

Independent Journalism Training Initiatives: Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education

By

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Presented to the Professional Education Section, International Association for Media and
Communication Research, Singapore, July 2000

ABSTRACT: Charitable foundations, media organizations, government agencies and various nongovernmental organizations have invested extensively in the last 10 years in training programs aimed at emerging democracies in an effort to create a journalistic workforce that is independent, well-educated, and well-trained. Despite this growth in training activity, there has been relatively little written about it. Largely unexplored, for example, is the impact these ad hoc training initiative might have on older, more established training institutions and what the future might be in terms of the ways in which journalists are educated in these countries. This paper explores these issues within the context of an evaluation of one particular journalism training program, the Knight International Press Fellowship Program, which has operated since 1994 and has sent American journalists to serve as trainers all over the world. The paper documents structural change, particularly in the area of journalism education, resulting from the training initiative.

The authors acknowledge the assistance in this project of Dr. John Bare, Director of Evaluation for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. This project was funded by the Knight Foundation. Dr. Melinda Hawley and Dr. Patricia Priest assisted in the fieldwork. This report was produced with the help of Aswin Punathambekar and Todd Fraley.

Independent Journalism Training Initiatives: Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education

Page 1

As part of more general strategies designed to aid democracy abroad, governmental and nongovernmental organizations in a variety of countries have invested in media training programs. The programs are designed to create a journalistic workforce that is well-educated, independent, and—in the way in which the term is generally used—professional, so the journalists can aid in the development of a civic, open society.

These initiatives at media training became particularly pronounced in the last decade of the 20th Century. The expansion of democracy that began in southern Europe in the 1970s, spread to Latin American and parts of Asia in the 1980s, accelerated dramatically from 1989 with fall of the Berlin Wall and the breakup of the Soviet Union (Carothers, 1999). As the decade progressed, there was further evidence of the growth of democracy in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Government and media organizations and foundations saw this as a particularly important time for investment in media training to help solidify democracies' gains.

Most, though certainly not all, of these initiatives at journalism training have been outside of traditional academic settings, which were often judged to be inadequate to the task of journalism training because of historical traditions and contemporary limitations due to inadequate resources. Training has often been carried out in collaboration with media organizations or associations and has generally been short-term in nature.

The impact of these journalism training initiatives on those who participated in them and on organizations in the society is largely undocumented. Have these programs been judged effective by those who participated in them? Have the programs changed these individuals in any way? Have the programs had an impact on other organizations in the society, such as those that might offer journalism training in the future? Have the programs contributed to the development of an independent press and a democratic society?

This paper attempts to answer some of these questions through the examination of the impact of a single training program, funded by an American media foundation and operated by an independent U.S.

Independent Journalism Training Initiatives: Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education

Page 2

training organization. Particular attention is given to the implications of this training program for journalism education in the future.

Assisting Journalism

While U.S. organizations have been prominent in programs designed to further democracy, many other industrialized democracies also have been involved, such as Denmark, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. Even countries such as Barbados, Chile, Costa Rica, India Portugal and South Africa have been involved (Quigley, 1997).

No tally exists of the initiatives at journalism training and media development. Quigley (1997) estimates that foundations (as opposed to government organizations) spent \$450 million in democracy assistance to Central Europe from 1989 to 1994. Of this, about \$18 million was for programs that in some way promoted a free press. But Quigley admits that this accounting misses the contributions of many smaller foundations.

Prominent organizations involved in media training are the BBC and Thomson Foundation (UK), the European Journalism Centre (Netherlands), World Association of Newspapers (France), and the Independent Center for Journalists (U.S.). Major foundation support has been provided by The Freedom Forum, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Soros Foundations, and others.

Nature of Impact

Media programs can be classified as of two sorts: those designed to have impact on individuals, usually working journalists, and those designed to impact on the media organizations themselves. In fact, there is almost always overlap between these two goals. A program designed to train journalists is expected to have impact on the media organization in which those journalists work. Programs designed to secure the financial viability of a media organization are intended to provide an unfettered working environment for journalists. In both cases, the ultimate goal is to further the development of democratic elements in the society.

A broader context for understanding these types of impacts comes from the study of educational initiatives and institutions more generally (Bidwell and Friedkin, 1988). Education has influence on the

Independent Journalism Training Initiatives: Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education

Page 3

individuals who participate by giving them particularly talents and skills and on the society more generally by creating a better educated workforce. In turn, the education institution can have influence on organizations, such as employers, who alter their training activities in response to what the educational institutions provide. Those educational institutions also are influenced greatly by the broader activities of other organizations. Universities, for example, offer curricular that are popular with students who anticipate opportunities in the labor market and with employers who want certain skills in their new employees.

Unfortunately, there is little context within which to view any influence of the journalism training initiatives undertaken in the emerging democracies in the 1990s. While many post-graduate journalism training programs are offered in the U.S. particularly, they have received almost no attention, either in terms of their impact or as components of the larger training apparatus. The work of German media scholar Stephan Russ-Mohl (1994) on midcareer journalism training in the U.S. and Germany is a stark exception.

