Emotional Management in Journalism and Communication Studies

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Summary

Communication professionals are experiencing a growing level of exposure to traumatic events as a result of their involvement in the coverage of various tragedies, including accidents, climatic disasters, rights violations, and acts of terrorism. However, it is worth noting that journalism and communication university courses often lack comprehensive instruction on effectively managing emotional challenges, anxiety, trauma, self-care, and the prevention of vicarious trauma. The objective of this study is to assess the inclusion of emotional management within the curricula of Journalism and Communication programmes offered by two universities in Catalonia, namely the University of

Barcelona and the Autonomous University of Barcelona. In order to accomplish this objective, a series of semi-structured interviews were carried out with a total of twelve (12) professors who specialise in the fields of Journalism and Communication. Additionally, a thorough analysis was conducted on a set of 97 study plan guides. The results indicate that none of the participants in the interviews possess knowledge regarding any existing training programmes focused on emotional management. Furthermore, they unanimously agree on the importance of implementing such courses. The study plans did not include any subjects that were specifically dedicated to the topic of emotional management. This study presents a set of strategies aimed at creating a cross-disciplinary teaching-learning model that offers a comprehensive educational experience for students. This entails integrating precise subject matter on the previously mentioned topics, fostering critical contemplation and discourse regarding emotions within the educational setting, and advocating for ethical and sound professional behaviours.

Keywords: Emotional Management; Journalism; Communication; University.

Abstract

Communication professionals are experiencing a growing level of exposure to traumatic events as a result of their involvement in the coverage of various tragedies, including accidents, climatic disasters, rights violations, and acts of terrorism. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that journalism and communication university courses lack comprehensive instruction for students in effectively addressing emotional matters, anxiety, trauma, self-care, and the mitigation of vicarious trauma. The primary objective of this study is to ascertain the extent to which emotional management is incorporated into the curricula of Journalism and Communication programmes offered at two universities in Catalonia, namely the University of Barcelona and the Autonomous University of Barcelona. In order to accomplish this objective, a series of semi-structured interviews were administered to a total of twelve (12) professors who specialise in the fields of Journalism and Communication. Additionally, a thorough analysis was conducted on a set of 97 study plan guides. The results of the study indicate that none of the participants were found to possess knowledge regarding any existing training programmes focused on emotional management. Furthermore, all interviewees expressed agreement on the importance of implementing such courses. The study plans did not include any subjects that specifically addressed the topic of emotional management. This study presents a set of strategies aimed at establishing a cross-disciplinary teaching-learning model that offers a comprehensive educational experience for students. This entails integrating precise subject matter on the previously mentioned subjects, fostering critical contemplation and discourse regarding emotions within the educational setting, and advocating for ethical and sound professional conduct.

Keywords: Emotional Management; Journalism; Communication; University.

Introduction

The investigation of emotion in journalism and media studies has traditionally focused on cultural perspectives, the impact of media, and the portrayal of emotions through visual means. However, there has been a notable shift in perspective in recent times, as journalists have encountered a heightened level of exposure to traumatic occurrences while reporting on various calamities such as accidents, climatic disasters, pandemics, rights violations, and acts of terrorism. The aforementioned exposure has the potential to have a negative impact on the emotional well-being of journalists, resulting in the development of anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and various other psychological conditions (Figley, 1995).

Within this particular framework, scholarly literature places significant emphasis on the significance of emotions within the realm of journalistic practise, as well as their impact on both the professional and personal aspects of journalists' lives (Clay, 2020; Hassan, 2020; Jukes, 2020; Kotišová, 2019; Sánchez Laws, 2020; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020; Zou, 2020). Numerous studies have demonstrated that journalists frequently function within similarly demanding contexts as emergency personnel, including police officers, firefighters, ambulance crews, and emergency physicians (Bos et al., 2004). However, journalists generally possess limited formal training in effectively managing these tense and potentially distressing circumstances.

Previous studies have examined the techniques employed by journalists to regulate their emotions within their professional context (Feinstein, Osmann, & Patel, 2018; Hughes et al., 2021; Miller & Lewis, 2022). Emotions, traditionally regarded as personal affairs detached from public dialogue, have garnered attention in contemporary research (Kotišová, 2019; Massé, 2011) and initiatives aimed at trauma prevention training (Brayne, 2009), highlighting their significance in the lives of journalists. As stated by Beckett (2015), contemporary media landscapes, characterised by their dynamic content cycles, foster a greater inclination towards personal and interactive journalistic approaches. However, various studies conducted globally suggest that journalists may experience a decline in their emotional well-being due to their exposure to stressful and traumatic incidents. In accordance with this, the study conducted by Smith, Drevo, and Newman (2018) examined the various factors that contribute to the development of post-

traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among journalists who regularly cover traumatic news events and encounter situations characterised by high levels of threat and severe injuries. This encompasses the recurrent exposure to distressing details, which is commonly referred to as 'vicarious trauma'. In an investigation conducted by Smith et al. (2018), it was observed that journalists who heavily relied on avoidant emotional coping strategies, such as denial or distraction, demonstrated an increased manifestation of symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Some scholars argue that journalism is becoming increasingly emotive as a result of changes in the media landscape and evolving audience demands (Beckett, 2015; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020). It has been proposed that the utilisation of technological advancements, such as immersive journalism, has the potential to enhance empathy among individuals (Hassan, 2020; Sánchez Laws, 2020). However, it is also argued that these advancements may simultaneously heighten emotional susceptibilities for journalists. Extensive research has been conducted to thoroughly investigate the emotional pressures experienced by journalists and the subsequent effects on their mental health. In a recent study conducted by Miller and Lewis (2022), it was observed that female broadcasters employed at local television stations in the United States experienced higher levels of emotional distress and were subjected to a greater degree of harassment compared to their male colleagues.

These factors were found to have a significant impact on the mental well-being of female broadcasters. The authors Hughes et al. (2021), emphasised the importance of professional identity and advocacy as strategies for alleviating job-related stress in the field of journalism. The Journalism and Trauma Handbook (2009), published by the Dart Centre, provides practical guidance for journalists who are tasked with reporting on traumatic events, with the objective of minimising the likelihood of experiencing emotional distress. According to Feinstein et al. (2018), the authors observed symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among frontline journalists, suggesting an increased susceptibility to the disorder within this population. In the study conducted by Massé (2011), an exploration was undertaken regarding the ethical and emotional dilemmas associated with trauma journalism, as well as the potential consequences it may have on the mental well-being of journalists.

However, it is worth noting that a significant focus in journalism and communication courses is often placed on technical aspects, which can result in the neglect of holistic student development, particularly in regards to emotional well-being and the prevention of vicarious trauma. Vicarious trauma refers to the psychological impact experienced as a result of being exposed to the traumatic experiences of others, such as when individuals are involved in reporting on events that involve violence or distressing circumstances (McCann & Pearlman, 1990).

One additional factor to take into account is that, due to its inherent link to contemporary events, educational institutions have consistently faced challenges in staying updated with the rapidly changing trends in the field (Mensing, 2013). Within the context of this continuous quest for significance, there exists a clear dichotomy in the discourse, with some individuals advocating for pragmatic instruction while others support a more abstract and conceptual methodology (Mellado, 2010). However, neither perspective has assessed the potential impact of emotional management on curriculum design and conceptualization.

The curricula for journalism degrees should be designed to address the specific training requirements of the industry and the complexities of the communication landscape (Calvo & Cervi, 2017). Additionally, it is important for these curricula to incorporate research that emphasises the importance of emotional management in journalistic endeavours and, consequently, in the education of aspiring journalists. By integrating this emotional aspect, it is possible to provide future journalists with valuable resources that can greatly enhance their psycho-emotional well-being. These resources would encompass both remedial and preventive measures specifically designed to address the unique challenges faced by journalists in the modern era. According to Scolari (2012, 2013), it can be argued that media ecology plays a significant role in shaping the development of novel environments, subsequently exerting a direct impact on individuals utilising information and communication technologies. The discernibility of emotional management's influence and its extensive impact on news production and dissemination is a plausible proposition.

In light of the dynamic nature of the contemporary professional environment, particularly within the field of journalism, it is crucial to reevaluate the significance of

emotions for individuals who will inevitably encounter narratives, images, and situations that are infused with unforeseen emotional intensity. Afterwards, it is necessary for individuals to formally document, analyse, and distribute this data in a manner that is both expertly executed and impartial. In agreement with these opinions, Salaverría (2016) emphasises the necessity of reimagining academic programmes to adapt to evolving professional requirements while considering the unique characteristics of the communicative vironment. This observation is consistent with Wahl-Jørgensen's (2020) assertion that there has been a noticeable trend towards embracing the emotional aspect in the field of journalism studies.

Within the framework of this research, it is recognised that journalistic practice requires practitioners to possess an ethical awareness. The cultivation of such awareness is primarily fostered within educational institutions. However, it is important to note that this concept should not be mistakenly equated with, nor positioned in opposition to, proficiency in emotional regulation.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the inclusion of emotional management in the journalism and communication curricula of two Catalan universities. Based on the present analysis, the viewpoints of twelve (12) professors were taken into account in conjunction with an evaluation of the study curricula. Subsequent recommendations were offered to promote the comprehensive development of students, emphasising the importance of collaborative curriculum design that integrates emotional regulation.

Literature Review

Throughout history, journalists have been recognised and documented as impartial observers whose primary duty is to provide an unbiased account of political, social, and economic occurrences (Ojala, 2021). Nevertheless, a number of scholars, including Pantti (2019), Birks (2021), and Zelizer, Boczkowski, and Anderson (2021), have expressed scepticism regarding the widely accepted notion of journalistic objectivity. They contend that emotions have consistently influenced journalistic practices, leading them to argue that objectivity in journalism is merely a deceptive construct. As noted by Wahl-Jorgensen (2020), there is evidence to support the idea

that emotions play a substantial role in the editorial decision-making process within journalism, particularly in the selection of news stories for prominent placement on the front page. The author additionally posited that narratives infused with emotional content possess a heightened capacity to captivate and involve readers in comparison to accounts that maintain a more objective stance.

