Journalism Students' Professional Views in Eight Countries: The Role of Motivations, Education, and Gender

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The global trend toward university-based journalism education has led to a growing scrutiny of students' experiences at university and the extent to which professional views may be shaped there. Three main influences have been identified in the literature: students' preferences for certain news beats, their gender, and students' stage of progression in a journalism program. Typically, however, analyses have focused on only one potential influence within one particular country at a time. Arguing that a comparative approach is needed, this article examines potential influences on journalism students' role perceptions across eight countries. Results suggest that students' motivations, and the amount of time they have spent in a program, play a part in influencing their professional views while gender has little influence.

Keywords: Journalism, education, student, university, role perception, professional views, motivation, gender

Introduction

Continuing efforts at professionalizing journalism around the world have led to a veritable boom in journalism education at universities. Until recently, journalists in many countries learned their skills on the job once they completed secondary education. However, in recent years there has been a clear trend toward university education for journalists in many countries not only in the West, but also increasingly in non-Western countries. This trend toward an "academization" or "graduatization" (Splichal & Sparks, 1994, p. 114) of journalism has led to a slowly growing scrutiny of students' motivations for studying journalism, what happens to students while they are at university, and the extent to which their professional views may be shaped during this experience. A number of reasons and influences for these issues have been suggested and also analyzed empirically in the literature. However, quite often these analyses have been interested in examining only individual influences rather than the variety of influences

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that may exist. In addition, the vast majority of studies of journalism students have been conducted in single-country contexts—only a limited number have attempted to examine these issues across countries. Yet cross-cultural approaches are crucial for finding out whether certain influences are universally applicable or limited to a particular setting (Esser & Hanitzsch, 2012).

In trying to fill this gap in knowledge, this article analyzes the main debates surrounding the influences on journalism students' professional views before empirically testing these against a cross-cultural sample. It identifies three main influences that have been raised in the literature: (1) the role that students' motivations and career desires play, (2) the role that gender may play in influencing professional views, and (3) the effect that journalism schools may have on students' views, as measured by the stage at which students are within a program. We argue that studying these dominant influences on students' professional views is important in order to provide an empirical base that can better inform journalism education worldwide. This article therefore examines a sample of 4,393 journalism students from across eight countries in order to determine the extent to which the influences identified here may actually make a difference in students' professional views. Students were surveyed in the following countries: Australia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States. While we aimed to have as large a variety of media systems as possible included, the selection of countries was based on a convenience sample determined by the academic networks among the collaborating researchers.

Literature Review

As journalism education has become increasingly university-based over the past few decades in most countries, scholars have also become more interested in the conditions in which future journalists are trained. University-based journalism education first emerged in France, Germany, and the United States around the beginning of the 20th century and quickly expanded to China, Australia, and, by the 1930s, into Latin America. Many African countries would follow suit after World War II (Obijiofor & Hanusch, 2011). The existence of university courses in journalism did not necessarily mean such an education would be the main pathway for journalists, with countries such as Australia and Britain holding on to a predominantly apprentice-based system for a long time, and even now continuing a dual approach to journalism training (Deuze, 2006). Nevertheless, there certainly has been a growing trend toward increased university-based education in journalism (Berger, 2007; Hanusch, 2008; Mellado, 2012; Phillips, 2005; Rao, 2009; Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes, & Wilhoit, 2007; Weaver & Willnat, 2012). Scholarly interest in this field is often based upon the basic notion that "journalism training perpetuates or modifies professional practices and molds the perceptions journalists have of the role and function of the media" (Gaunt, 1992, p. 1).