While the emerging comparative work on media educational institutions is very encouraging (Aumente, et al. 1999; Fröhlich, and Holz-Bacha, forthcoming), still almost completely unexplored is a comparative assessment of the impact of different ways to study journalism. Even studies of the impact of a single educational experience are limited in number and scope.

In this context, expectations regarding the impact of the journalism training programs are straightforward and inductively derived. While it may be argued that that the Western style of journalism typically taught in these programs may not be appropriate across all cultural and social contexts, this study is more concerned with the mechanism of change itself. The programs are designed to change the attitudes and behaviors of those who participate in them. They also are designed to change the way the media operate and, in the long term, to change the society in which the media function. Their impact can be assessed in this context.

Independent Journalism Training Initiatives: Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education

Page 4

Method

This study treats as an exemplar the Knight International Press Fellowship Program, operated by the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) in Washington and funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation in Miami. ICFJ was established in 1984 is a nonprofit organization in the United States “dedicated exclusively to developing overseas print media, radio and television” (ICFJ, 1998). The Knight International Press Fellowship Program began in 1994. Each year, a group of journalists from the United States is sent to assignments around the world for periods of up to nine months. The trainers, known as Knight International Press Fellows, work in conjunction with local hosts to provide a wide variety of training. The program is funded by the Knight Foundation, a national foundation making grants in journalism. In 1994, 12 journalists served as trainers. As many as 22 trainers participated in subsequent years.

The study covered the period from when the Program began in 1994 until the end of 1998, when 84 working journalists completed 89 different Knight Fellowships. The assignments given Knight Fellows ringed the globe, from the Pacific region of Russia to Chile, from the Pacific Island nations to South Africa and from Albania to the Baltic states. Knight Fellow activities were concentrated most heavily in Central and Eastern Europe, although the states of the former Soviet Union also have hosted large numbers of Knight Fellows. A third area of concentration of the Knight Fellow assignments was Latin America and the Caribbean. The study examined the work of the Knight Fellows in these three broad areas. The 11 countries studied were the Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru.

To obtain reports of impact from those with whom the Knight Fellow worked, we attempted to find as many of those who worked with the Knight Fellows in the 11 countries as possible and to conduct interviews with them. We used two interview techniques. First, we asked those we contacted to complete a written interview, generally with one of us in close proximity. Next, we asked most of those we contacted to answer follow-up questions. The first questionnaire contained clusters of items designed

Independent Journalism Training Initiatives: Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education

Page 5

to measure the perceived impact of the interaction with the Knight Fellow. The interview included a variety of questions designed to obtain both discrete indications of impact and examples of that impact.

We interviewed at least 31 people in each of the 11 countries we visited. The smallest number of interviews completed was in Poland, where we successfully contacted and interviewed 31 persons who had worked with the Knight Fellows there. We completed 92 interviews in Ecuador.

The 531 completed interviews include 269 with individuals on original lists of possible contacts provided by the Knight Fellows themselves and 262 with individuals whom we identified in the field. In the end, we completed interviews with 44.6% of those whose names were on our original lists and with 61.4% of those persons whose names we ultimately had in our database.

We were seeking evidence of impact of the Knight International Press Fellowship program on the journalists and on others in the country with whom the Knight Fellows came into contact, the practice of journalism in the countries visited by the Knight Fellows, the media and media-related institutions in the countries visited by the Knight Fellows and the countries themselves. We also sought to learn more about the impact on these institutions in order to unearth avenues for future study in this area.

Findings

What the Fellows Did

Knight Fellows engage in many different types of training activities during their time abroad. We asked each of the persons we interviewed to classify the types of interactions they had had with the Knight Fellows, using a list of possibilities we provided. Six in 10 said they had attended a presentation given by the Fellow, while a just slightly smaller percentage had attended a discussion group with a Fellow. Forty-five percent participated in a class led by a Knight Fellow. About half of those we interviewed said a Knight Fellow had discussed their work with them individually, just under three in 10 said the Fellow had provided information about additional training opportunities, and a similar ratio reported a Fellow advised them about career opportunities. About two in 10 said a Knight Fellow actually went with them on assignments, eight in 10 said they had one-on-one conversations with a Fellow about journalism and related topics, and about four in 10 said a Fellow provided them materials or documents

they had used. About a third of the persons interviewed said they had interacted with a Knight Fellow on a social basis. Only one in 10 said they had some kind of contact that did not fit into these categories. The reports of the people we interviewed show a high level of activity on the part of the Knight Fellow. Only one in 10 of the persons we interviewed reported only one type of contact.

Impact Globally Measured

The first question in the self-administered instrument that dealt with the influence of the Knight Program was a global one. It asked the person completing the questionnaire to indicate how much impact, if any, the Knight Fellow(s) had on nine different areas that included attitudes, knowledge and behavior. The questions covered such things as impact on career goals and ambitions and impact on knowledge of tactics and strategies to be used on the job.

