Journalism and mass communication education in the Arab World: Towards a typology

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Abstract
This study offers an overview of the current status of journalism and mass communication education in the Arab World. Specifically, through an exploratory analysis of structure, curricula and faculty from ten journalism and mass communication programs in five Arab countries, the study identified four typologies that characterize journalism and mass communication education in the Arab World. These typologies were also determined by political and economic differences in the region. In an effort to expand literature on global journalism and mass communication education, this study was the first to apply typologies in its methodological approach. Through the process of classification, the study was able to provide a better understanding of how and why journalism education differs within a specific region.

Keywords
Arab World, education, journalism, mass communication, Middle East, typologies

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Introduction

The Arab World is a region that is developing in a multitude of ways. Since there were fewer than five universities by the 1950s, billions of dollars have been invested to expand and improve higher education across the region (Issa and Siddiek, 2012). The number of students enrolling in universities across the Arab World increased significantly in the 1980s to the 1990s (Issa and Siddiek, 2012). By the early 2000s, the emergence of private, international universities increased the options available to students (Al-Rashdan, 2009).

Yet, the Arab World is not a monolithic region. There are regional differences that affect the development of Arab universities (Romani, 2009). This study explores those differences through an analysis of journalism and mass communication (JMC) programs in five Arab countries. While most Arab nations provide limited press freedoms, the media industry in the region continues to grow. Arab news organizations like Al Jazeera have become global news brands; other international news organizations like BBC are currently producing content in the Arabic language; and Arab versions of popular shows like The Voice and American Idol have now become an essential part of entertainment culture in the Arab World. Moreover, the hike in social media use by Arab youth, which was evident during the Arab Spring makes JMC education in the region an interesting topic of exploration.

According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), ‘journalism education is offered in many different ways by many different organizations with different educational traditions and resources, in many different settings, circumstances and cultures, and in many different political conditions’ (2007: 6).

Scholars examining media education in the Arab World have usually focused on analyzing JMC education from specific countries (See El-Nawaway, 2007; Kamel and Alabassi, 1997; Melki, 2009; Nassar, 1999; O’Rourke, 2011; Pavlik et al., 2012; Yunis and Picherit-Duthler, 2011). This study offers an overview of the current status of JMC education in the Arab World. Specifically, through an analysis of structure, curricula, and faculty from 10 JMC programs in five Arab countries, the study classified JMC education in the Arab World into four typologies. By using typologies, the study was able to provide a better conceptualization of how and why JMC education differs within a specific region. Thus, findings should encourage researchers in JMC education to utilize this method in future comparative research.

Framework

Development and globalization of U.S. mass communication education

The internationalization of U.S. universities has led to the increase of liberal arts and social science programs around the globe. Since the early 2000s, JMC programs in the United States have been facing ‘financial pressures’ that have been
addressed through the creation of partnerships with international institutions (Knight and Hawkins, 2010).

In some cases, these global partnerships resulted in positive media developments for the host country. For example, in analyzing JMC programs before and after China’s entrance to the World Trade Organization, Zhang et al. (2004) found an increase in offerings of courses that focus on media management and the business side of journalism, coinciding with China’s growing economic market. In other cases, faculty and staff have reported less positive developments. For instance, Knight and Hawkins (2010) found that because most textbooks were published in Anglo-Saxon nations, educators in the Middle East and Asia said they could not relate to the examples presented in the textbooks. Moreover, while many of the programs have a clear objective in advancing journalism education in the host country, educators were uneasy over the fact that some partnerships and programs were created solely for financial gains.

The concern over appropriate JMC curriculum worldwide led to the creation of the World Journalism Education Council (WJEC). The initial Congress in Singapore in 2007 led to the creation and adoption of a series of principles that dealt with topics such as offering ‘a balance of conceptual, philosophical and skills-based content’ and skills needed by successful journalists (WJEC, 2007).

UNESCO developed a recommended set of standards for journalism curricula that were introduced at the WJEC’s first meeting. Among their recommendations is a curriculum with a balance of journalism skills, journalism values and an understanding of supporting fields in the arts and sciences. Prior to UNESCO’s initiative the main set of standards of JMC education was created by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). Their curricula standards include a minimum of 72 semester hours to be taken outside the journalism field, a balance between theory and skills courses, and opportunities for internships. Both organizations stress the need of expanding the horizon of JMC students. According to UNESCO, ‘journalism is not a stand-alone discipline. It should be combined with education in the disciplines of arts and sciences, and we encourage journalism educators to steer their students towards studies that expand and enrich the language of public life’ (2007: 8).

While JMC programs around the world are in a constant struggle to catch up with the technological advances in the field and to fulfill the needs of the media industry, their success in doing so is much debated. Scholars have called on more research about JMC education on a global scale (Deuze, 2006; Melki, 2009; Tahat and Self, 2013). This study is one of the few that focuses on JMC education the Arab World.