Despite the interest in journalism education models, comparatively little attention has thus far been paid to the way in which journalism students' professional views are molded by their university education. While journalists' professional views have been researched extensively across the globe— including, most recently, in a comparative context (Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Weaver & Willnat, 2012)— journalism students have mostly been studied within their national or regional contexts. The only large-scale comparative project that stands out is one conducted more than 20 years ago, which analyzed first-year students in 22 countries (Splichal & Sparks, 1994). Yet in order to make any assessment of the

comparative influence of a variety of factors that may shape journalism students' professional views, it is crucial to analyze them against a cross-cultural background. This is important because of the sometimes-quite-significant differences between various national contexts. As Nordenstreng (2009) has pointed out in the conclusions to a recent volume about journalism education in 33 European countries, even within a continent such as Europe, "the situation of journalism education seems to be quite specific to each country" (p. 513). Cross-cultural studies can therefore identify the extent to which certain factors may influence students' views across national borders.

Based on an examination of the debates on journalism education over the past 20 years or so, we identify three key issues that need to be tested. These are:

1. The role that students' motivations and career desires play in shaping their professional views.

2. The role that gender plays in shaping students' professional views.

3. The impact that journalism education may have on students' professional views.

These three areas are discussed in more detail herein, leading us to develop a number of hypotheses and research questions for analysis.

Students' Motivations and Career Desires

One important aspect of journalism education relates to students' motivations for studying journalism in the first place and what position they would like to achieve once they graduate. Research has found that while most programs focus on mainstream journalism, far from *all* journalism students want to work in this area. For example, O'Donnell (1999) has pointed out that journalism degrees also prepare students for successful careers in areas such as public relations, marketing and advertising, as well as commercial services. She found that students had quite different career expectations and goals, arguing that "not all those who aspire to work in journalism seek entry-level employment in a newsroom, a general level of competence across a broad range of news gathering and reporting skills, or a lifelong career in journalism" (O'Donnell, 2006, p. 28). Hanna and Sanders' (2007) survey of British journalism students found only 75% of arriving journalism students were sure they wanted to work in journalism, a figure that fell to 53% among students completing their degree. Many of those who want to work in journalism are also interested not in hard news but rather in the softer kinds of journalism.

Splichal and Sparks (1994) found that 51.1% of all 1,820 surveyed students wanted to work in human interest or culture, arts and social science rounds, while only 21.2% were interested in political journalism. An additional 9% wanted to work in sports journalism. When asked about their motives for studying journalism, two-thirds of the students said they did so because they liked journalism as a profession, four out of 10 said they had a talent for writing, and just over one quarter said they would like to travel. Only around one-fifth said they did so because of the chance of changing society, while a mere 4.5% said their decision was based on what they perceived as high salaries in journalism.

These results were replicated in Britain, where less than 30% of surveyed journalism students said they wanted to work in hard news journalism, while more than 40% preferred feature or lifestyle areas (Hanna & Sanders, 2007). Almost 20% wanted to work in sports journalism. Once again, a majority of students enrolled in journalism because they thought it would suit their personality or because it was a desirable, satisfying, or interesting occupation. A love of writing was noted by around 27% as the main reason for wanting to be a journalist. Public service ideals—either expressed more generally or specifically in terms of wanting reform or to change society, campaign, or investigate—were noted by a combined 16%. A recent survey of Nordic journalism students has pointed to a comparatively higher level of interest in public service ideals, with students displaying a mix of practical and idealistic motives, such as wanting to have a varied and lively job with freedom and independence, as well as fighting injustice and working with political issues. Personal motives such as status and pay only played a minor role, leading Hovden, Bjørnsen, Ottosen, Willig, and Zilliacus-Tikkanen (2009) to argue that:

> this points to a generation of journalism students who are motivated to make a difference by working in the picture of the classical fourth estate role of the press, while at the same time being motivated by the pragmatic everyday features of journalism. (p. 154)

As the evidence here indicates, journalism students tend be interested in either producing hard news such as political journalism or being involved in softer kinds of journalism such as lifestyle, human interest, culture, arts and sports. It would seem logical to suggest that this basic professional orientation would also impact students' professional views. Hence, the following hypotheses were posed:

H1.1   *Students whose goal is to work in hard news are more likely to support citizen- and watchdog-oriented roles.*

H1.2   *Students who want to work in soft news are more likely to support consumer-oriented roles.*