Chart 1 summarizes the responses across the eight items used to measure overall impact. Clearly, the level of self-reported consequences of the Knight International Fellowship Program are quite dramatic. Only in the case of one of the eight areas did fewer than six in 10 of the Fellows report at least some impact. The Knight Fellows changed career goals, imparted knowledge about the basics of journalism, imparted knowledge about the audiences of the media, and helped those they worked with think in new ways about news and about the roles of journalism in democracy. The Fellows also helped the vast majority of those they worked with carry out their jobs, understand tactics relevant to those jobs, and know better how to work with people. Four in 10 of those with whom the Fellows worked said they gained an understanding of the economics of journalism.

There is no known standard against which these questions should be evaluated. On the face of it, the reported levels of impact are quite large. Against a standard of no impact—a response option open to the respondents—the level of reported impact is indeed dramatic.

Specific Measures of Impact

In another set of questions on the self-administered instrument, we asked those we interviewed to answer specific questions about the impact of their interactions with the Knight Fellows. The questions

were similar to those in the first set, but they were more specific and they were separate from the first set by questions on the fellows themselves and on limitations of the program.

A comparative reading of the responses to these eight questions in this second set, shown in summary form in Chart 2, suggests the Knight Fellows had relatively more impact on the learning of specific skills (Items A and H) and on some basic attitudes about journalism (Items B and D), and relatively less impact on more fundamental attitudes, such as those about the role of journalism in a society, about the Knight Fellow's country of origin, or about the country where the Fellow worked. That even three in 10 of the respondents said the Fellow changed their attitudes—in a positive way--toward their own country is quite noteworthy. That four in 10 would say they became more positive toward the U.S. is even more so.

Probes about Impact

The second survey instrument, which we administered to 387 of the 531 initial respondents, contained, as noted, a series of general questions, followed by prompts, that was designed to force respondents to think concretely about the nature of impact of the Knight Fellow on themselves, on others, on organizations, and on the country itself.

The first two questions in this set were asked differently, depending on whether the person we were talking to was in a supervisory capacity. For those who were in such a capacity, we asked if the person had noted attitude change on the part of those in the organization as a result of the work of the Knight Fellow. We followed this with a question about behavioral change. For those not in a supervisory position, we asked if the Knight Fellow had changed their own attitudes and behavior. In all cases, the specific question was followed by a request for specific examples of changed attitudes and behaviors.

We know from other research on projection of influence that people are more likely to say others are influenced by social forces than to say that they, themselves, are influenced (Davison, 1983), and the responses we received to this question are consistent with this. As Chart 3 shows, three of four of the respondents reported that their own attitudes were influenced, while four of five of those asked about the impact on others said the Knight Fellows changed opinions. In both cases, however, the level of

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 8

reported impact was quite striking. The same can be said for the reports of behavioral change. Seven in 10 of those interviewed said the Knight Fellow had impact on the behaviors of those under their supervision, while about six in 10 said their own behavior had been influenced.

More than half of the respondents to the second survey indicated that a Knight Fellow had impact on their career. Four in 10, however, said there was no impact.

The next two questions in the supplemental instrument asked respondents both to reflect on the types of and quality of stories written by journalists in the host country and to indicate whether the Knight Fellows had impact on either, both, or neither. Half of those interviewed said the types of stories written by journalists had changed as a result of the work of the Knight Fellows; seven in 10 said the quality of stories had changed.

The next three questions on the instrument were difficult for many of our respondents to answer. These questions asked, first, about the impact of the work of the Knight Fellows on the economic situation of the media in the host country, then about the impact of the Knight Fellow on other institutions in society, and finally about the impact on the functioning of democracy in the country.

Three in 10 of the respondents, in fact, said they did not know if the Knight Fellows had had impact on the “economic stability of the media in this country,” and only two in 10 said that they had. Five in 10 said simply that the Fellows had not had impact of this sort.

The question on impact on other institutions offered a suggested example—impact on organizations providing journalism training in the country. Even with this tip, nearly four in 10 of the respondents said they did not know the answer. More than half, however, said they saw evidence of impact of this sort.

Perhaps the “biggest” question on the instrument was the final one in this group, which asked the respondent if she or he thought “the work of the Knight Fellow(s) has had impact on the functioning of democracy in this country.” Three in 10 said the answer was negative, and two in 10 said they ‘Didn’t Know.’ Half answered in the affirmative.

Responses to Questions about Themselves

We included questions on the first instrument to find out something about the types of people in our sample, that is, the types of people with whom the Knight Fellows had contact. For the most part, the programs of the Fellows served people actually working as journalists or preparing for journalism careers. Two of 10 of those we interviewed reported they were working as editors when they interacted with the Knight Fellow, and a similar ratio classified themselves as reporters. University students made up the next largest group—setting aside those who did not fit into the provided categories. In fact, this latter group is large because so many of those we interviewed held more than one position and did not fit into the classification scheme. Many were working as editors and reporters, for example, as well as teaching at the university or taking university classes.

The Knight Fellows targeted young journalists and those still preparing for careers in journalism. One in five of those we interviewed was less than 25 years old when we talked with them. Three in 10 were 25 to 34. One in four was 45 years old or older.

One in four of those we interviewed had between one and five years of professional experience, and about one in five had no experience at all (Chart 4). Only 16% had more than 20 years of professional experience. Clearly, the work of the Knight Fellows has targeted young people.

