because of this feature, it is not static but in constant change. Society and journalism have developed in mutual relations. The newspaper and the journalist itself are a product of the process of social change and journalism practices are shaped within the framework of social change.

Keywords: AzerTac, media literacy, journalism, education, digitalism, mass communication education.

DOI <https://doi.org/10.23856/5201>

1. Introduction

Journalism education has set out to improve and develop media content around the world. In addition to scientific factors in the establishment of journalism schools and colleges, the ever-increasing demand for qualified labor due to the press becoming an industry has been effective. Because it is accepted that those who will work in all fields that are defined as a profession need a special education in order to fulfill the requirements of that profession. For this reason, journalism education is one of the important issues in the field of communication. Accordingly, since the lack of ethics, knowledge, intellectualism and a deep perspective towards events is felt in journalism practices and practices, the necessity of journalism education at the

university level has manifested itself. In addition, the press needed more qualified personnel and aimed to increase its prestige in this way. The desire of publishers and media organizations to employ more qualified personnel in order to gain prestige has led to financial support of journalism schools, and even the curriculum formats, knowledge structures, research methods and departments of these schools have historically been shaped in line with the needs of the sector. This situation has been the source of the discussions that the academic world has been instrumentalized by the press industry and that the academy has trained a workforce for the sector. For this reason, in many Western European countries, journalism has become an area of postgraduate education in addition to previous undergraduate studies such as history, politics, law, economics or business.

2. Discussion

The demand for journalism education is high. In the research conducted on the educational status of journalists in 21 countries, it was stated that 40 percent of journalists have an associate degree. When we look at the journalists aged 30 and younger more recently, it is seen that most of them have a bachelor's degree in communication/journalism. In Azerbaijan, the data on the education levels of the media workers have not been determined yet (*Picard, 2004: 1–17*).

In general, the aim of journalism education can be expressed as raising qualified journalists with social responsibility in their business practices and increasing the quality of information produced. In this respect, journalism schools have an important function in the democratization of society. UNESCO suggested that the curriculum model prepared for developing and newly developing countries should include courses in journalism schools that will support the development of their country's democracy, and develop the personal and professional aspects and skills of journalists (*UNESCO, 2007: 5*). In general, two aspects of journalism education can be mentioned. The first is to focus on the newspaper as the research object of the discipline, the organizational structure, the journalist and its practices, mass communication and various aspects of communication, and the second is a preliminary preparation for the journalism profession (*Singer, 2008: 122 – 129*).

It is impossible to make a clear distinction between practice and theory in the journalistic professions, which is a social, cultural, political and economic activity. Therefore, trying to distinguish where theory stops and practice starts in journalism education is the product of an unnecessary effort. For example, it would be meaningless to do news and information gathering, which is the most basic practice of journalism, without establishing a certain theoretical knowledge. On the other hand, how to use technical equipment and practices for the profession in journalism education cannot be reduced to technical knowledge alone. Because a strong social and communicative knowledge is required for technical use to be meaningful. At this point, the inseparability of theory and practical education in journalism education gains importance (*Pavlik, 2020: 392–406*). In addition to theoretical knowledge, vocational training is required to activate this knowledge in professional practices.

In addition to America and Europe, UNESCO's model, which has been based on the problem of "free flow of information" since the 1950s and aimed at improving journalism education in underdeveloped countries, has been another important element in the structuring of journalism education. Reinforcing the understanding that modern journalism requires university-level education, UNESCO's approach to encourage the establishment of mass media institutes in developing countries has led to the institutionalization of journalism education in most developing countries, including Azerbaijan, since the 1960s.

Since the 1980s, there has been a significant increase in undergraduate journalism and 'media and communication' courses in the UK, and accordingly, the number of students increases regularly every year. In Germany, the number of higher education institutions and teaching staff that provide education in the field of communication and media studies in the context of the potential of the media in society is constantly increasing. In Japan, where industry-university cooperation is common, there are around 200 communication and journalism programs, with a steady increase over the years, according to 2007 data (Mills, 2019: 265–275). The widespread view in the Japanese media industry that journalism can be learned in a master-apprentice relationship has led journalism schools to structure their curricula more on political and social sciences rather than practice. Another country where schools in the field of journalism and media are proliferating rapidly is China. The most important reason for this situation is the rapid transformation of post-communist Chinese society and media industry. It also started in the 1990s, mostly in journalism schools where vocational training is provided. In Hong Kong, which was under British control until 1997, and then transferred to the Chinese administration, communication/journalism programs mostly focused on issues such as political communication, media economy, new media, and health communication. In Singapore, another British colony, education programs in communication and journalism were large according to trends in England (Thurman, 2008: 439–455). Nanyang Technical University (NTU) in the country has taken an innovative attitude in structuring communication/journalism education within the framework of new technologies. Perhaps the most interesting start date of journalism education took place in Spain. The first journalism school in Spain was established in 1941 by General Franco under the control of the Falangist Party. The 'National School of Journalism', which remained under government control until the 1970s, became one of the most important educational institutions in the country.

Higher journalism education in Azerbaijan has always been considered one of the most popular and prestigious art directions. The foundation of higher journalism education was first laid in 1928 at Azerbaijan State University (now BSU). In a period of nearly 70 years, the faculty has trained more than 3,500 journalist-graduates. The vast majority of them have successfully worked in separate information agencies, state structures, public organizations, educational institutions, and most of them continue their necessary activities even today. The need for wider contact necessitated the establishment of a master's degree in the faculty. For this purpose, the Department of International Journalism was established in 2004. The department is engaged in teaching general subjects for the bachelor's degree and specialized subjects for the master's degree.