Gender Influences on Professional Views

Gender has long been regarded as a potential influence on journalists' professional views and news content. Van Zoonen's (1998) much-cited work on "the gendered nature of journalism" (p. 36) was particularly concerned with differences between men and women along four main issues: (1) the selection of topics (men report hard news while women focus on soft news); (2) story angles (men focus on facts and sensation, while women approach them from backgrounds and effects, as well as compassion); (3) the use of sources (men predominantly report about other men, women focus on women); and (4) ethics (the masculine nature of journalism is detached, while the feminine nature is concerned with audience needs). Van Zoonen (1998) argues that women favor "a more human and involved approach that is seemingly at odds with professional values of objectivity and detachment" and, as a result, they have "a much more fragmented and contradictory professional identity than men" (p. 45). Trends toward more "soft" news have often been seen as related to the increase in female journalists worldwide.

Women are said by some to have particularly different views as regards the issue of objectivity and the watchdog role of journalism. Lumby (1994), for example, argues that there is a very clear distinction between men and women when it comes to reporting. "There is no question that traditional news values split both format and content along traditional masculine and feminine lines. Facts, objectivity and the public sphere belong to the men" (p. 50). Soderlund, Surlin, and Romanow's (1989) analysis of Canadian television news noted that men were much more likely to report hard news stories, while women were relegated to reporting soft or feature news. Similarly, Liebler and Smith's (1997) analysis of policy stories on U.S. television found that women reported only 14% of foreign policy stories while covering roughly half of the stories on social issues. Studies of female journalists in Korea have found that they use more positive reporting styles, place less emphasis on conflict values, use fewer stereotypical references to women, report on a larger number of women's issues and perspectives and, more generally, aim to direct attention to women (Kim & Kim, 2005; Kim & Yoon, 2009; Lim & Uhm, 2005). Other studies have found that female journalists tend to encourage positive news reporting or positive aspects of stories (Craft & Wanta, 2004; Kim & Kim, 2005; Rodgers & Thorson, 2003), which suggests that women are less likely to support a confrontational approach such as that of a "watchdog" of political and economic elites.

Furthermore, studies of journalists and editors in the United States and Israel suggest women journalists are more attuned to audience needs than men (Lavie & Lehman-Wilzig, 2005; Weaver, 1997). Coupled with other evidence discussed here, this would lead us to assume that female journalism students would be more likely to pursue a consumer orientation in journalism versus male students. At the same time, academic studies in this field have often arrived at inconclusive or contradictory results. As Hanitzsch and Hanusch (2012) have pointed out, "there is no consensus over the extent to which gender matters in the process of news production. Evidence is ambiguous and often dependent on whether results are based on journalists' self-declarations or actual content" (p. 258). In their study, they found that men were more likely to pursue a watchdog role, although the effect size was small. With this caution in place, the existing literature does allow us to pose the following two hypotheses in regard to female journalism students' professional views:

H2.1   *Female journalism students are less likely to pursue the watchdog role than male students.*

H2.2   *Female journalism students are more likely to pursue a consumer-oriented role than male students.*

Impact of Journalism Education

A concern for many studies of journalism education has been whether the experience at university has an effect on the way journalism students think about their chosen profession. If one assumes that journalism education plays an important role in the shaping of future journalists' values, attitudes, and beliefs, it would follow that students' professional views would be different at the end of their degree studies versus what they were at the start. Existing studies have shown somewhat-inconclusive results, however. Some indicate that university journalism education has a great influence on students' human values and attitudes (Splichal & Sparks, 1994) and that, although some attitudes regarding professional socialization emerge at an early age, professional socialization is actually a lifelong

process in which the role of a university education is of central importance (Becker, Fruit, & Caudill, 1987; Parsons, 1989; Ronneberger, 1988; Gaunt, 1992; Mensing, 2010). Becker et al. (1987) found that students are remolded by the university, and there exists a significant relationship between U.S. journalism students' college experience and their perspectives about journalism.