Six in 10 of those we interviewed reported they had some formal training in journalism (Chart 5). This, of course, included most of those still at the university when we interviewed them. Large numbers of students still enrolled at the university were included among the respondents in Chile and Ecuador. About two of three of the respondents with some journalism training across all countries had a university journalism degree.

About four in 10 of those we interviewed were women.

Country Differences

We selected the 11 countries we visited because of their similarities and their differences. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia were part of the Warsaw Pact. During the Cold War, these countries were controlled by Soviet politics, but they retained a strong degree of national identity.

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 10

These independent identities offered tremendous advantages after the fall of the communist system. In contrast, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine were incorporated into the Soviet state, and much was done to crush their national identities. They emerged after the dissolution of the Soviet Union with weaker senses of distinctiveness, even less economic independence, and fewer ties to the west. The three Latin American countries had none of these experiences with communism, yet each has struggled historically to develop strong democratic institutions.

As a result of the differences among these countries, we expected differences in outcomes of the activities of the Knight International Press Fellows, and we designed the study to allow for a test of this possibility. For example, we attempted to—and successfully did—complete enough interviews in each country to allow for these comparisons. We also attempted in each country to represent the diversity of activities of the Fellows there so as to be able to give a representative picture of Fellow work on a country-by-country basis.

At the same time, we recognize what scientists call “natural confounds” in these comparisons. The Knight Fellows in four of the five former Warsaw Pact countries operated largely under the auspices of the Independent Journalism Centers. (Poland is the exception.) These Centers provided a solid base for the work of the Knight Fellows, and they also shaped the types of programs and other work of the Fellows. In contrast, Fellows in Moldova, Russia and Ukraine had less established and, certainly in the case of Russia, more varied bases of support. In fact, in Moldova and Ukraine, the assignment of some of the Fellows was to build independent journalism centers that could host future trainers. Fellows in these countries, in general, had less centralized and more limited bases from which to work. In Chile, the Fellows used as a base an old, well-established, prestigious university. In Peru and Ecuador, the hosts were often media organizations themselves.

Other factors played a role as well. Russia is a huge country, and Fellows had to travel widely. Romania presented more travel challenges, because of its size, than did Slovakia. Fellows traveled much more widely in Ecuador than they did in either Chile and Peru, in part because of geography.

These “natural confounds” complicate the comparisons among our 11 countries. More than one explanation for any given difference can be offered. Yet the confounds are naturally occurring ones. Work in Russia for a Knight Fellow is not the same as work in Romania, and the differences in outcomes are important to document.

To allow for these comparisons, we created nine indices from the various measures of impact in our two questionnaires. To create these indices we used factor analysis to look for patterns of responses to different questions to help us see if items we thought belonged together actually did empirically. Before creating these indices, however, we also simplified some of the data we had gathered. We noticed that our respondents were reluctant to use the full ranges of responses on many of our questions, preferring, for example, to say they did not know the answer to a question rather than to say the Fellow had no impact on them. In fact, we noticed this tendency in the field, and we asked those we interviewed about it. Invariably, a “Don’t Know” response or a skipped question meant that the person did not feel the question was relevant to them because the Fellow had no impact on them in that way.

We recoded the initial responses to the items in Chart 1 so that a “Don’t Know” answer was the equivalent of no impact and we summed the responses to these nine items to form a single index, which we called a Global Measure of Impact. Our analyses of the interrelationships among the eight individual items suggested this was warranted.

The set of items in Chart 2, which we intended to cover diverse areas of potential impact, proved to be the most complex empirically. We first recoded the responses to these items so only the responses “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” and “Other” remained.. Then, based on the analysis of the patterns of responses, we summed responses to Items A, B, C and H to create an index that we called Professional Attitudes and Learning. These items clustered together empirically and report on impact in the professional area. We summed responses to Items E and F and called this index Attitudes Toward Host Country and U.S. They are related empirically. We treated Items D and G as separate measures because responses to them indicated they were, in fact, distinct. We have termed Item D a measure of Striving for Journalistic Independence and Item G as a measure of Career Commitment.

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 12

We created a final index based on responses to the items measuring impact in the second questionnaire. We simply counted the number of areas in which the respondent said the Knight Fellow had impact. We called this final measure a Checklist of Effects.

To show the relative levels of these indices across our 11 countries, we computed the mean score for each index in each country and then created an average of these 11 scores. We next subtracted from the mean score for a given country the mean score for the 11 countries to determine whether a given country was below or above average on a given index. All measures of impact were positive, so a score that is below average does not indicate low impact, but rather less impact than was reported on average across the 11 countries.

Based on the measure of Global Measure of Impact, above average countries are Hungary, Ukraine, Chile, Ecuador and Peru. Respondents were most likely to say their attitudes had changed and that they had learned as a result of contact with the Fellows in Ecuador and least likely to report this effect in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Attitudes toward the U.S. and the host country were most likely to have been changed as a result of the Knight Program in Ecuador, Moldova and Romania and least likely to have changed in Poland and Hungary. Striving for journalistic independence was more likely to be an outcome of the Knight Program in Ecuador, Ukraine, Moldova and Romania than in Poland and Peru. Career commitment was more likely to be increased in Ecuador and Hungary than in Poland. The Checklist of Effects measure produced higher scores in Moldova, Ecuador and Peru than in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Chile.