The role of correspondent representation abroad is very important in terms of prompt and direct information of Azerbaijani readers, viewers and listeners about events in different regional countries of the world. In accordance with the decrees of the President of Azerbaijan on the improvement of the activities of AzerTag, expansion of correspondent points in America and Europe, strengthening of their material and technical support, Azerbaijan Television and Radio Closed Joint Stock Company in Turkey, United States of America, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Central Asia operation of the representative office, the first steps of some private television channels in this field open the perspective of expanding the scope of the media representatives of Azerbaijan in different regions of the world in the near future. The need for a press service in the embassies of Azerbaijan in foreign countries, as well as in international companies and organizations operating in our country, also raises the need to give purposeful direction to this work.

AzerTac, which plays a major role in the country's information exchange, also contributes to the country in the field of education. Thus, AzerTac Information Agency assists students in their internship and cooperates with higher education institutions. This site, which has options in Azerbaijani, English, Russian, German, French and Arabic languages, is now being watched all over the world. For the organization of the library of AzerTac, especially the electronic library, the necessary literature, first, reference books, new dictionaries were purchased and this work is continued regularly. This, in turn, improves the process of international information exchange in education (*AzerTac 2019, August 10*).

Journalism education generally develops according to the national education system of the countries, the effect of journalism professional associations and government policies, as well as new employment forms that have emerged within the framework of developments in communication technologies. However, this situation differs from country to country. In their study of journalism education in countries with a longer academic tradition such as America, Canada and Europe, they mention four types of approaches in the journalism education system in general, which differ from country to country. The first group consists of countries that include university-level journalism education (Finland, Sweden, Spain, United States of America, Canada, Turkey). It is possible to include Azerbaijan in this group. The second group includes countries with independent journalism schools (Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Italy) (*Mancini, 2003: 93–104*). In the third group, there are countries that contain a mixture of the system in the first and second groups, that is, they have both university and independent journalism schools (France, Germany, Ireland, Portugal). And finally, the fourth group consists of countries where on-the-job-training, in house training is based (Great Britain, Austria). While journalism programs in universities are generally entered after high school education, it is noteworthy that the journalism programs of the USA and some European countries require a university degree from one of the social sciences fields as an entry requirement (*Monroe, 2003: 304*).

The problems related to journalism education, both in vocational and academic education, which are mentioned on a world scale, have caused more and more problems in the process since the beginning of communication education in Azerbaijan, the professional and theoretical aspects of the education provided, the opportunities of the faculties and the educators and actors of the education field. It has often been discussed on the axis of students. As in the world, meetings where academicians and educational institutions discussed the problems of communication/journalism education, seminars in cooperation with the sector, and conferences jointly organized by communication faculties were held in Azerbaijan.

3. Conclusion

One of the most important problems in journalism education is the distinction between theory and practice. During the statistical analysis, it was determined that the use of newspapers, agencies and workshops in the school as if they were separate units apart from vocational courses, caused not every student to benefit from these opportunities equally. The theory-practice distinction in schools and the reflection of this distinction in curricula and course content has led to the formation of the idea, very clearly, in students and journalists, that the profession can only be learned in professional environments through professional practices. Another factor that laid the groundwork for this thought was the inadequacy of the instructors giving vocational courses in journalism departments, and the inadequacy of the environment and workshops related to vocational courses. Accordingly, students and journalists expressed

opinions such as increasing internship opportunities, increasing vocational courses and giving these courses by professionals in the profession or by instructors with professional experience.

While journalism is the most affected by the change in professions with the development of technology internet journalism has emerged and the profession of journalism on the Internet is developing and changing within the framework of different platforms that are emerging day by day. As stated in the study, the continuous development of internet media resources offers great opportunities for Azerbaijan to gain a place in the global internet environment. Internet mass media is turning into an element that determines the priorities of social-political, economic and cultural life. As in the whole world, the internet media in Azerbaijan is progressing with its positive and negative, important and deficient aspects, gaining new successes and surpassing the traditional media.

References

1. Mancini, Paolo (2003). *"Between literary roots and partisanship: Journalism education in Italy"*, *Journalism ducation in Europe and North America*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
2. Picard, Robert G. (2004). *"Environmental and Market Changes Driving Strategic Planning in Media Firms"*, *Strategic Responses to Media Market Changes*, Sweden: Jonkoping International Business School.
3. Singer, Jane. B. (2008). *"Five Ws and an H: Digital Challenges in Newspaper Newsrooms and Boardrooms"*, *The International Journal on Media Management* 10(3).
4. Thurman, Neil ve Ben Lupton (2008). *"Convergence Calls: Multimedia Storytelling at British News Websites"*, *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies* 14(4).
5. Mills, A., Sanders, A. K., Hussain, S. S. (2019). *Fitting it all in? A census of undergraduate ethics and leadership courses in accredited U.S. journalism and mass communication programs*. *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 74(3), .
6. Pavlik, J. V., Alsaad, A. A., & Laufer, P. (2020). *Speaking Truth to Power: Core Principles for Advancing International Journalism Education*. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 75(4). doi:10.1177/1077695820946241
7. Monroe P., Beata R., Stefan V. (2003) *Media Reform: Democratizing the media, democratizing the state*. New York: Routledge.
8. AzerTag. (2019, August 10). *International relationship*. *azertag.az*: <https://azertag.az/site/InternationalRelations>
9. UNESCO (2007), *"Experts Consultative Meeting on Journalism Education Report"*, Paris.