Plaisance (2007) examined the value systems and ethical ideologies of journalism students who took a media ethics course and found significant changes in how they ranked key media-related and journalistic values at the beginning of the course compared with at the end. At the same time, he also found significant decreases in students' degrees of idealism and relativism. Wu and Weaver (1998) examined the professional values and attitudes of Chinese journalism students, comparing them with Chinese journalists' worldviews. They found that Chinese students' college experiences are more important than demographic characteristics, although values that students bring to university interact with their educational socialization to produce their professional values. They also found that students held a more moderate view of professional roles than did Chinese journalists.

At the same time, Hanna and Sanders (2007) found that from arrival at the program to completion, undergraduate journalism students in the United Kingdom had stable opinions and ideals and that pre-arrival influences remain—for most of them—the key determinants in what motivated them to become journalists. Bjørnsen, Hovden & Ottosen (2007) also detected that, among Norwegian journalism students, most professional attitudes seemed to stay quite stable from the commencement of studies until early career, although a general decline in professional idealism about journalism is seen after entering the newsroom.

Moreover, several studies have more recently shown that education is just one of the factors that potentially influences journalists' professional views (Wu & Weaver, 1998; Zhu, Weaver, Lo, Chen, & Wu, 1997) and that, in the same way that students can be socialized by a college education in journalism, the university education itself can be directly influenced by economic, political, and cultural-level factors. In fact, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha (2003) believe that "the most powerful influences for journalism education are the factors of the societal sphere or the system including the historical and the cultural background of a country, as well as the media structure with its normative and economic background variables" (pp. 319–320). Weaver (1998) and Shoemaker and Reese (1996) also indicate that societal influences are more important than formal education on media professionalism. In their study of U.S. journalists, Weaver and his team from Indiana University have shown that growing academic education in journalism has so far not led to a homogeneous conception of journalism practices (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986, 1996; Weaver et al., 2007).

Due to the somewhat contradictory findings of existing studies, we decided to pose a research question in order to examine whether students' year of study was in any way related to their professional views.

RQ1:   Do students' professional views change over the course of their degree and, if yes, in which direction?

Methodology

In order to examine the hypotheses and research questions developed against the background of existing literature, this study—which served as a pilot project for a larger global study—inquired into journalism students' professional views at 33 universities in Australia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland, and the United States. The countries and universities selected for this project were determined by the academic networks among the collaborating researchers and the resources available to each one. Within each country, universities from a variety of educational approaches and social demographics were chosen to represent the heterogeneity of their countries' environments. This meant we aimed to include a mix of private and public, regional and metropolitan, as well as large and small universities. Decisions were made to best represent each country's specific educational environment. Following Splichal and Sparks' (1994) approach, journalism students were defined as those enrolled in a journalism degree at public or private universities. Students across various streams of media, such as print, broadcast, or multimedia journalism, were included. Professional technical institutes, which, in some national contexts, may also offer journalism education, were excluded from this study.

In each country, students across the various years of a degree were requested to complete a self-administered questionnaire about a variety of their views on journalism. The questionnaire was originally developed in Spanish and then translated (aided by back-translation) into English, Swiss-German, and Portuguese to be conducted in non-Spanish-speaking countries. During the process of translation, some adjustments were made to ensure locally appropriate terminology was used in its particular context. Great care was taken to preserve equivalence in the constructs that were applied. The development of the questionnaire was guided by existing work on journalism students (e.g., Bjørnsen et al., 2007; Hanna & Sanders, 2007; Plaisance, 2007; Splichal & Sparks, 1994; Wu & Weaver, 1998). Questions on students' professional views were further guided by the literature on role conceptions (Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Ramaprasad & Kelly, 2003; Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986, 1996; Weaver et al., 2007).