There are a number of possible explanations for these variations. One rather problematic one is differences in the meanings of words used in the questionnaires when translated into the various languages used. We cannot rule this possibility out entirely, but the variability among the three Latin American countries is counter to this explanation, since all used the same translation of the questionnaire. In addition, the Russian questionnaire was used in Moldova and Ukraine as well as in Russia, and the Romanian questionnaire was used in both Moldova and Romania.

Another explanation of the differences among the countries is that the programming was different in them. What the Fellows did in the various countries often was quite different. In Chile, all of the programming was done out of a university setting, and most of it involved university students. In Poland, many of our respondents had taken university classes from a Knight Fellow who taught public relations at a business school. Clearly the limited effect of this Program on Striving for Journalistic Independence and journalistic Career Commitment in Poland can be easily explained for this reason. In Peru, there was no university instruction and the bulk of the work was at two media outlets. In other countries, such as Russia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, both university-type instruction and individual consultancies were part of the package.

It is possible, using regression analysis, to sort out and explain some of these differences. The survey instruments included measures of characteristics of the experiences the respondents had with the Fellows and of the respondents themselves. From the surveys we conducted with the 33 Knight Fellows who worked in our 11 countries from 1994 to 1998 and from their application materials, we were able to obtain measures of the characteristics of the Fellows. The role these factors played in explaining variability in the responses to our measures of the impact of the Knight Fellowship Program is addressed in the following section.

Impact of Characteristics of Recipients on Outcome

From the primary questions completed by respondents, we selected eight characteristics that we felt might be related to the success of the Knight Program. These included the checklist of types of interactions with the Fellows and the time spent with the Fellows. In the case of the former, we created an index that simply counted the number of types of contact. We also included a measure of the voluntary nature of the interaction with the Fellow. Other measures examined were age of the respondent, the number of years they had been a communication professional, and whether they had formal journalism training. We also looked at gender of the respondent and the number of Fellows with whom the respondent had contact. We also looked at whether the respondent was a member of the staff

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 14

of one of the formal centers that hosted the Fellow and the location of the organization that employed the respondent.

For each of the criterion measures of the Program's impact, we performed a linear regression. We first controlled for the variability in the criterion measure due to country (that is, took it out of consideration) and then looked at the effects of these 10 variables that tell us something about the respondent and his or her interaction with the Fellow. The first question is: Do these characteristics of the respondent matter? The second question is: If so, what predicts to an effect from the Knight Program? In this way we could determine if these characteristics of our respondents mattered, regardless of the country where they worked.

We have summarized the results of these analyses graphically in Charts 6-11. We dropped from those charts four measures: age of the respondent, whether they had formal journalism training, gender of the respondent, and the number of Fellows with whom the respondent had contact. These four characteristics had no impact on any of our criterion variables once we eliminated the effect of country and looked at the six remaining variables. The charts show the effects of the remaining six variables as bars, which represent a standardized regression coefficient. This coefficient can vary from -1.00 to +1.00, with a larger score (either negative or positive) indicating greater importance. We show only those coefficients that are statistically significant at the .05 level. Finally, in each chart we produced a pie chart showing how much of the variance or variability in our criterion variable we were able to explain. In each case shown, the amount of variance explained is statistically at the .05 level.

Those respondents who had a lot of different types of contacts with the Fellows and who spent more time with them were more likely to report impact from this experience based on the Global Measure of Impact than were those who had less contact and spent less time (Chart 6). Respondents who were not part of the Center staff also reported more impact. The effects of country and these characteristics of the respondents are pronounced. Nearly a third of the total variance in this index is explained by them.

Those who reported the greatest amount of impact of the Knight Fellows on their attitudes and their knowledge were those who had a large number of types of contacts with the Fellows, spent a lot of time

with them, and were early in their professional careers (Chart 7). Country and these characteristics of the respondents explain a quarter of the total variance in the measure.

The Knight Fellows were most likely to change the attitudes of the respondents about their own country and the U.S. if the respondents had differing types of contact with the Fellow, if they spent more time with the Fellow, if they were older rather than younger people, and if they worked outside the Capital city (Chart 8). Country explains 10% of the variance in this measure, and these factors add another 4% of explanation.

The Knight Fellows were more likely to have been able to encourage striving for journalistic independence if they had more types of contact with the individual and if the individual worked outside the Capital (Chart 9). These factors explain about the same amount of variance as country alone.

Career Commitment of the respondents was influenced by the amount of contact with the Fellow and location, with those outside the Capital most affected (Chart 10). Country makes a big difference here, and types of contact and location, combined with country, explain 20% of the variance in the final measure.

The Checklist of Effects measure also is influenced by types of contact and amount of time with the Fellows. Here, however, maturity in the field also matters (Chart 11). This measure more than others requires that the respondent be able to see impact on institutions and society more generally, and those with more experience in the field are more likely to report this type of impact. Country is important, but these other factors combine with country to explain nearly 20% of the variance in the final measure.

