

J-Education and the Media market: who follows whom?

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Abstract:

The present paper aims to discuss the relationships between Journalism Higher Education and journalistic professional practices in the newsrooms, in order to evaluate if it's possible to detect within the academia some clear trends that show that Universities are concerned and prepared to face media market changes.

At a first glance, it could be helpful to use the definitions already mentioned by some authors, positioning Journalism Education (J-Education) as a "follower" or as a "innovator".

Despite the many differences between countries all over the world concerning Universities positionings and media market states of development, we strongly believe that it's possible to define a generic policy that drives the mentioned relationships. In this article, we will be inspired in the Universities where J-Education tend to stay closer to the Journalism practices, rather than that ones who intentionally follow a more theoretical framework. In others words, we will adopt J-Education mixed systems that both promote a stand-alone learning framework and a university-level training. For this purpose, we will use the case of the University of Porto in Portugal and the daily newspaper Público through its online magazine P3.

Normally, the key-question used to be how can Universities face the challenges of the changing media market.

However, media market is very often difficult to define due to the existence of blurred business models, obsolete technologies, or even unclear editorial options. Those ambiguous examples are usually more common in online versions, where the necessary knowledge to implement new journalistic paradigms seems to be more multidisplinary, and much difficult to achieve.

In Portugal, generally, Journalism Higher Education tend to be closer to a classic model related to Arts and Humanities rather than to Technology. However, the experiences in classroom and the medium convergence shows an emergent need to cross humanistic values with technological skills. During the internships in newsrooms, students from U.Porto usually add an important

value to media organizations cause they are able to incorporate different and new concepts in some newsrooms plenty of classic ideas about Journalism.

Due to those reasons and to a multi-level approach to students profiles, the Journalism Higher Education model in Porto tend to be more innovative than reactive to the media market needs. To achieve this level of innovation, it seems to be particularly crucial the focus in some topics like entrepreneurial initiatives, algorithms, image theories, just to mention some of them. In any cases, the main idea is not to teach technics but rather incorporate logics of distinct areas. In such a broadband model, we believe the basic principles of Journalism can be complemented with different knowledge without losing the essential core of the J-Education.

The case of the partnership between the University and the daily newspaper Público around the online project P3 will be detailed in this paper, in order to identify the most important values coming from the academic field to the journalistic one.

In conclusion, we argue in this paper that, sometimes, newsrooms could be the 'followers' of the academic know-how, cause media market maturity, specially in online journalism, is far from being achieved.

Keywords: J-Education, online journalism, integrated journalism, new media, Convergence Culture.