Higher education in the Arab World

There were approximately only three institutes of higher education in the Arab world by 1950 (Issa and Siddiek, 2012). Throughout the 1980–90s, the number of students who sought enrollment in Arab universities increased and Arab universities were not
able to provide enough faculty or space to accommodate for this growth. Further, most universities were developed in large urban areas, leaving those in rural areas without many resources for higher education (Al-Rashdan, 2009).

Despite high amounts of public spending on institutes of higher education, Arab universities are separate from their societies as they are not always perceived as researching issues relevant to the communities they serve. Further, the dependence on government funding creates a restrictive environment where innovative thought that is critical can result in a threat of academics’ personal security (Al-Rashdan, 2009; Issa and Siddiek, 2012).

One way to improve the quality of Arab universities is to develop partnerships with international institutions. In the early 2000s, billions of U.S. dollars were spent on developing branches of foreign universities in the Arab Gulf states (Romani, 2009). However, as Ghabra and Arnold’s (2007) analysis of American style education in the Arab World concludes, even those universities face challenges in the region. Specifically, those problems include limited academic freedom mainly due to government censorship and low faculty morale due to work overload and non-transparency in administration.

Media education in the Arab World

Media education in the Arab World is not exempt from this contradictory environment. In 2005, Kirat stated that there were at least 80 JMC programs in the Arab world. Recently, Tahat and Self (2013) were able to identify 95 programs from 12 Arab countries. While JMC programs in the region continue to grow, scholars examining JMC education in the Arab World have echoed concerns with issues like curricula and the quality of faculty. For curricula, studies have found that that coursework in the region is mostly focused on theory rather than practice. Thus, students are ill-prepared to work in the media industry upon graduation (El-Nawaway, 2007; Kamel and Alabassi, 1997; Nassar, 1999; Tahat and Self, 2013). For example, Kamel and Alabbasi (1997) found that while journalism students, educators, and professionals thought journalism curricula in Egypt are too dense with theory, students also believe that such courses would not help them in their careers. Two decades later, Josephi (2010) explains the challenges of journalism education as either a publicly-funded university that’s disconnected from global standards and tends to the needs of political elites or a privately-funded university that tends to the needs of economic elites.

With regard to faculty, Tahat and Self (2013) state that JMC faculty in the Arab world lack necessary industry experience. Low salaries for faculty and the manipulation of messages to support state policies demonstrate that journalism education is not a priority (Josephi, 2010). Melki (2009) states, even though the number of students entering JMC programs in Lebanon has increased, more qualified faculty members and resources for research are needed.

Scholars have also addressed the effects of global partnerships on JMC education in the Arab World. Tahat and Self (2013) state that in some universities JMC
education has moved closer to the UNESCO and ACEJMC models. In the initial stages of implementing the UNESCO model curricula in Iraq, Pavlik et al. (2012) recommend that as violence and political instability continue to grow, students should take courses in survival skills to cope with the dangerous work environment.

Literature has mainly focused on analyzing JMC education from specific Arab countries (see El-Nawaway, 2007; Kamel and Alabassi, 1997; Melki, 2009; Nassar, 1999; O’Rourke, 2011; Pavlik et al., 2012; Yunis and Picherit-Duthler, 2011). As part of the World Journalism Education Council's (2007) initiative to provide a census of JMC education around the world, Tahat and Self (2012) were the first to survey 65 JMC programs from 12 Arab countries. While their analysis found variances in size of programs, curricula, source of funding, and international partnerships amongst other things, their conclusion regarded the Arab World as one entity without taking into consideration that such differences may be caused by the diverse political and economic environments in the region. Through an extensive exploratory analysis of 10 JMC programs from five Arab countries, this study goes a step further than a census. Specifically, the study groups programs with shared characteristics to create typologies.

Towards a typology of Arab journalism education programs

Typologies are defined by Collier et al. (2012) as ‘organized systems of types’ (p. 217). Guest (2012) states that typologies are widely used in mixed-method research to ‘impose order and simplify complex phenomena for didactic, organizational and communicative purposes’ (p. 141). Several studies have created typologies for education systems based on regional differences (Allemendinger and Leibfried, 2003; Hopper, 1968; Willemsen and De Beer, 2012) while scholars like Rix and Twinning (2007) classified education systems based on different learning styles. Other studies have focused on types of students within an education system (Hu et al., 2011). With regards to media, literature has mainly focused on classifying types of audiences of a specific medium or a phenomenon. For example, Meyen et al. (2010) developed typologies of internet users and Székely (2015) created typologies for multitasking during media consumption. While typologies have been employed in literature on education and media studies separately, this study is the first to use such a method to classify different kinds of JMC education programs in a specific region. Moreover, the creation of typologies of mass communication programs in the Arab World will create a better conceptualization of how and why JMC is taught differently within a region and may encourage scholars of JMC education to utilize this method in their future comparative research.