In sum, two characteristics of the interaction of the Fellows and those they are working with are extremely important, regardless of country. These are the number of different types of interaction and the amount of time spent. For each of the nine criterion measures of impact except one, either amount of contact, amount of time, or both predict to impact. Such a finding is hardly surprising except that it comes from people who participated in a Program that by-and-large provides an extended amount of contact. Most of these people did not have fleeting interactions with the Fellows, but rather they had

interactions over at least several days and often over several weeks and even months. Even within this context—where the amount of contact is already high—diversity of contact and amount of time matter.

Less consistent are the findings for the other factors. Location does seem to matter in several cases, however, with those outside the Capital more likely to be affected. Those who participate voluntarily are less likely to criticize the Program. For some effects, those who are more senior are more likely to change. In other cases, they are less likely to show change.

Impact of Characteristics of the Fellows on Outcome

If the characteristics of the targets of the Knight Program help to determine the outcomes, is it not also likely that the characteristics of the Fellows have impact?

To answer this question we conducted a second regression analysis, like the first except that now we added in several characteristics of the Fellows. From the information we obtained from the interviews with them and from the records in their files at the International Center for Journalists we knew each Fellow's age, gender, position when they applied for the Fellowship, year of assignment, number of countries they visited, and the length of the assignment. In this second analysis, we studied the responses only of those 411 respondents who had had contact with a single Fellow, and we used the characteristics of that Fellow in the analysis.

Once we eliminated the influence of the country in which the respondent resided and the influence of the characteristics of the respondent, the characteristics of the Fellows made very little difference. In the case of our Global Measure of Impact, for example, no single characteristic was related in a statistically significant way to reports of impact as reflected in this measure. In general, however, little was gained in terms of an understanding of the evaluation measures by considering the characteristics of the Fellows, once the country itself and the characteristics of the recipients of the Program were eliminated as factors. In the case of the Global Measure of Impact, for example, only just under 2% new variance was explained.

The interpretation of the determinants of the effectiveness of the Knight Program, based on the responses of those who participated, is tricky. In the analyses above we looked first at the impact of the

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 17

country itself, then on the impact of the characteristics of the recipients of those programs on impact, and finally on the impact of the characteristics of the Fellows. We did this because we felt the situation within which the program was conducted, as represented by country, was the most important likely determinant of impact. We felt the next most important factors were those associated with the recipients of the training initiatives. We felt the characteristics of the Fellows were of importance only after these other factors were considered.

Had we chosen to look first at the characteristics of the Fellows, we would have reached different conclusions. For example, the scores on the Global Measure of Impact were higher for Fellows who completed their work in 1998 than for Fellows who completed their work in 1995 if we examine the effect of characteristics of the fellows without controlling for the other variables. The year 1995 was exceptional, but, in general, scores on this measure are improving across the years. Those respondents who worked with female Fellows were more likely to report high scores on the Striving for Journalistic Independence measure than were respondents who worked with male Fellows. Career Commitment was more likely to be increased among respondents who worked with Fellows who had been reporters or writers when they took on the assignment abroad than for any others. Finally, those respondents who worked with a Fellow who had been assigned to only a single country reported more impact on the Checklist of Effects measure than did those who worked with Fellows with multiple-country assignments.

We attribute these effects to other factors. For example, the Czech Republic and Slovakia are two countries where all of the Fellows worked in a second country, and these countries had very low scores on the Checklist of Effects measures. In our analysis, the effects of country were taken into consideration first, and then the effects of the characteristics of the respondents were eliminated. In this case, the number of countries visited by the Fellow does not matter. Standing alone, however, the number of countries visited by the Fellow certainly does matter, and in a very negative way. Specialization, it seems, does make a difference, if this is the only factor considered.

Our analytic strategy, in sum, places priority on country differences as a predictor of Program success. We looked at individual characteristics of the Program recipients and characteristics of the trainers only secondarily. Does this approach overestimate the importance of country?

To answer this question, we reran the analyses summarized in Charts 6-11, this time looking at the effects first of characteristics of the respondents to our survey—the recipients of the Knight Fellow training—and then at country as an explainer of Program success. We focused on the changes in the explained variance in our criterion measures to see if, had we given primary status to the characteristics of the respondents, we would have concluded that country did not matter. In fact, that would not have been the case. Even after we eliminate the effects of the characteristics of the recipients of the training initiatives, country makes a difference for each of measures of impact we constructed. The order of our analysis would not have changed the outcome.

Examples of Organizational Impact

The data presented to this point document rather convincingly that the Knight Fellows had impact on those with whom they worked. Included among those influenced by the Knight Program were high school and university students, working journalists, and members of the staffs of organizations that hosted them.

Impact on an individual is likely to be amplified to the extent that individual has contact with others. A young person can influence many individuals as she or he moves through the stages of a career. A leader of an organization can employ managerial skills or other tips provided by the Fellows in working with those under him or her and have great impact throughout the organization. Clearly those in media centers and other organizations that hosted the Knight Fellows could use what they learned from the Fellows to improve their programming and, in this way, extend the impact of the Knight Fellow into the future.