Using a 5-point scale, students were asked to indicate to which extent they regarded as important each of 28 statements about their professional views. In order to examine the hypotheses posed earlier, we collected data in relation to students' preferred field of future journalistic occupation, differentiating between hard news and soft news, gender, and grade level. To measure grade level, we asked students to indicate which year of study they were in. Although the majority of countries have four-year programs, in countries such as Chile, journalism degrees require five years of study. Spain has a mixed system due to its transition to the Bologna model: Some programs last four years, while others are five years long. In Australia, on the other hand, university journalism degrees are typically three years in duration. In order to be able to compare the answers given by students from different countries and at different stages of their journalism program, we recoded the grade level variable into three categories: beginning, middle, and end-of-degree. Table 1 provides a basic overview of the independent variables used for this study.

Table 1. Social Characteristics of the Sample.

		Australia	Brazil	Chile	Mexico	South Africa	Spain	United States	Switzer-land
Sex (% female)		66.9	59.7	59.6	60.9	73.5	64.9	66.3	56.4
Age (average)		21.8	22.3	20.9	20.8	21.4	20.2	22.9	20.2
University type (% public)		100	71.5	89.9	49.8	100	100	54.2	100
Motivation (% hard news focused)		46	68.3	62.3	45.1	36.2	78	41	79.6
Year of study	**Beginning**	40.3	29.8	27	20.3	39.3	31.5	30.4	47.5
	End	32.7	21.1	18.5	25.4	18.1	16.5	29.7	13.0

On average, the survey was conducted at between three and seven different journalism programs within each country, with the exception of Switzerland, which only has one journalism program represented in the sample. In total, 4,393 questionnaires were completed. Response rates varied considerably between institutions, ranging from 17.3% to 64.5%. Response rates also fluctuated within institutions; there were grade levels with almost 90% of participation and others with only 15%.

The surveys were administered to students in class between mid-2010 and 2012. Because of the different structures of the academic year in the northern as opposed to the southern hemispheres, surveys had to be conducted at differing points in time. Typically, the first semester in the northern hemisphere begins between August and October, while in the southern hemisphere the first semester starts in February or March. Another factor in the timing of the administration of the survey was the availability of each collaborating researcher and their respective assistants, funding for printing of the questionnaires, and human resources available for data entry.

In order to measure journalism students' professional views, we used four role dimensions previously identified (Mellado et al., 2013). These role dimensions were based on 18 items on students' perceptions of the roles of journalism in society. All dimensions had acceptable-to-very-good Cronbach's α scores, indicating strong internal consistency.

- **The citizen-oriented role**: This dimension is composed of seven items. This role considers the public as a citizen and focuses on providing what the public "should know." (α = .80)

- **The loyal role**: This dimension was composed of five items (α = .81). Here items deal with the positive image that the media can provide for a country's leaders and the support for and defense

of the government's policies. This dimension also focuses on the relevance to the advances and triumphs made by the country or individual national figures in comparison with the rest of the world.

- **The watchdog role**: This dimension is composed of three items (α = .86). This role is related to the function of acting as a check on the government—as a Fourth Estate or watchdog—and defiant toward power and those who hold it.

- **The consumer-oriented role**: The three items associated with this role (α = .69) focus on the logic of the market, what the public "wants to know," and on entertaining the public.

These roles were used in the analysis in order to ascertain the extent to which our hypotheses could be supported.

Results and Discussion

Overall, the results show that a number of our predictions could be supported, but there were also some unexpected results. First, we examined whether students' job aspirations and career goals were in any way related to their professional views. Hypothesis 1.1 had predicted that—controlling for country—students whose goal it is to work in hard news are more likely to support citizen- and watchdog-oriented roles. The univariate analysis of variance offers some statistically significant support for our original expectations, although the actual effect sizes are very small. In general, the watchdog (M = 3.91; SD = .728), and especially the citizen-oriented roles (M = 3.24; SD = 1.18), found quite high support among all students, but when we examined these roles in relation to whether students wanted to work in soft or hard news, we found a significant effect of students' motivations on the extent to which they agree on the importance of these functions (F = 26.304, df = 1, p < .001, η^2 = .012 for watchdog; F = 7.461, df = 1, p < .05, η^2 = .014, for citizen-oriented). Thus, overall, students who would like to work in hard news tend to place significantly more importance on the watchdog (M = 3.31; SD = 1.19) as well as the citizen-oriented roles (M = 3.99; SD = .668) than students who would like to work in soft news journalism (M = 3.03; SD = 1.15 for watchdog; M = 3.77; SD = .768 for citizen-oriented) (Table 2).