There has been a notable level of scholarly interest surrounding the incorporation of emotions and sentiments in the practise of dynamic journalism. Orben (2020) and Lünenborg and Medeiros (2021) have underscored the importance of utilising emotional narratives within the field of journalism. There is a prevailing belief that narratives that elicit emotional responses, such as those centred around human-interest stories, instances of injustice, oppression, terrorism, and violence, possess the ability to forge a deeper connection with viewers, consequently rendering them more memorable and relatable. The occurrence of these events and their subsequent media coverage possess the capacity to enhance audience involvement. Nevertheless, they also give rise to noteworthy apprehensions regarding the intricate balance between genuine narrative and sensationalism.
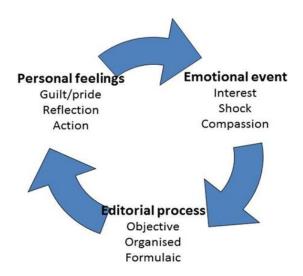

Diagram 1: The daily cycle of newsroom sensitivity

Source: Beckett (2015)

The diagram provides a visual representation of the complex interplay between individual emotions and established protocols within a newsroom setting. The process commences with a "affective event," which encompasses emotions such as curiosity, astonishment, or empathy. This event subsequently triggers a "editorial

process" that is characterised by objectivity, a well-organized structure, and a systematic approach. The implementation of this methodical process is likely to evoke "subjective emotions" among the individuals comprising the newsroom team. These affective states, characterised by sentiments of regret or contentment, self-reflection, or subsequent actions, can be witnessed across diverse contexts.

The aforementioned emotions possess the capacity to influence the perception of forthcoming emotional occurrences, as well as their portrayal in the media. This phenomenon underscores the continuous and interactive nature of the connection between the personal and professional dimensions of journalism. Furthermore, it suggests that despite the presence of objective editorial guidelines, the dissemination of news is significantly influenced by individual emotions and reflections. This study emphasises the importance of news professionals having self-awareness and striking a careful balance between their personal emotions and journalistic principles.

According to Wahl-Jorgensen (2020), the study highlights the importance of emotions in journalism and communication studies. It is widely acknowledged that the role of emotions holds great significance in these fields. The individual proceeded to assert that within the field of journalism, practitioners such as journalists, communicators, and other media professionals often encounter emotionally charged circumstances and subjects that possess the capacity to impact not only their professional conduct but also their personal welfare. In a separate study conducted by Weitzman and Bailey (2019), the domains of journalism and communication have shown considerable interest in the complex and multifaceted nature of emotional management. This aspect has garnered substantial attention from both researchers and media organisations in recent years.

Coddington, Lewis, and Belair-Gagnon (2021) argue that the interplay of emotion within the field of journalism gives rise to a multifaceted and intricate phenomenon. This phenomenon encompasses not only the emotions experienced by the audience but also the emotions felt by journalists and communicators themselves. The authors further asserted that a narrative incorporating a substantial degree of emotional content possesses the ability to exert a profound impact on the individuals comprising the audience. Moreover, it was contended by the authors that these

narratives possess the capacity to evoke a diverse range of emotional reactions among their recipients, encompassing sentiments such as empathy, anger, sadness, or joy. However, Baym (2017) introduced a significant argument in his influential study, asserting the significance of acknowledging emotions in journalism. It is crucial to recognise that journalists and communicators are not impartial observers devoid of emotions. Instead, they are individuals who possess their own emotional reactions to the narratives they report on. This point should be considered essential.

In a similar vein, the scholarly works of Hopper and Huxford (2017) and Bossio and Holton (2021) have examined the significance of emotional regulation in the field of journalism. These studies emphasise the criticality of journalist's ability to effectively manage the interplay between their personal emotions and professional responsibilities. The ability to strike a delicate equilibrium in this regard is deemed essential for journalistic success. Robinson and Culver (2019) substantiated the assertions put forth by Hopper and Huxford (2017) as well as Bossio and Holton (2021), contending that the inclusion of emotional elements in reporting can enhance its profundity and genuineness. However, it can also pose challenges to maintaining impartiality and objectivity. Scholars have also contended that the field of journalism has experienced substantial paradigmatic transformations throughout its evolution.

These transformations encompass a range of subsidiary shifts in its operational dimensions as well as the educational requirements that are essential for its professional application. Thus, it can be deduced that the correlation between emotional encounters, distressing incidents, and journalistic pursuits is a subject that has garnered considerable scholarly attention and has emerged as a prominent area of academic concentration. The discourse additionally asserts that journalism has historically been examined and interpreted through the lenses of cultural influences, media effects, and visual representation. Nevertheless, the paradigm shift has resulted in the emergence of the contemporary perspective, which has evolved to prioritise the emotional ramifications that are intrinsic to the occupation.