The host organizations are a reasonable place to look for organizational or structural impact. If the work of the Fellow was incorporated into activities of an ongoing organization, it should be possible to document Knight Fellow institutional impact through an examination of the work of that institution while

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 19

the Fellow was present. Organizations with strong programming that serves their constituencies survive into the future. By extension, then, documented immediate impact can be expected to have continuing impact on the structure of a society even after the Knight Fellow has left.

In each of the countries we visited, we asked the leaders of host organizations to show us concrete records of the programming they did that involved the Knight Fellows. We were looking for examples of courses taught that would not have been taught had the Knight Fellow not been present, of workshops held that could not have been done without the Fellows, or other initiatives that were wholly dependent on the work of a Knight Fellow. Using a Knight Fellow to teach a class that someone else taught in the past was considered to be of less importance than using a Knight Fellow to teach a class that no one else could teach. We wanted to know how the Knight Fellow changed what that organization did.

The results of these probes were informative. In the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania, we were able to obtain detailed reports and in three of those cases concrete records of what types of programming the Knight Fellows offered. Poland was more problematic. One of the Fellows there was hosted by an organization that went out of existence. The other taught a class in public relations at a university that clearly would not have been taught otherwise. Plans are being made to incorporate some of the instruction into the curriculum permanently, though the final shape of this change has not yet been determined.

In Moldova, a Knight Fellow is given much credit for actually creating a journalism center, which hosted a second Fellow and offers programming that is highly valued by journalists in the country. A Knight Fellow played an important role in developing a press center in Ukraine that continues to provide services to journalists in that country. In Russia, the Fellows provided expertise used in programming at two centers, and an individual served as an expert consultant for a third organization.

The situation in Latin America was rather different. In Chile, to be sure, the Knight Fellows strengthened the offerings of a university and allowed that university to do outreach programming it could not have done on its own. In Peru, however, there is little evidence the Fellows left behind an infrastructure that will serve others in the future, though, certainly, those with whom the Fellows worked

gained from the experience. Much the same can be said for Ecuador, where the Fellows worked largely on their own initiative. Two of the hosts there said they did programming with the Fellows, and almost certainly they did, but neither provided documentation. The impact the Fellows had in that country seems to have had little to do with the activities of the hosts and much to do with the initiatives of the Fellows themselves. Several hosts in our 11 countries made a simple point to us. Really strong Fellows probably do not need a lot of local assistance. They will make contacts and have impact on their own. Probably all Fellows will gain from strong local support, however, and weaker Fellows need it.

The evidence about organizational impact can be divided into three sections, one dealing with center programming contributions, the other with institution building, and the final with university curricula. Almost all of our 11 countries provided some evidence of impact in each of these areas, but the best evidence of the first type of impact comes from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Russia. The discussion below focuses largely on those countries. The second type of impact comes from Moldova and Ukraine, and these cases are detailed below. The final type of impact comes largely from Poland and Chile, covered in the final section below.

Impact Through Center Programming

In the Spring of 1997, the Center for Independent Journalism in Prague, Czech Republic, listed 17 different offerings in its program catalog. Four of them were provided by the Knight Fellows working in the Center during that period. A year later, the Center listed 25 different programs; seven of them were provided by the three Knight Fellows associated with the Center that Spring. In the Fall of 1998, the Center listed 20 offerings, none of which were taught by a Knight Fellow. If these three programs are typical, and the Center leadership said they are, somewhere between 15 and 20% of the programming of the Center is dependent on availability of a Knight Fellow. But the content area is particularly important. The Center leadership said:

“We could not have done the TV offerings without the Knight Fellows. We can find print trainers here, but we cannot find local TV trainers. There is not enough talent in the country and

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 21

what is here is being used by three different stations. It will take another generation to get (local) trainers.”

The Center for Independent Journalism in Budapest, Hungary, listed 80 workshops or short courses in published program booklets covering the period from Spring 1996 to January of 1999. Seventeen of those courses were taught by Knight Fellows, or roughly one in five of the offerings. The Center leadership said the Knight Fellows did more than just cover the courses, however:

“We could not afford top trainers (of the caliber of the Knight Fellows). We are using local trainers more and more but it is important to have a combination of local and outside trainers...It is getting more difficult to raise money for the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. It is important that the Knight Fellows come with funding. To do this at a commercial rate would be too expensive.”

Two Knight Fellows have returned to the Budapest Center to do additional programs in the years since they completed their Fellowships. The Budapest leadership gave particular meaning to this:

“This is a kind of success. We were happy with them (initially) and happy when they came back. This is an effect of the Knight Fellowship Program. There is a pool of American trainers who can do immediately a very good job. This is a very important contribution of the Fellowship Program.”

The Center for Independent Journalism in Bucharest, Romania, relies heavily in its programming on what its staff term “targeted assistance,” and the Knight Fellows have contributed extensively to this outreach effort. Trainers have visited media organizations all over the country, offering workshops and other kinds of training. Often, these workshops are offered by trainers from outside Romania. In 1998, for example, the Center employed the services of eight western trainers, five of whom were Knight International Press Fellows.

