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MECHANISMS FOR IMPROVING JOURNALISM EDUCATION THROUGH MASS MEDIA

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Abstract: This study examines the role of mass media as a transformative mechanism in improving journalism education within contemporary information ecosystems. The research is grounded in the premise that journalism education is not only shaped within academic institutions but is also significantly influenced by how it is represented, interpreted, and problematized in the media space. Despite the growing importance of media-driven discourse, journalism education remains insufficiently and inconsistently covered in many national media systems, often limited to event-based reporting rather than systematic analytical engagement.

The study employs content analysis and semantic analysis to evaluate the nature, depth, and orientation of media coverage related to journalism education between 2020 and 2024. A purposive sample of leading online media outlets is analyzed to identify dominant discursive patterns, including informational, analytical, and critical approaches. The findings reveal that media coverage is predominantly informational and episodic, lacking continuity and critical depth, which restricts the formation of a stable public agenda around journalism education.

At the same time, the research argues that mass media possess a latent potential to function as a diagnostic, communicative, and monitoring mechanism capable of identifying systemic problems, facilitating public dialogue, and influencing institutional reforms. The paper proposes a conceptual framework that repositions media from passive information transmitters to active agents of educational transformation.

The results contribute to a better understanding of how media systems can be leveraged to strengthen journalism education through structured analytical coverage, expert engagement, and data-driven storytelling. The study offers practical recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of media involvement in educational development processes.

Introduction

In the context of rapidly evolving digital communication environments, journalism education is undergoing significant transformation. The increasing complexity of media systems, the rise of digital platforms, and the growing demand for professional competencies require journalism education to adapt continuously. However, the transformation of journalism education does not occur solely within academic institutions. It is also shaped by broader communicative processes, particularly by the ways in which mass media construct, frame, and disseminate narratives about educational practices and challenges.

Mass media, as a key social institution, play a crucial role in shaping public perception and influencing the development of various sectors, including education. Through agenda-setting and framing processes, media determine not only what issues are considered important but also how these issues are interpreted and understood by society. In this regard, journalism education becomes both an object and a subject of media discourse,

where its problems, achievements, and transformations are selectively represented.

However, existing observations indicate that journalism education is rarely treated as a stable media agenda. Instead, it appears in fragmented and episodic forms, often linked to isolated events such as conferences, institutional announcements, or policy updates. This event-driven approach limits the depth of analysis and prevents the formation of a coherent and sustained discourse. As a result, systemic issues within journalism education remain underexplored, and their underlying causes are insufficiently addressed.

This gap highlights the need to reconsider the role of mass media in relation to journalism education. Rather than functioning merely as channels of information dissemination, media can act as active mechanisms that diagnose problems, stimulate public discussion, and contribute to the development of effective solutions. Understanding these mechanisms is essential for enhancing the interaction between media and education systems and for ensuring that journalism education evolves in line with contemporary societal and professional demands.

Main Part

The transformation of journalism education through mass media requires a clear understanding of how media systems operate as functional mechanisms within the broader communication environment. To explore this, the study relies on a combined methodological approach, integrating content analysis and semantic analysis to examine how journalism education is represented in media discourse.

The empirical basis of the research consists of materials published between 2020 and 2024 in leading online media outlets. A purposive sampling strategy was applied to select relevant publications that explicitly address journalism education, its challenges, and its development trends. In total, more than 1000 media items were monitored, of which 132 articles were selected for in-depth analysis. These materials were coded according to key analytical categories, including content type (informational, analytical, critical), tonality (positive, neutral, critical), depth of coverage, and the presence of expert opinions.

The analysis demonstrates that media coverage of journalism education is dominated by informational content, which primarily focuses on reporting events rather than examining underlying issues. Approximately 65% of the analyzed materials fall into the informational category, while only a limited proportion reflects analytical or critical perspectives. This imbalance indicates that journalism education is not positioned as a subject of systematic inquiry but rather as a secondary topic that emerges sporadically within the media agenda.

Such a pattern reveals a fundamental structural limitation: when media discourse is driven by events, it loses its capacity to sustain long-term thematic continuity. Journalism education, therefore, remains trapped in a cycle of visibility and invisibility - appearing briefly during specific events and disappearing from public attention shortly afterward. This discontinuity weakens the potential of media to influence both public understanding and institutional reform processes.