Feelings, regarded as a subconstruct of emotions based on numerous studies, hold significant importance within the domains of journalism and communication studies (Oga-Baldwin, 2019). According to their findings, journalists, editors, and

other media practitioners often confront complex subject matters and situations that can potentially impact both their professional and personal spheres. Dubovyk et al. (2020) assert that emotional intelligence is a subject of intricate nature and diverse dimensions, which has garnered significant attention in contemporary research across various disciplines, notably within the realm of journalism and communication. The proponents further contended that within the realm of journalism and communication, the significance of emotions extends beyond the audience's sentiments, encompassing the emotions experienced by journalists and communicators themselves. It is imperative to consider, nonetheless, that journalists and other communicators are not devoid of emotions but rather individuals who experience emotional responses to the stories they report on.

According to Kotiová's (2019) study, achieving a harmonious balance between one's personal emotions and one's professional obligations is a crucial aspect of emotional regulation in the field of journalism. Furthermore, he contended that the possession of this ability is imperative for journalists to achieve success. The inclusion of emotional expression in reporting has the potential to enhance its authenticity and depth. However, it also presents a significant obstacle to maintaining objectivity. The presence of this duality has engendered extensive scholarly investigation and discourse. The field of journalism has undergone substantial transformations throughout its history. As a result of these advancements, there have been substantial modifications to both the operational and educational prerequisites for its implementation.

The discourse reveals that scholars have displayed a notable level of engagement and achieved significant advancements in their understanding of the connections between emotional experiences, traumatic occurrences, and journalistic endeavours. Scholarly examinations and analyses of journalism's historical trajectory have predominantly focused on cultural influences, the impact of media, and the representation of media. The current evolving viewpoint places increased significance on the individual ramifications associated with working in the respective field. The current perspective represents a substantial departure from the preceding viewpoint. The objective of this literature review is to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the

existing discourse surrounding emotional management in journalism, with the intention of gaining a deeper comprehension of its importance and potential ramifications for journalism education.

From the literature review it can be deduced that within the continuously evolving domain of journalism and communication studies, the aspect of emotional regulation among journalists and communicators remains insufficiently investigated. A considerable body of research exists on the ethics, methodologies, and technologies employed in journalism, as well as the influence of communication on societal dynamics. However, limited knowledge is available regarding the mental and physical well-being of individuals engaged in the production and dissemination of these messages. According to numerous sources, journalists are experiencing heightened levels of pressure as a result of the 24-hour news cycle and the widespread availability of digital platforms. It is apparent that the perspectives of individuals who directly witness traumatic events, despite occupying a frontline position, are seldom taken into account within academic discourse.

Despite the initiation of pioneering research, there remains a notable deficiency in our comprehensive comprehension of emotional regulation in high-pressure, real-time circumstances. Furthermore, the importance of emotionally intelligent journalism extends beyond individual well-being to encompass broader societal concerns, and its presence in academic literature is limited or non-existent. Hence, the present study aims to address the aforementioned gap in the existing body of literature.

Method

The research was conducted within the framework of qualitative methodology. The chosen design methodology is constructivism, which seeks to investigate whether the recently implemented educational policies for communication degrees acknowledge the inclusion of emotional management, vicarious trauma, and self-care as integral elements in the curriculum. This objective was primarily accomplished by examining the presence or absence of these components in the course materials. The following section provides a comprehensive account of the findings obtained during the initial two stages of the project.

Population and Sample

A preliminary exploratory phase was conducted, which consisted of semi-structured interviews with twelve professors from two public universities in Catalonia: the University of Barcelona and the Autonomous University of Barcelona. The objective of conducting these interviews was to ascertain the specific needs and thoroughly evaluate prospective training solutions. The interviews conducted during the period of August to September 2022 were translated and adapted to ensure their comprehensibility, accessibility, and ease of understanding for the participants involved in the study.

Instrument

In accordance with Valles Martínez (2002), the interview design underwent several stages prior to the finalisation of the guidelines, the determination of the institutions, and the selection of the interviewees. The study employed a set of 13 semi-structured questions to elicit participants' personal evaluations pertaining to a range of topics, with a particular focus on emotional management.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

In accordance with the recommendations put forth by Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006), a sample was chosen from a homogeneous population that possessed familiarity with the subject matter of the study. This implies that a sample size of only six interviews would be adequate to attain information saturation. As a result, a total of six (6) participants were selected from the University of Barcelona, and an additional six (6) participants were chosen from the Autonomous University of Barcelona. During the subsequent phase of description, a comprehensive examination and evaluation of 97 instructional manuals was undertaken. These teaching guides were selected from the curriculum of the Bachelor's Degrees in Journalism at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (51 guides) and the Bachelor's Degree in Communication and Cultural Industries at the University of Barcelona (46 guides). The curriculum encompassed mandatory courses, elective courses, and practical training experiences and culminated in the completion of final degree projects.