These typologies must be informed by previous research on Arab JMC education, which, as demonstrated earlier, mostly focused on curricula and faculty. Typologies must also examine the structure of JMC programs—their size, the majors they offer, whether they are part of public or private institutions, and whether they are colleges or departments. Another aspect of education structure
in the Arab World is the language of instruction. Melki (2009) states the orientation of journalism education programs depends on the language employed in the classroom. O’Rourke (2011) explained that the fact that English is a foreign language, the Omani journalism students she examined came with obstacles, including the amount of time required to complete a task (O’Rourke, 2011). Conversely, as resources in the Arabic language are outdated, the quality of teaching JMC in the Arabic language is hindered. Clearly, creating a typology that examines these factors would shed light on Arab JMC education. In order to achieve such a typology, the analysis examines the following questions:

RQ1: How are the structures of JMC programs different across the Arab world?

RQ2: How do JMC education curricula differ across the Arab world?

RQ3: How does the faculty differ across JMC programs in the Arab World?

Moreover, in-order to get a better understanding of the Arab World, typologies must consider the different political and economic contexts that exist in the five countries hosting the ten journalism programs in this study: The United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, and Egypt.

Countries in the study

Out of the eight international JMC programs accredited by ACEJMC, four were from the Arab World—specifically three from UAE and one from Qatar (ACEJMC, 2016). Both countries have recently put a lot of effort and investments in advancing education standards to compete with universities around the world (Bollag, 2016; Hall, 2014). While both countries have limited press freedoms (Freedom House, 2016), they have become media hubs in the Middle East. Qatar is the birthplace of Al Jazeera, which has now become a global news brand operating in various languages and platforms. The UAE is home to the Dubai Media City and the TwoFour54 media training center. Both cities provide resources for global media organizations to operate in the Middle East and offer learning and work opportunities for Arabs eager for a media-oriented career. These developments in education and in the media industry make the inclusion of Qatar and the UAE in the analysis imperative.

Kuwait is the Arab Gulf state that enjoys the most press freedom (Freedom House, 2016). When compared to other Gulf states, Kuwait is also most likely to democratize due, in part, to the ability of its people to negotiate power with authorities—a characteristic Michael Herb (2016) calls ‘Kuwaiti exceptionalism’ (pp. 8). Thus, an exploration of media education in the Arab world benefits from the unique characteristics that Kuwait exhibits.

Yet, not all Arab nations are as affluent as the oil-rich Arab Gulf states. With no natural resources, Jordan, for example, is considered rich in human resources as the
government has shown significant interest in education development. However, limited funds and the political struggles in dealing with issues like the Syrian refugee crisis are sources of concern (Ghabra and Arnold, 2007; The World Bank, 2011; Yasin, 1996). Egypt has some of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the region, and is also home of the first JMC program in the Arab World (Abu Baker et al., 1985). Egypt and Jordan are important nations to study because the process of liberalizing and restricting press systems has been taking place for more than four decades (El-Nawawy, 2007). The recent political turmoil in Egypt in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, for example, has further restricted media freedoms (Freedom House, 2016). Thus, the inclusion of Jordan and Egypt in the analysis helps in creating a more accurate representation of journalism programs in the region.

Method

This research used a mixed methods approach in its analysis. First, in an effort to create typologies of JMC programs in the Arab World, an in-depth exploratory analysis of websites associated with each program in the sample was conducted. The objective of this aspect of the study was to categorize and classify JMC programs based on overall structure of the programs, faculty diversity and curricula. Second, after identifying typologies of JMC programs in the Arab World, a further quantitative analysis of curricula and faculty profiles was conducted to test for significant differences.

Sample

The study used a purposive sample of 10 JMC schools from five Arab countries. The main objective behind the sampling procedure was to select and analyze programs that showcase diversity in JMC education in the Arab World. The authors first selected five countries from the Arab World and then chose two universities—one private and one public—from each country. The countries each represent a unique journalism culture along with differences in economic and political environments. After the selection of the countries, the authors looked at the universities that first, offer journalism programs, second, have thorough and informative websites about their programs and, finally, represent diversity within the JMC entities in the Arab World. A total of 10 universities that fit the above criteria were selected. From those universities, a total of 477 course descriptions and 448 faculty biographies were compiled and analyzed.

Universities in the sample

- Kuwait
  - Public: Kuwait University (KU)
  - Private: Gulf University of Science and Technology (GUST)
• Qatar
  o Public: Qatar University (QU)
  o Private: Northwestern Qatar (NWQ)

• Egypt
  o Public: Cairo University (CU).
  o Private: American University in Cairo (AUC)

• Jordan
  o Public: Yarmouk University
  o Private: Middle East University, Jordan (MEU)

• UAE
  o Public: Zayed University (ZU)
  o Private: American University of Sharjah (AUS)

**Exploratory analysis of program structures and curricula**

Through an in-depth exploratory analysis of websites pertaining to the JMC programs in the sample, the analysis’ main objective is to classify JMC programs in the region into typologies. According to Guest (2012) the classification process must include the creation of categories that could be used to demonstrate the similarities and differences within the concept being studied.