Table 2. Mean Differences in Students' Role Perceptions by Favorite Area of Work.

	Citizen	Loyal	Watchdog	Consumer
Australia	0.23**	−0.35***	0.5***	−0.41***
Brazil	0.32***	0.19*	0.59***	−0.07
Chile	0.1	0.08	0.34***	−0.25***
Mexico	−0.1	0.08	0.17	−0.05
South Africa	0.54***	0.05	0.85***	−0.3***
Spain	0.19***	0.02	0.25***	−0.29***
Switzerland	0.18	0.19	0.14	−0.39*
USA	0.13	−0.25	0.52***	−0.27*
Total	**0.22***	**−0.07**	**0.28***	**−0.26***

Note: A positive value means students wanting to work in hard news value the role more, while a negative value means students wanting to work in soft news value the role more

*$p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; ***$p < .001$

The effect size in both cases was much smaller than the effect size for country (Mellado et al., 2013). In terms of individual countries, as Table 2 shows, there were statistically significant differences in the watchdog role in Australia, Brazil, Chile, South Africa, Spain, and the United States. Only in Mexico and Switzerland could we not find a statistically significant difference even though the trend was in a similar direction. In Australia, Brazil, South Africa, and Spain, students wanting to work in hard news were significantly more likely to support a citizen-oriented role than their soft news-focused counterparts. No statistically significant difference was found in Chile, Mexico, Switzerland, and the United States. Thus, it appears that Hypothesis 1.1 can be largely supported in that students who want to work in hard news are more likely to support a professional role of the watchdog and addressing audiences as citizens. They prefer to be a check on the government, fulfill the role of a Fourth Estate, and are defiant toward positions of power and those who hold them. They also like to focus on what the public "should know," concentrating mostly on political news.

In contrast, Hypothesis 1.2 predicted that students who want to work in soft news are more likely to support a consumer-oriented role. Again, the results offer some statistically significant support for our expectations ($F = 19.566$, $df = 1$, $p < .001$), but effect sizes are small. Although students generally placed great importance on this function of journalism ($M = 3.38$; $SD = .81$), we found highly significant effects on the individual level in terms of the extent to which they support it. Overall, the consumer-oriented role was indeed considered significantly more important by respondents who would like to pursue a career in entertainment-oriented forms of journalism ($M = 3.58$; $SD = .77$) than by those who prefer to work in

hard news journalism (M = 3.32; SD = .82). The effect size was small (η^2 = .035) but not trivial. Again, the individual country results largely support this. We found a statistically significant difference between hard and soft news-oriented students in Australia, Chile, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States. Only in Brazil and Mexico could we not find a statistically significant difference even though the mean difference was in the same direction as in the other countries. Thus, we can also largely support Hypothesis 1.2 and are able to state that journalism students who prefer to work on soft news focus on news aimed at what the public "wants" to know rather than needs to know, and they concentrate on news that entertains.

The fact that both of our hypotheses were confirmed shows that students' motivations do matter considerably in terms of the careers they may want to pursue. These aspects are important to keep in mind when developing journalism curricula, which may traditionally have been focused on hard news reporting. As the evidence shows, far from everyone wants to work in hard news, and the challenge is to provide a journalism education that will be of value to all kinds of journalists, even to those who will work outside the mainstream.