The data was analysed in two primary stages. The initial stage of the study involved an exploratory approach, primarily aimed at establishing analysis categories. Subsequently, the second phase of the research focused on conducting a content analysis of both the interviews and guides. The courses' attributes, including competencies, objectives, and thematic areas, were carefully examined from both a quantitative and qualitative methodological perspective. Additionally, attention was paid to the epistemological, theoretical, and methodological criteria, as well as the definition of the study object (syllabus, bibliography). Considerable attention was also devoted to subjects pertaining to proactive instruction, encompassing emotional regulation, anxiety management, trauma response, self-preservation, and the mitigation of vicarious trauma. The study focused on examining the presence or absence of content pertaining to emotional management and vicarious trauma prevention. Additionally, the study aimed to highlight trends in curriculum design.

The selected approach for analysing the interviews involved the utilisation of open coding. The approach employed in this study involves the classification of linguistic expressions within the text according to their semantic units, which can be either individual words or sequences. Subsequently, concepts and annotations are assigned to these expressions through a process known as coding. According to Flick (2012), it is not necessary to employ this technique across the entirety of the text; targeting specific sections or passages may be adequate. Therefore, the identification and refinement of concepts were conducted by considering their distinct properties and dimensions.

The coding method employed in this study was implemented in compliance with the Law on Personal Data Protection and Guarantee of Digital Rights (BOE, no. 294, 06 December 2018). Additionally, the decision to preserve the anonymity of the teachers was made based on their explicit request. The interviewee 1 (E1, E2).

Results and Discussion

Upon examining the curricula of both universities, it becomes apparent that emotional management is a neglected aspect. This conclusion is drawn from an assessment of the instructional methods employed, the content delivered, and the lack of workshops and training opportunities dedicated to emotional management.

Upon careful examination of the study plans and analysis of the twelve interviews, a number of psycho-emotional needs were identified, specifically focusing on anxiety, self-care, and the mitigation of vicarious trauma. In addition, it was found that 82% of the participants in the interviews expressed a lack of awareness regarding the existence of courses specifically focused on this subject area. Furthermore, a significant majority of 95% agreed on the importance of making progress in the collaborative development of an instructional model. 50% of the participants in the interview agreed that the proposed model should take a cross-curricular approach.

Furthermore, it was agreed that the model should prioritise the development of emotional management skills and the prevention of vicarious trauma. Interestingly, it was observed that all 12 interviewees displayed a lack of awareness regarding any specific courses within their respective academic programmes that directly address the teaching of psychosocial tools. These tools are designed to equip students with the necessary skills to effectively manage their emotions in various high-stress situations, including emergencies, accidents, and traumatic events such as acts of violence or ongoing physical abuse. As an outlier, Interviewee 3 (E3) did mention a fellow professor who focuses specifically on the "mental health and emotions of journalists". However, it was underscored that this undertaking is a solitary endeavour and lacks recognition within the formal curriculum of the institution.

In contrast, all of the interviewees expressed a unanimous belief that the incorporation of content and skills pertaining to the recognition and management of these emotions could potentially augment the process of learning. For interviewee 1, (E1): "I'm unsure if we can prevent traumas, but we might at least equip individuals with tools to foresee them" (...) Certainly, with bolstered self-assurance, tools would be offered to enhance their emotional well-being."

At the pedagogical and methodological level, there is a divergence of opinions among the interviewed individuals. A quarter of individuals support the utilisation of Case Studies as a potential approach to enhance the development of these skills. Similarly, another 25% endorse Project-based Learning as a suitable framework for imparting this knowledge, while an additional 25% suggest that Problem-based Learning may be a more effective method. When questioned regarding strategies for

incorporating emotional management into the curriculum, half of the participants expressed the belief that it should be integrated through cross-disciplinary projects.

Additionally, 33% of respondents emphasised the importance of incorporating this knowledge and skillset across different modules within the degree programme. A majority of respondents, specifically 58.3%, expressed agreement with the notion that Anxiety should be given priority as an emotional component that requires attention within classroom settings. This was followed by Depression, Vicarious Trauma, and Self-care. The three factors, namely Hyperactivity, Apathy, and Generational Disinterest, each received an equal percentage of 8.3% in the study.

In relation to the subject matter deemed crucial by professors for cultivating effective emotional management within the fields of journalism and communication studies, a range of recommendations were put forth. The ability to effectively manage stress is of utmost importance for Interviewee 4 (E4), especially for individuals working as freelancers within a highly unpredictable industry. E6, meanwhile, emphasised the need to address "traumatic news management" so students might effectively handle their "engagement with sensitive information". In this line, E10 advocates for "techniques/tools to discern risk scenarios and emotionally navigate them". E11 alludes to the necessity of utilising "practical scenarios wherein students might employ tools related to empathy, managing tension, stress, and the like."