*Categories within a typology must be broad enough to simplify the phenomena being classified, but not so broad as to be vague and uninformative. Conversely, the differentiating features of a typology cannot be so narrow as to create a multitude of unique categories, and thus negate the original purpose of simplification. (Guest, 2012: 141)*

Based on previous literature, the researchers used three main categories to create typologies of JMC education: structure, faculty diversity, and curricula.

For structure of the programs, the study explored issues like the size of the programs, whether the programs selected are colleges or departments and the majors they offer.

Previous literature focused on the quality and experience of JMC faculty in the Arab World and was conducted using surveys or in-depth interviews. In this exploratory analysis; however, the emphasis is not on the quality of faculty but with classifying JMC programs based on differences within the faculty structures. This classification can be achieved by exploring the gender, nationality and education backgrounds of faculty from each institution.

For curricula, the researchers explored how each program distributes the credits and courses needed for graduation. Deuze (2006) states that while most literature on curricula focuses on the balance of practical and theoretical coursework, in many situations, such distinctions are not clear-cut. Rather, this part of the study looked at two aspects of curricula organization. First, it analyzed the proportion of JMC courses and non-JMC courses required by each program.
The objective here is to see if JMC curricula in the Arab World resemble national standards set by organizations like the UESCO and ACEJMC. Second, the study analyzed how courses were distributed between core requirements and electives, a curriculum analysis approach encouraged by Deuze (2006). The main objective in this part is to see how flexible programs are in granting students more freedom to organize their own study plans. In doing so, this study creates a new dimension in evaluating journalism curricula.

**Quantitative analysis of courses and faculty:** After identifying typologies in the exploratory aspect of this study, a further quantitative analysis of curricula and faculty diversity was conducted to test for significant differences between typologies. Specifically, JMC courses from each program were coded for area of specialization and faculty profiles from each program were coded for gender, nationality, and academic position.

**Courses:** The names and descriptions of every JMC course offered from each program in the sample were first collected. The courses were then coded for area of specialization using a modified version of Zhang et al.’s (2004) coding criteria for analyzing journalism courses from China and the United States. The code-guide included eight categories: print journalism, broadcast journalism, public relations and advertising, visual communication, media management and economics, new media, mass communication general, and other. Coders selected one category for each course. If two or more categories seem relevant to a specific course, the dominant factor within the course name and specification was used to select the category.

**Faculty:** The names, biographies, and resumes—if available—of each faculty member listed on each program’s website were compiled. Faculty members were coded for gender, academic position (assistant professor, associate professor, full professor, and other), and nationality (Arab, non-Arab).

**Inter-coder reliability**

Inter-coder reliability analysis was used to test the consistency and relevance of the coding process. Ten percent of the sample was double coded. Using Holsti’s (1969) formula, inter-coder coefficient was .82 in the analysis of JMC courses and .97 in the analysis of faculty profiles. These results indicate a high level of agreement between the coders, confirming the validity of the coding process.

**Results**

Through an in-depth exploratory analysis of the structures, faculty, and curricula of Arab JMC programs, along with information about economic and political differences within each institution’s home country, it was determined that four main typologies presided over JMC education in the Arab World. Tables 1 and 2 show how the typologies were derived using information on structure, faculty, and curricula of the universities in the sample.
### Table 1. Typologies of journalism programs in the Arab World: structure and faculty diversity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>College/Department</th>
<th>Majors</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Faculty nationality</th>
<th>Faculty education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Communication</td>
<td>Jour, broadcast TV, PR &amp; Adv., electronic jour, English track</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>Arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Communication</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jour, broadcast TV, PR &amp; Adv., electronic jour, English track</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arab</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yarmouk</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Mass Communication</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>Arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Mass Communication</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>Arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MEU</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>College of Media</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>Arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>College of Media</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>Arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf-Arab</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Art, Dept. of Mass Communication</td>
<td>Jour, PR &amp; Adv., radio &amp; TV</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Mostly Arab</td>
<td>Mostly Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Art, Dept. of Mass Communication</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Mostly Arab</td>
<td>Mostly Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QU</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Arts and Sciences, Dept. of Mass Communication</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Mostly Arab</td>
<td>Mostly Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private-US</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Arts and Sciences, Dept. of Mass Communication</td>
<td>Print and online jour, broadcast and online broadcast, strategic comm.</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Mostly Arab</td>
<td>Mostly Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUS</td>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>College of Arts and Sciences, Dept. of Mass Communication</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Mix</td>
<td>Western</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>College/Department</th>
<th>Majors</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Faculty nationality</th>
<th>Faculty education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>School of Global Affairs, Dept. of Journalism and Mass Communication</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Mix</td>
<td>Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multimedia jour, comm. and media arts, integrated marketing comm.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUST</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>College of Arts and Science, Dept. of Mass Communication</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Mix</td>
<td>Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Visual comm., PR &amp; Adv., radio &amp; TV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZU</td>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>College of Communication and Media Sciences</td>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>Non-Arab</td>
<td>Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Converged media, film and video comm., tourism and cultural comm.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWQ</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>College of Media Industry and Technology</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Non-Arab</td>
<td>Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Media industries and technology, journalism major with four tracks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CU: Cairo University; MEU: Middle East University; KU: Kuwait University; QU: Qatar University; AUS: American University of Sharjah; AUC: American University in Cairo; GUST: Gulf University of Science and Technology; ZU: Zayed University; NWQ: Northwestern Qatar.
Table 2. Typologies of journalism programs in the Arab World: curricula.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total courses</th>
<th>Mass comm. courses</th>
<th>Outside courses</th>
<th>Required courses</th>
<th>Elective courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarmouk</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEU</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf-Arab</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QU</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private-US</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUS</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUST</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZU</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWQ</td>
<td>32 credits (each course 1 credit or 0.5 credit)</td>
<td>Differences based on major but NWQ requires two-thirds of courses to be in the liberal arts</td>
<td>Differences based on major. The proportion is about 70% elective and 30% required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CU: Cairo University; MEU: Middle East University; KU: Kuwait University; QU: Qatar University; AUS: American University of Sharjah; AUC: American University in Cairo; GUST: Gulf University of Science and Technology; ZU: Zayed University; NWQ: Northwestern Qatar.