The next set of hypotheses was aimed at examining any potential gender differences in relation to journalism students' professional views. The literature on journalists' professional views in this regard has shown a mixed picture, with some studies suggesting a gender effect, while others have shown that gender tends to play only a small role. Hypothesis 2.1 had predicted that, controlling for country, women would be less likely to pursue the watchdog role than men, which is in line with findings from the general literature that indicated such trends in the journalistic workforce (Hanitzsch & Hanusch, 2012). Meanwhile, Hypothesis 2.2 predicted that women would be more likely to pursue a consumer-oriented role than men, a finding that had been made by some studies of journalists (Lavie & Lehman-Wilzig, 2005; Weaver, 1997). Our results show that neither of the two hypotheses could be supported. Contrary to our expectation, the data did not show any significant differences overall between women and men in relation to the importance they place on the watchdog role (M = 3.25; SD = 1.21 for men; M = 3.25; SD = 1.17 for women), t(3741) = .083, p = .934, two-tailed (Table 3).

Table 3. Mean Differences in Students' Role Perceptions by Gender.

	Citizen	**Loyal**	**Watchdog**	**Consumer**
Australia	0.18**	0.28***	0.03	0.22*
Brazil	0.13**	0.09	0.13	−0.01
Chile	0.23***	0.14**	0.01	0.01
Mexico	0.27***	0.19**	0.05	0.04
South Africa	0.1	0.11	0.05	−0.11
Spain	0.22***	−0.04	0.05	−0.05
Switzerland	0.07	0.4***	−0.38*	−0.72**
USA	0.13	0.21	−0.15	0.14
Total	**0.18**	**0.13**	**0**	**0.04**

Note: A positive value means female students value the role more, while a negative value means male students value the role more.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$

In terms of gender differences within individual countries, a statistically significant result could only be found in Switzerland, with men indeed slightly more likely to support a watchdog role than women. A similar result was found for the different genders' perceptions of the consumer-oriented role of journalism ($M = 3.36$; $SD = 0.81$ for men; $M = 3.40$; $SD = 0.81$ for women), $t(3757) = 1.32$, $p = .186$. In terms of individual countries, the results were inconclusive as well. Only Australia and Switzerland exhibited statistically significant differences, but in Australia women were more likely to favor the consumer role, while in Switzerland it was the male students who exhibited stronger support for this role. While not part of the hypotheses, Table 3 also lists results for gender differences in regard to the "citizen" and "loyal" roles. Again, no overall difference could be found, although there were more significant differences within countries, with women more likely to favor the citizen and loyal role in Australia, Chile, and Mexico. Women also value the citizen role more in Brazil and Spain and the loyal role in Switzerland. At the same time, effect sizes for these differences are very minor.

These findings go against some of the evidence from broader studies of journalists, but at the same time, we need to remember that, as Hanitzsch and Hanusch (2012) point out, there is ambiguity in the existing evidence about the role of gender in professional views. It may also be that such views may only be shaped later, when journalists start working in a newsroom and are assigned to certain beats. A relationship of their professional views to the beats they work may then develop.

Finally, we were interested in the extent to which the time spent at university may influence journalism students' professional views. Research question 1 asked if students' professional views change over the course of their degrees and, if this was so, in which direction this change occurred. Controlling for

country, the data shows a significant association between grade year and students' professional views for the watchdog (F = 15.636, df = 2, p < .001, η^2 = .034), loyal (F = 11.337, df = 2, p < .001, η^2 = .011), and consumer-oriented roles (F = 7.667, df = 2, p < .001, η^2 = .004), although it should be noted that the effect sizes were very small. While the importance given to the watchdog role increased significantly over the course of the students' career (M = 3.08; SD = .18 for beginning; M = 3.29; SD = 1.17 for middle; M = 3.37; SD = 1.19 for end), the importance they place on the loyal (M = 2.53; SD = .87 for beginning; M = 2.43; SD = .88 for middle; M = 2.32; SD = .88 for end) and the consumer-oriented role (M = 3.47; SD = .84 for beginning; M = 3.39; SD = .78 for middle; M = 3.36; SD = .98 for end) decreased (Table 4).

Table 4. Mean Differences in Students' Role Perceptions by Stage in their Degree.