Conversely, Interviewee 5, E;5 underscores the urgency of introducing subjects that explore "human behaviour, complemented by psychological principles." For E12, the focus should shift towards "empathy, active listening, critical analysis, collaboration, and managing disappointment."

A notable proportion of 75% of respondents held the view that integrating emotional regulation into the field of journalism and communication studies could potentially mitigate the occurrence of compassion fatigue, a problem that is becoming more widespread among journalists.

In this sense, and based on the Study Guides, it is possible to discern an inclination to nurture skills primarily related to promoting emotional intelligence, based on the following tenets:

- Skills to act with ethical integrity, honouring fundamental rights and obligations, celebrating diversity, and upholding democratic values.

- Skills to communicate in a non-sexist and non-discriminatory use of language.

- Ability to contextualise different journalistic trends.

- Competences to identify the social, economic and environmental repercussions of academia-related tasks

- Ability to identify predominant gender/sex-based biases and discrimination within society.

However, the expressed objective outlined in the competencies is scarcely apparent in the substance of the subjects. Within this particular context, the individuals being interviewed demonstrate their recognition of this deficiency and articulate mounting apprehensions regarding the incorporation of knowledge and abilities pertaining to the comprehension and regulation of said emotions. These competencies have the potential to enhance the aptitude of forthcoming professionals.

Initially, an analysis was conducted on content that centres around the management of emotions and the practise of self-care. The Bachelor's Degree programme in Journalism at the Autonomous University of Barcelona encompasses various modules that address relevant subjects, such as "Journalism and Health," "Emotional Communication," and "Communication and Advertising in Health." The curriculum of the Degree in Communication and Cultural Industries at the University of Barcelona includes courses such as "Emotional Communication and Persuasion" and "Social Psychology of Communication." In both instances, it is apparent that there is a notable focus on the importance of education in the realms of emotional regulation and self-care.

Furthermore, an evaluation was conducted regarding the incorporation of material pertaining to the prevention of vicarious trauma. The Journalism programme at the Autonomous University of Barcelona includes a specialised module known as "Journalism and Trauma." This focuses on the prevention of vicarious trauma and the preparation of emerging professionals to effectively navigate emotionally charged situations. In contrast, it was found that the Degree in Communication and Cultural

Industries at the University of Barcelona does not include a dedicated module on this topic. However, peripheral discussions on this subject can be found in certain modules.

The teaching guides provided by both universities exhibit a notable lack of focus on the inclusion of emotional management and vicarious trauma prevention content within the modules of the Journalism and Communication Bachelor's Degree programme. Among the 97 teaching guides that were examined, only a small number addressed the topics of journalistic ethics, professional integrity, and the societal responsibility of journalism. These aspects may partially encompass elements pertaining to the regulation of emotions and the mitigation of vicarious trauma. However, these subjects are not commonly stated explicitly in the objectives or syllabi of the courses, nor are they emphasised in the anticipated competencies that students are expected to cultivate during their educational journey.

Consequently, the inclusion of educational content pertaining to emotional management and the prevention of vicarious trauma appears to be significantly lacking in the curriculum of both degree programmes. This void provides a valuable opportunity to improve the training programmes for aspiring journalists and communicators. Proficiency in this field necessitates the acquisition of essential skills in emotional management and the prevention of vicarious trauma. In addition, the integration of these disciplines into the design of educational curricula has the potential to mitigate the emergence of burnout syndrome, a pervasive issue within the fields of journalism and communication. Additionally, it has the potential to cultivate a culture that places a high value on the provision of care and the promotion of emotional well-being within the work environments of these professionals.

The noteworthy aspects of this study include the definition of study objectives and the representation of topics on preventive training in the teaching guides for Journalism at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and Communication and Cultural Industries at the University of Barcelona. The subject outlines typically emphasise both the theoretical and practical aspects of communication, content creation, and journalism. The areas covered encompass a wide range of subjects,

including media history, journalistic ethics and deontology, audiovisual storytelling, advertising, corporate communications, and digital media content creation, among others.

In relation to the content of preventive training, it is apparent that a significant portion of instructional materials do not explicitly include topics pertaining to emotional regulation, anxiety management, trauma, self-care, or prevention of vicarious trauma. However, certain elective modules do address topics pertaining to mental health and personal well-being, such as "Communication and Health" or "Communication, Gender, and Emotions". Furthermore, audiovisual content creation occasionally alludes to care ethics, while the importance of empathy in journalistic endeavours is also acknowledged.

The inclusion of preventive training content in teaching guides is limited and lacks a specific focus on emotional management and the prevention of vicarious trauma. There is an observable trend towards the inclusion of gender, human rights, and cultural diversity topics in both compulsory and elective subjects. This suggests a growing dedication to tackling urgent societal issues within the educational path of students pursuing Journalism and Communication.