**Arab-oriented typology**

*Structure:* This education typology mainly comes from the poorer and impoverished regions of the Arab World where education funding and development is low. The programs that fit this typology are CU, Yarmouk University and MEU in Jordan. The typology is characterized by outdated programs and curricula that are unlikely to change to fit the rapid technological advancements in journalism. The programs in this typology are all taught in the Arabic language, except for CU, which has a general mass communication track taught in English. The majors in this typology are generic: print, TV and radio, PR and advertising. Even though CU has an electronic-journalism major, a closer look at the curricula reveals that it looks very similar to the print journalism major with only a few additional courses.

*Faculty structure:* Faculty is Arab-oriented where about all faculty members are Arab with degrees from Arab universities.
Curricula: The curricula from the three universities share characteristics that are very different from the other three typologies. First, the three universities require 132 credits, equivalent to 44 courses, to graduate, which is the largest number of courses when compared to the other programs. Second, the curricula are heavily concentrated on JMC courses and a small proportion of courses are allocated to general education and liberal arts courses. For example, out of the 44 courses needed to graduate, CU requires 36 (82%) JMC courses and only eight (18%) courses outside the JMC curricula. This heavy concentration on JMC courses results in curricula that is very redundant. For example, the radio and TV program from Yarmouk, requires students to take the following courses: radio and TV production 1, radio and TV production 2, writing for radio and TV, directing for radio, directing for TV, producing for TV, and producing for radio. The curricula in this typology also allow the least amount of freedom and choice to students. For example, MEU’s curriculum has the least freedom with 35 (80%) required courses and only nine (20%) electives.

Gulf-Arab typology

Structure: This education typology is emphasized by the largest and oldest state universities from the oil-rich Gulf countries in the sample: KU and QU. Similar to the universities from the previous typology, these universities also teach mostly in Arabic. The programs also offer the generic mass communication majors: print journalism, broadcast journalism, and PR and advertising. However, recent additions to online concentrated courses differentiate the programs in this typology from the previous one. For example, upon the recent ACEJMC accreditation granted to QU, the university renamed its print and broadcast majors to print and online journalism and broadcast and online broadcast journalism.

Faculty structure: Similar to the previous typology, faculty members are mostly of Arab origin. However, most of them have degrees from Western universities.

Curricula: Both programs in this typology require 126 credits, equivalent to 42 courses, to graduate, which is less than the required courses from the Arab-oriented typology. Also, this typology allocates more general education and liberal arts courses than JMC courses and grants students more electives. Both KU and QU require students to take 26 (62%) courses outside the department and 16 (28%) courses within the department. KU evenly distributes its curriculum between 21 (50%) required courses and 21(50%) electives. QU’s curriculum has 19 (47%) required courses and 21(53%) electives. Both universities also require their students to take a minor in the field of their choice as part of their electives.

Private-American typology

Structure: The universities in this typology include the small private universities that adopt an American education style and teach in the English language: AUC, GUST. As can be seen from the university profiles, the programs begin to stray
away from the generic mass communication majors (print journalism, broadcast journalism, and PR and advertising). For example, both AUC and GUST do not have a print journalism major, but do offer other majors that are different from the previous two JMC typologies. GUST offers a visual communication track and AUC offers three different majors: multimedia journalism, communication and media arts, and integrated marketing communications.

**Faculty structure:** The faculty is a mixture of Arab and non-Arab with degrees mostly from American universities.

**Curricula:** All programs require 120 credits, equivalent to 40 courses, to graduate, which is less than the previous two typologies. The universities here adopt an American-style JMC curriculum, which is heavy on social sciences and liberal arts courses. The ratio of non-JMC courses to JMC courses is about 65%–35%. All programs in this typology allow students more opportunities than the previous typologies in selecting the courses of their preference.