At the same time, the findings highlight that the absence of analytical depth is closely linked to the limited involvement of expert voices. In many cases, media materials lack professional commentary from educators, researchers, or industry practitioners. Without such perspectives, coverage tends to remain descriptive rather than interpretive, which restricts the ability to uncover causal relationships and evaluate systemic challenges.

Despite these limitations, the study identifies a significant opportunity: mass media possess the structural capacity to function as active mechanisms in improving journalism education. This capacity can be understood through several interconnected dimensions.

First, media operate as a diagnostic mechanism, capable of identifying and highlighting

systemic problems within journalism education. By selecting specific issues and bringing them into public visibility, media initiate the process of problem recognition. What is not covered does not exist in public consciousness; therefore, media visibility becomes the first and most crucial step in any transformation process.

Second, media function as a communicative platform, where diverse actors - including students, educators, journalists, and policymakers - can express their perspectives. This interaction transforms isolated problems into shared public concerns. When different viewpoints converge within a single communicative space, the issue gains complexity, depth, and social relevance.

Third, media act as a monitoring mechanism, ensuring that ongoing reforms and initiatives are continuously evaluated. Regular and systematic coverage enables the public to track changes, assess effectiveness, and hold institutions accountable. Without such monitoring, reforms risk becoming symbolic rather than substantive.

Finally, media contribute as an integrative mechanism, connecting the educational system with the professional media industry. This connection reduces the gap between theory and practice, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, skills, and expectations. In this sense, media are not external observers but active participants in the development of journalism education.

The interaction of these mechanisms forms a dynamic process in which media move beyond their traditional role as information transmitters. Instead, they become agents of transformation, shaping not only how journalism education is perceived but also how it evolves in practice. When media coverage shifts from episodic reporting to structured analytical engagement, journalism education gains visibility, coherence, and strategic importance within the public sphere.

This shift is not optional - it is necessary. In an era where information flows define social reality, the absence of a strong media discourse on journalism education directly limits its development potential. Strengthening media involvement is therefore not merely a communicative improvement but a strategic requirement for the future of journalism education.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that the role of mass media in journalism education extends far beyond the function of information dissemination. Media systems, when analyzed through their structural and functional capacities, reveal a significant potential to act as transformative mechanisms within the educational landscape.

The findings confirm that current media coverage of journalism education is predominantly informational and episodic, lacking analytical depth and continuity. This limitation prevents the formation of a stable public agenda and reduces the visibility of systemic challenges. As a result, journalism education remains underrepresented in public discourse, which directly affects its development trajectory.

At the same time, the research clearly shows that this situation is not determined by structural constraints alone, but also by the absence of a strategic approach to media engagement. Mass media already possess the necessary communicative tools to influence educational processes; however, these tools are not being fully utilized. When media operate only within an event-driven logic, their impact remains superficial. When they shift toward analytical and data-driven coverage, their role becomes transformative.

The study argues that the improvement of journalism education requires the activation of several key media mechanisms: diagnostic identification of systemic problems, facilitation of multi-actor communication, continuous monitoring of reforms, and integration between education and professional practice. These mechanisms, when functioning together, create a sustainable communicative environment in which journalism education

can evolve more effectively.

Importantly, strengthening the role of media in journalism education should not be viewed as an auxiliary process. It is a strategic necessity. In contemporary society, where public perception is largely shaped by media narratives, the development of journalism education is inseparable from its representation in the media space. Without consistent and analytical media coverage, even well-designed educational reforms risk remaining invisible or misunderstood.

Therefore, the future of journalism education depends not only on institutional reforms within universities but also on the transformation of media practices. Establishing specialized analytical content, increasing expert involvement, and expanding the use of data-driven storytelling are essential steps toward building a more effective and responsible media discourse.

In conclusion, mass media must be redefined as active participants in educational development. Their role is not limited to reflecting reality - they are capable of shaping it. Recognizing and operationalizing this potential is ключевой фактор in ensuring the sustainable improvement of journalism education.

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