It is important to mention that, when examining the sections that specifically discuss subject matter within the modules, it was found that out of the 97 guides that were assessed, only 7 explicitly reference emotional management as a subject of study. In a similar vein, it is worth noting that only one guide made mention of anxiety as a subject matter, while a mere two guides acknowledged content pertaining to the management of trauma. Furthermore, it is worth noting that none of the aforementioned programmes explicitly tackle the issue of preventing vicarious trauma. Moreover, only a single programme makes mention of content pertaining to self-care.

In relation to the subject matter of preventive training, it is apparent that there is a growing inclination towards the incorporation of these topics within educational curricula. Both universities have identified topics such as emotional management, anxiety, and self-care. However, the prevention of trauma and vicarious trauma is given relatively less attention.

Table. Presence of categories according to section of the guide.

Competences, objectives and thematic areas:	Analysis of Journalistic Content (UAB)
	Audiovisual Communication (UB)
	Communication Cabinets (UAB)
	Investigative Journalism (UB)
	Journalistic Writing (UAB)
	Communication Theory (UB)
Epistemological, theoretical and methodological criteria:	Corporate Communication (UB)
	Communication Ethics and Deontology (UB)
	Fundamentals of Journalism (UAB)
	History of Journalism (UB)
	Communication Research (UB)
	Public Opinion and Political Communication (UAB)
Definition of the object of study (syllabus, bibliography):	Communication and Gender (UB)
	Cultural Studies (UB)
	Media and Democracy (UAB)
	Journalism and the Information Society (UB)
	Audiovisual Production (UAB)
	Semiotics and Discourse Analysis (UB)
Preventive training (emotional management, anxiety, trauma, self-care; vicarious trauma prevention):	Communication and Health (UB)
	Communication and Gender Violence (UAB)
	Intercultural Communication (UB)
	Communication and Disability (UB)
	Journalism and Human Rights (UAB)
	Theory and Practice of Peace Journalism (UB)

The analysis reveals a discernible pattern wherein these topics exhibit greater prevalence in elective courses and culminating degree projects, while their presence diminishes in mandatory and applied courses. Moreover, these disciplines are more prominently emphasised in modules pertaining to mental health, journalism, and communication in times of crises and conflicts, as well as the intricate relationship between journalism and society.

Conversely, it should be noted that the incorporation of the aforementioned subjects is currently in its early phases. However, once implemented, they are commonly found in modules that are interconnected with the principles of journalistic ethics and deontology in both educational and professional establishments. In the case of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, subjects like "Investigative Journalism" and "War Journalism" delve into emotional management. Contrastingly, at the University of Barcelona, this topic is primarily tackled in "Ethics and Deontology of Journalism".

Regarding vicarious trauma prevention, the Autonomous University of Barcelona addresses this in "War Journalism". The University of Barcelona, meanwhile, reserves this for "Ethics and Deontology of Journalism".

Upon scrutinising the bibliography sections, references to various authors and their works pertaining to the topics of emotional management, self-care, and vicarious trauma prevention were discovered. In general, there are references to the scientific literature regarding these subjects, although their representation is significantly overshadowed by conventional communication and journalism papers.

In relation to trends in curriculum design, both degree programmes demonstrate an emphasis on the development of emotional skills and the prevention of vicarious trauma.

However, it should be noted that the Bachelor's Degree in Journalism offered by the Autonomous University of Barcelona places a greater emphasis on these subjects. This is evident through the inclusion of a specialised module specifically focused on preventing vicarious trauma, as well as the incorporation of various courses that revolve around emotional management and self-care. In contrast, it should be noted that the Degree in Communication and Cultural Industries offered by the University of Barcelona does not include a dedicated module focused on the prevention of vicarious trauma, despite addressing related topics.

In brief, the cultivation of emotional competencies and the prevention of vicarious trauma continue to be crucial in equipping future communication professionals. The analysed curricula demonstrate a clear preference for these subjects, although the extent and scope of their inclusion differ. The Bachelor's Degree

in Journalism at the Autonomous University of Barcelona provides a more prominent and comprehensive framework for addressing emotional management and preventing vicarious trauma, in contrast to the Degree in Communication and Cultural Industries offered by the University of Barcelona.

Based on the analysis and insights provided by educators during the interviews conducted in August-September 2022, a number of recommendations for curriculum improvement can be identified, focusing on the aforementioned topic.

1. It is imperative for universities to provide comprehensive and detailed courses that specifically focus on emotional management and the prevention of vicarious trauma. By implementing this approach, students will have the opportunity to cultivate proficiencies and aptitudes pertaining to emotional regulation and the mitigation of vicarious trauma.

2. The incorporation of didactic units or modules into preexisting courses enables the integration of instructional materials pertaining to these specific topics. An instance of incorporating vicarious trauma prevention into investigative journalism could be observed within the curriculum of the Investigative Journalism course.

3. Encouraging the integration of social-emotional skills and competencies training: The curriculum can incorporate training sessions focused on developing social-emotional skills and competencies, such as empathy, resilience, and emotional intelligence. By implementing this approach, there will be an enhancement in the emotional well-being of students as well as an improvement in their capacity to effectively manage and navigate through traumatic circumstances.