**Strategic typology**

**Structure:** This typology includes universities with initiatives and strategies that far extend educational goals. They are heavily funded from private enterprises or governments and their main objective is to build a solid reputation and compete with educational entities around the world. The universities in this typology are ZU from the UAE and NWQ from Qatar. Both countries have recently put a lot of effort and investments in advancing not only education, but all aspects of their societies including infrastructure, healthcare, sports, and tourism. The two universities are part of both countries’ strategic plans for global recognition and achievement, which is why the journalism programs seem to be specialized to fit those strategies. ZU’s program, for example, offers a unique major—tourism and cultural communication—that emphasizes the tourism strategy of the country, while NWQ offers a specialized journalism program that coincides with Qatar’s interest in the news industry through its global news brand, Aljazeera.

**Faculty structure:** Faculty members from both programs are highly accredited with professional and academic backgrounds. They are mostly Western with degrees from Western universities.

**Curricula:** NWQ has a unique curriculum that offers two majors: media industries and technology (MIT), which focuses on film making, and a journalism major with four tracks (newspaper and online journalism, magazine, broadcast, and public relations). NWQ requires its students to take 32 credits—each course is allocated either 1 credit or 0.5 credits—which is the least amount of courses in the sample. The college stresses the importance of liberal arts education where two thirds of the courses taken by students are in the arts and sciences. MIT majors enroll in 7 (22%) required courses and 25 (78%) electives, whereas journalism majors take either 20 (63%) or 21 (66%) electives depending on the track of their choice.

Zayed University has a curriculum with a total of 42 courses to graduate. This high number of courses is, in part, due to its emphasis on bilingual education
as students take more Arabic language courses than all the other universities in the sample that primarily teach in English. The program requires its students to take 25 (60%) courses outside the college and 17 (40%) courses within the college. With regards to freedom of course selection, ZU seems very strict as students are only allowed 14 (33%) elective courses. This rigorous curriculum is mainly due to the university policy that requires all students to enroll in 16 courses during the first three semesters, even before choosing major. These courses are what the university calls the ‘common core’ and they aim to strengthen skills like critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and global awareness.

**Analysis of mass communication courses**

*General:* A quantitative analysis of the 477 mass communication courses from Arab journalism programs in the sample revealed that most courses concentrated on general mass communication (N = 102, 21%) followed by broadcast journalism (N = 85, 18%), PR and advertising (N = 83, 17%), and print journalism (N = 70, 15%), respectively. Courses in new media, (N = 47, 10%) visual communication (N = 37, 8%), and media management and economics (N = 31, 7%) were seen the least, while 22 (5%) courses were coded as other.

*Across typologies:* Cross-tabulations with Pearson’s chi-square coefficients found significant differences in the type of courses offered across the four JMC program typologies in the Arab World. The top three types of courses offered by the Arab-oriented typology were broadcast journalism, followed by print JMC general. While mass communication general courses were offered the most in the rest of the typologies, they were followed by broadcast and PR and advertising courses in the Gulf-Arab and the Private-American typologies, and by new media and visual journalism courses in the Strategic typology ($\chi^2 = (21, N = 477) = 53.01, p < .001$). Table 3 shows the differences in the type of courses offered across the four journalism education cultures in the Arab World.

**Table 3.** Differences in the type of courses offered between the four journalism and mass communication education typologies in the Arab World.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Print</th>
<th>Broadcast</th>
<th>PR &amp; Adv.</th>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Economics</th>
<th>New</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arab-oriented</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gulf-Arab</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private-US</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>15</td>
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</table>

($\chi^2 = (21, N = 477) = 53.01, p < .001$)
Analysis of faculty profiles

General. The profiles of 448 faculty members were analyzed. In terms of gender, there was more female faculty (N = 253, 57%) than male (N = 195, 43%). The majority of the faculty members are from Arab nationalities (N = 363, 81%). Less than 20% of the faculty in the sample was non-Arab. Most of the faculty members in the sample are teaching assistants or instructors without doctorate degrees (N = 193, 28%) followed by assistant professors (N = 123, 28%), full professors (N = 68, 15%), and associate professors (N = 64, 14%), respectively.

Across typologies. With regard to nationality of faculty members in the JMC education typologies from the Arab World, results from a cross-tabulations with Pearson’s chi-square coefficients revealed that all faculty members from the Arab-oriented typology (N = 259, 100%) and the majority of faculty members from the Gulf-Arab (N = 57, 92%), and the private American (N = 36, 63%) typologies are Arab. The majority of faculty members in the strategic typology (N = 59, 84%); however, are non-Arab ($\chi^2 = (3, N = 448) = 271.52, p < .001$).