	Citizen	Loyal	Watchdog	Consumer
Australia	0.06	−0.15	0.28*	−0.24**
Brazil	−0.07	−0.18*	0.26*	−0.08
Chile	−0.2**	−0.14	0.09	0.14
Mexico	0.02	−0.21	0.01	−0.45***
South Africa	−0.06	−0.27*	0.30*	−0.17
Spain	0.02	0.03	0.47***	−0.07
Switzerland	0.26	−0.24	0.86**	−0.14
USA	−0.2	−0.52**	0.17	−0.33*
Total	**−0.05**	**−0.08*****	**0.27*****	**−0.1*****

Note: A positive value means students at the end of their degrees value the role more, while a negative value means students at the beginning of their degree value the role more.
*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

In terms of individual countries, we found a statistically significant difference in that students at the end of their degrees valued the watchdog role more in Australia, Brazil, South Africa, Spain, and Switzerland. The other three countries showed a trend in the same direction, yet the differences were only minor and not significant. In terms of the consumer orientation, beginning students in Australia, Mexico, and the United States were significantly more likely to value this role. The trend was similar again in relation to the loyal role, although we could find statistically significant differences only in Brazil, South Africa, and the United States. In the case of the citizen-oriented role, we did not find any significant pattern in the importance that students place on this aspect of their future work. Only in Chile did students at the beginning of their degrees value this role more, but results from other countries were contradictory, and no overall statistically significant difference was found. The reason for this finding may lie in the fact that many journalism educators are former journalists themselves, and they may be

influencing their students to value more strongly the ideal of watchdog journalism while highlighting perceived deficiencies of the loyal and consumer-oriented roles.

Conclusion

Journalism students have been the object of scholarly inquiry for some time, but recent years have seen an increase in activity in many places around the world. At the same time, cross-cultural studies have rarely been conducted. This study, by examining journalism students from eight culturally diverse countries, has attempted to break new ground in the field. The large sample has allowed us to conduct a detailed study of the various potential influences that may affect journalism students' professional views. On the basis of a review of the literature, we identified three areas that are of particular interest here. The first includes students' preferred areas of journalism in which they would like to work in the future—distinguishing between soft and hard news. Second, we argued that gender could play a role in affecting their professional views. Finally, a third area of inquiry related to whether the fact that students were in various stages of their journalism degrees could play a role in affecting their professional views.

Our findings support some of the predictions we made about certain influences but reject others. We found evidence that, regardless of the country in which they live, journalism students who want to work in hard news are more likely to support a citizen-oriented as well as a watchdog role. On the other hand, those who want to work in soft news favor a consumer-oriented role. We could not find any evidence that gender actually made a difference in determining students' professional roles at all. The stage at which students are in their journalism programs also plays a role in that the longer students have studied journalism, the more likely they are to support a watchdog role. At the same time, the longer they have studied, the less likely they are to support a loyal and consumer-oriented role. It should be noted that while we found statistically significant results, the effect sizes were very small.

The findings presented here provide some interesting insights into journalism students' role perceptions across cultures. At the same time, there are a number of limitations to the study. Because this sample was a convenience sample of countries and universities, its scope is limited to only the countries we studied and to the specific schools that were included. Including a wider diversity of countries would add strength in terms of cross-cultural application. The relative overrepresentation of Latin America, as well as significant differences in the number of university programs included from each country, may have also influenced the results to some extent. Future studies should therefore aim at more representative samples. It is also important to remember that the analysis of influences is restricted to the ones that were chosen on the basis of a careful review of the literature. It is possible, indeed likely, that there may be other significant factors that shape students' professional views. One such approach would take account of existing journalistic cultures and the extent to which they may predetermine students' professional views even before they start their journalism degrees. Due to the increasing emergence of global studies of journalists (Hanitzsch et al., 2011; Weaver & Willnat, 2012), it would be feasible to compare journalism students' views with those of working journalists more directly in order to gauge to what extent they may be similar or different. Thus, we hope that this study can lay the ground for future studies that can examine more definitively the professional views of journalism students and the ways in which they are shaped.

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