4. Promoting the integration of experiential and introspective learning opportunities within the educational setting, such as group dynamics, case studies, and collaborative endeavours, among other pedagogical approaches Training faculty in emotional management and vicarious trauma prevention is crucial to ensuring their ability to effectively support and guide students.

5. Training sessions and workshops can be organised for educators with the aim of enhancing their proficiency in addressing these matters. Forming

collaborations with organisations specialising in emotional wellness and trauma prevention:

6. Collaborative partnerships can be established with organisations that have expertise in emotional wellness and trauma prevention, thereby providing students with access to specialised resources and tools in these areas. By adopting this approach, students can potentially benefit from more comprehensive and enhanced educational experiences.

Conclusions

Upon an in-depth review of the curricula and interviews, it becomes apparent that there is a notable absence of subjects pertaining to emotional management. Specifically, topics such as anxiety, trauma, and vicarious trauma are not adequately addressed. Furthermore, ethical considerations such as respect for confidentiality and sources are discussed, but they do not encompass the aforementioned issues. Professors from both academic institutions acknowledge that a significant number of journalists encounter compassion fatigue as a result of insufficient preventative training. Both parties agree that addressing emotional management should be done in a comprehensive manner. They also assert that jointly creating a teaching-learning model will be the most efficient approach to educating both educators and learners.

The document review suggests that journalism and communication training programmes generally do not explicitly address the topic of emotional management. However, a multitude of programmes incorporate subjects pertaining to ethics and social responsibility, thereby providing a potential framework for the integration of material concerning emotional management. The findings of the study suggest a compelling need for a more inclusive approach to the education of journalism and communication. While it is crucial to attaining proficiency in the technical aspects of the profession, it is equally important to prioritise the emotional well-being of students, considering the pervasive stress and trauma that are inherent in the contemporary journalism and communication industry.

Emphasising the emotional difficulties encountered by journalists on a global scale, including stress, trauma, vicarious trauma, harassment, and emotional violence,

will facilitate institutions in directing their efforts towards developing educational materials that effectively equip upcoming generations with the necessary emotional management skills. This entails possessing the capacity to address these challenges using concrete resources and, if deemed essential, the opportunity to pursue supplementary instruction. The results of this study indicate an urgent requirement for the expeditious implementation of a comprehensive curriculum encompassing subjects such as emotional regulation, anxiety management, trauma awareness, self-care practises, and the mitigation of vicarious trauma.

This study highlights the insufficiency of psycho-emotional resources in promoting emotional well-being within journalism and communication courses. The inclusion of subjects pertaining to emotional regulation and the prevention of vicarious trauma within the educational curriculum is of utmost importance for the overall welfare of aspiring journalists. Furthermore, it will have an impact on the manner in which news is generated and disseminated, thereby influencing the level of professionalism and commitment exhibited by individuals in their chosen field.

This study also introduces a teaching-learning model that examines the manner in which emotional management is addressed in scientific research. This study highlights the importance of recognising and incorporating emotions within socio-spatial dynamics, which encompass movements and relationships. It emphasises the advantages that arise from addressing the identified needs in this context.

Based on conversations with the faculty, it has been determined that emotional regulation is a skill that contributes to the optimal formation of an individual's character. The aforementioned concept functions as a fundamental cornerstone that underpins both skills and dispositions, rendering it indispensable for both established and emerging industry practitioners, given its direct impact on their marketability.

Policy Implication

The study has proposed the following policy implications:

- The study's findings suggest that the lack of emotional management subjects in curricula, despite their clear significance, highlights a pressing requirement for

structured and formal education on this topic. Consequently, the study's results underscore the importance of emotional well-being and establish its equal significance to job performance. It is advisable that journalism and communication programmes incorporate comprehensive modules that encompass emotional management.

- According to the study, many journalists experience compassion fatigue and other emotional problems as a result of inadequate preventative training. The research underscores the necessity for the consistent provision of psycho-emotional support and resources for both students and staff. Journalism and communication professionals encounter distinct emotional obstacles, necessitating the provision of regular counselling sessions, workshops, and support groups by institutions to effectively address these concerns. This encompasses the provision of therapeutic services, resources for enhancing emotional resilience, and platforms for professionals to share experiences and coping strategies.

- The affirmation by institutional leaders regarding the importance of a cross-cutting approach and the development of a collaborative teaching-learning model underscores the significance of collective action and iterative learning. Establish a collective comprising of members from the academic faculty, business community, psychology professionals, and student body, with the purpose of collaboratively engaging in the development and regular assessment of the curriculum. In order to maintain currency with the latest research and optimal approaches pertaining to emotional management within their respective domain, tutors ought to engage in continuous training and workshops. This presents an opportunity for present students to offer valuable input on enhancing course materials and instructional methods

By implementing these policies, educational institutions can provide students and staff with an advantageous opportunity in the highly competitive realm of journalism and communication. It is possible to achieve this by developing both technical and emotional fortitude.

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