While there is more female faculty than male faculty in JMC programs in the Arab World, a three-way cross-tabulations with Pearson’s chi-square coefficients revealed significant differences with gender-position distributions within the four journalism education types. Within the Arab-oriented typology, the majority of women faculty members (N = 103, 63%) are teaching assistants or instructors without doctorate degrees, whereas the majority of males are full professors (N = 28,

| Table 4. Differences in gender and position distributions across the four journalism and mass communication education typologies in the Arab World. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assistant | Associate | Full | Other |
| | N | % | N | N | % | % | N | % |
| Arab-oriented$^a$ | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 26 | 27 | | | | | 26 | 27 |
| Female | 33 | 20 | 8 | 5 | 20 | 12 | 103 | 63 |
| Gulf-Arab$^b$ | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 16 | 37 | | | 12 | 28 | 4 | 9 | 11 | 26 |
| Female | 10 | 53 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 47 |
| Private-US$^b$ | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 9 | 30 | | | 5 | 17 | 8 | 27 | 8 | 27 |
| Female | 5 | 19 | 6 | 22 | 1 | 3 | 15 | 56 |
| Strategic | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 11 | 41 | 7 | 26 | 3 | 11 | 6 | 22 |
| Female | 13 | 30 | 11 | 26 | 4 | 9 | 15 | 35 |

$^a$Differences in gender position distribution significant, $p < .01$.

$^b$Differences in gender position distribution significant, $p < .05$. 

the International Communication Gazette 0(0)
30%) \( (c^2 = (3, N = 259) = 34.31, p < .001) \). Within the Gulf-Arab typology, the majority of faculty members from both genders are assistant professors. However, women had no representations in associate and full professor positions \( (c^2 = (3, N = 62) = 9.76, p = .021) \). More than half of female faculty members from the private American typology are teaching assistants or instructors without doctorate degrees \( (N = 15, 56\%) \), whereas most of the males are assistant professors \( (N = 9, 30\%) \) \( (c^2 = (3, N = 57) = 8.66, p = .034) \). No significant differences were found with gender and position distribution in the strategic typology, indicating a balance in gender-position distribution \( (c^2 = (3, N = 70) = 1.48, p = .688) \). Table 4 shows the differences in gender and position distributions across the four journalism education cultures in the Arab World.

**Discussion and conclusion**

Through the process of classification, the study was able to provide a better understanding of how and why journalism is taught differently in a region of more than 20 countries with a shared language and religion. Specifically, the study generated four typologies of JMC education in the Arab World through an analysis of structures, curricula and faculty diversity of 10 journalism programs from five Arab countries.

Looking closely at the four typologies, one could determine that one of the main differences in Arab JMC programs stems from the top level. In a region where political systems are mostly authoritarian or dictatorships, the development of education in general, and JMC programs in specific, usually lies in the hands of those in power. As most higher education institutions in the Arab World rely on governments to survive financially, the development of education systems is determined by the amount of monetary support and encouragement provided by those governments (Al-Rashdan, 2009).

The institutions in the Arab-oriented typology, for example, come from countries that are struggling economically and politically. JMC education in this typology is characterized by outdated programs with generic majors, curricula that do not fit the global standards set by organizations like UNESCO and ACEJMC, and a faculty structure that lacks diversity. These factors suggest that programs in this typology are unlikely to change—at least in the short-run—to fit the rapid technological advancements in the field of journalism.

On the other hand, the institutions from the Gulf-Arab and Strategic typologies, come from the oil-rich Gulf states that are not only financially capable of developing journalism institutions with the latest tools and technology used by the industry, but could also hire the most qualified instructors from around the world. The question is not about their financial capabilities, but whether they are willing to advance JMC education in their countries.

Deuze (2006) talks about two JMC education styles: the ‘follower’ mode, where the goal of the program is to make sure their graduates acquire the needs and wants of the profession, and the ‘innovator’ mode, where programs look ahead of the
status quo and get students ready for the rapid changes in the industry. The Gulf-
Arab typology seem consistent with the ‘follower’ mode as they offer generic
majors (journalism, radio and TV, PR and advertising) with little consideration
to changes in the media environment globally and regionally. Due to the fact that
universities in this typology are the oldest and largest state universities within their
countries, the bureaucracy and size of such entities slow down their capabilities to
change. Countries that are willing to switch to ‘innovator’ mode would rather
develop new institutions than spend time and money fixing and changing existing
ones. This was evident in JMC programs from Qatar and the UAE.

Even though NWQ is considered a private institution, it is part of the Qatar
Foundation initiative founded by Amir’s (president) parents. Through providing
high quality education, Qatar Foundation’s vision is to transform Qatar from a
country dependent on its hydrocarbon resources to a ‘modern knowledge-based
economy’ (Qatar Foundation, 2016). At the university level, the foundation has
partnered with global institutions to establish campuses with specialized programs
in the country. NWQ’s journalism program is unique to the needs of the media
industry in Qatar and in the Arab World. With Al Jazeera now being a global
media brand, along with the recent expansion of its branch company, beIN, from a
major player in worldwide sports coverage to the acquisition of MIRAMAX film
studios, NWQ offers two programs: one focuses on the news aspect of media and
the other on the technology and art of film making and animations (Smith, 2016).

Similarly, the oldest public university in the UAE is the UAE University.
However, the country has recently founded ZU with an objective of making it
the ‘leading university in the UAE and a globally recognized educational and
research institution’ (Zayed, 2016). The program offers a unique major—tourism
and cultural communication—that emphasizes the tourism strategy of the country.
Dubai, which is in the UAE, is now one of the top tourism attractions in the world,
and with Dubai recently being named the host of the World Expo 2020, the tourism
industry is expected to expand (Jones, 2013).

As the youth population continues to grow the Arab World, smaller private
institutions like the ones from the Private-American typology help in granting
more access to higher education and in solving the issues of overcrowding in the
classroom (Romani, 2009). While those private institutions do have close ties to
local governments, decisions about the standards of education are usually made
within the institution. The flexibility of private enterprises allows them to adapt to
the ongoing changes in the journalism field. However, these institutions operate as
businesses, and their small size and limited budgets influence such developments.

It must be noted that while most literature on JMC education focuses on curri-
cula, it fails to recognize the circumstantial environments in which the decisions of
designing such curricula were made (Deuze, 2006). As this analysis demonstrates, a
major difference within the environments of the four typologies is faculty diversity.
With faculty mostly comprised of Arabs holding degrees from Arab universities,
faculty members from the Arab-oriented typology have a very one-dimensional
view of how JMC should be taught, which could hinder the quality of education.
First, there is only a handful of programs that offer JMC doctorate degrees in the Arab World. Second, statistics showing low research productivity from Arab universities offer skepticism of the quality of faculty and graduate students (Abouchedid and Abdelnour, 2015; Al-Rashdan, 2009).

Faculty members in the other three typologies; however, have been exposed to different educational institutions around the world either by studying or previously working in those institutions. This diverse exposure to journalism education further expands internal discourse on improving curricula. Having said that, universities from Arab-oriented typology, unlike in the other three typologies, enjoy a more authentic representation of the Arab culture as they teach in the Arabic language, they use Arabic resources, and their faculty are mostly Arab with degrees from universities in the Arab World.

While most of the faculty members from the Gulf-Arab and Private-American typologies are Arab, the faculty members in the Strategic typology are mostly non-Arab. These programs are located in Arab Gulf states, which are rentier states. A rentier state is one in which there is often no relationship between production and income distribution, where ‘reward is not related to risk-taking or the perceived need to work hard or compete’ (Minnis, 2006: 968). Thus, the affluent, oil-rich Gulf states are occupied by social classes that are dependent on foreign products and good. The findings reflect that faculty might be recruited from other nations because locals are either not intrinsically motivated or unqualified to participate in journalism education. Romani (2009) predicted it would take between one to two decades for the local workforce to effectively operate according to an international standard.

Another aspect of faculty diversity is gender inequality. The analysis suggests, the Arab-Oriented, Gulf-Arab and Private-American typologies are male dominated as there is an imbalance between males and females in high-ranking positions. Only in the Strategic typology is this disparity not witnessed. As Arab culture is fully or partially part of the first three typologies, gender roles in the Arab society definitely come into play. Despite social progress in much of the Arab world, there are many stigmas that may impede the development of a woman’s academic achievements in the region. Women might feel pressure to pay more attention to domestic affairs like getting married or raising a family than to get more educated or produce more research to climb the ranks of academia (Dashti and Mesbah, 2015).

Deuze states that a comparative analysis of JMC programs around the world ‘leads to the inevitable conclusion that all over the world journalism education is proliferating and differentiating... The world of journalism education is becoming increasingly complex’ (2006: 22). As this analysis demonstrated, one way to reduce this complexity is by creating typologies. However, it is important to consider the outcomes of these educational typologies in the context of the media environment in the Arab world, where challenges like press freedoms, censorship, ideology, and conflicts of interest are prevalent (Self, 2015). Ibrahim Abusharif, an instructor at NWQ, writes:

*As educators, our task is to teach, offer direction and give context to the profession, but in the end that is as far as we can go. These young men and women, when they graduate,*
will take what they have learned and make what they will out of it, whether it is informed by economic realities, family pressures, disillusionment, disappointment, corporate callings of public relations, activism or advocacy—or move to another field completely (Abusharif, 2014: 203)

Recent studies have looked at how journalists operate in the post Arab Spring era. Pintak and Ginges describe Arab journalists as carrying a sense of ‘responsibility to the people they serve’ (2012: 440). Likewise, O’Boyle and Knowlton (2015) found that while journalism students from Ireland and Jordan shared similar academic experiences, Jordanians showed more interest in utilizing the profession for social and political change. While this study explored JMC education structures in the Arab World, future research should demonstrate how the outcomes of such structures figure in the current professional field of journalism across the Arab World.

**Limitations and future study**

This study explored websites of JMC programs in its objective to create typologies. One main limitation is the fact that websites may not include up to date information. Even though, this study’s objective is to provide an overview of JMC programs in the Arab World, the sample of 10 universities from five countries is another limitation. Future research should analyze universities from more Arab countries, including ones ruled by different sects of Islam, like Oman and Yemen, and countries with French influences like Lebanon and Morocco.

**Declaration of conflicting interests**

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

**Funding**

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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