The Center for Independent Journalism in Bratislava, Slovakia, also sends its Knight Fellows out to do workshops around the country. For example, one Fellow, during a one-month assignment with the Bratislava Center, did two-day workshops on layout and design at five media outlets and two

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 22

universities. Another Fellow, during a four-month assignment, did a workshop on basic journalism for the staff of a magazine four days each week for three hours each day. The Center leadership uses other trainers but expressed a preference for Knight Fellows:

“The Fellows are of a high quality—on a personal and professional level. Compared to other trainers—Fulbright Fellows and those we pick up on an ad hoc basis—the Knight Fellows are of the highest quality. I have great respect for the selection process.”

In St. Petersburg, Russia, and Moscow, most Knight Fellows worked with the National Press Institute, providing staff for NPI projects. In St. Petersburg, for example, one Fellow did workshops on television journalism—until the equipment was stolen over the Christmas holiday break. The Fellow also taught classes twice a week at two university programs for a full semester. The Moscow Institute sends Fellows assigned to it out of Moscow to do individual consulting and teach seminars.

In all five countries, then, the Fellows become a type of staff member for the host organizations. Their hosts plan programs around them, and use the Fellows to fill programming needs. Successful programs enhance the status of the host organizations, in the same way that an American university’s status is enhanced by the quality of its visiting faculty and speakers and the programs in which it participates. Some of the “glow” from the Fellow shines on the host.

The hosts gain in other ways as well. One reported, in reference to a Fellow who had been at his organization:

“I learned from him—how he did his job, how he planned this time, how he prepared his material. He impacted on me as a manager.”

In several instances, the Fellows left behind at their host organizations training manuals and other materials that could be used by those who came after them. They also left behind new contacts and new ideas for future programming. One of the Russian hosts said of a Fellow:

“She came up with her own suggestions. She had all the imagination one could have. She didn’t need assignments. Wherever I go now I can see her trail.”

Impact Through Institution Building

The most dramatic evidence we observed of the organizational impact of the Knight Program was in Moldova, where the work of a Fellow was instrumental in the creation of the Independent Journalism Center there. The Center is now staffed by Moldovans, has an active program that serves the needs of journalists in the country, and has even hosted a successful visit of another Knight Fellow.

Shortly after her arrival in Moldova, the Fellow began working with representatives of the Open World House, a Soros Foundation organization, to create the journalism center.

The Center is located in Chisinau, the Capital of Moldova, and it has done programming aimed at the Russian and Romanian linguistic constituencies, both in the Capital and in other areas of the country. In 1998, the Center offered short-term training courses in basic computer use, TV journalism, radio reporting (taught by a Knight Fellow), basic journalism for young journalists, radio management, and economics writing. The Center published a bi-monthly bulletin for journalists and a magazine called *Media in Moldova*. The Center also organized internships for economics journalists in Ukraine and Romania.

The Leadership of the Open World House attributed the success of the Center to the Knight Fellow:

“Her presence here in the very beginning was instrumental in creating a small but very influential journalism Center. The Center is very efficient. With a small team, they did a lot of activities. It is because of her presence in the very beginning. She showed how it could be done. Her daily presence here and the fact that she worked here and colleagues here in the Center could observe how a well-trained person worked (had a lot of impact). Other saw how she organized her day and other things.”

The current Center director worked as a translator for the first of the two Knight Fellows and was involved from the beginning in the discussions about creation of the Center. She became interested enough to take over operation of the Center when the Knight Fellow left. One of the Center staff we interviewed summarized the impact of the Knight Fellow succinctly:

“What (the Fellow) did was create a new organization that does now exist. It is working.”

The first of the two Knight Fellows who served in Ukraine during the 1994 to 1998 period did not create a journalism center, but she had a great deal of impact on one that was emerging there at the time. She joined a press center focused on training for broadcasting and offered ideas on how to serve the print community as well. While she was there, she trained newspaper journalists, visited university journalism programs, worked to start a student newspaper, met with journalists to learn of their needs, and developed a business plan for the center. She also wrote a handbook for Ukrainian journalists that was distributed all over the country and launched the center on a publishing and information distribution path it still follows. The center operates today as a Ukrainian Nongovernmental Organization and offers programs for all types of journalists in the country.

According to one of those we interviewed at the Center, the Knight Fellow helped shape the Center by educating the staff about the basics of journalism. He said:

“I came to understand what is journalism from (the Knight Fellow)—what is the mission and what is the role. For many people in the press center, the understanding of the role of the media was to build an independent Ukraine—a kind of propaganda. It was at the very beginning of our professionalism. It was a very good start and push into proper training.”

The librarian at the Center added:

“She taught me the basics of being a librarian, setting up a schedule for me and training me on how to work with journalists. I worked for a long time in this environment with journalists but before (the Knight Fellow) came nobody told me how to do the job.”

The Ukrainian center continues to exist, offers a broad range of services to journalists in the country, and continues to follow many of the initiatives provided by the Knight Fellow who worked there in the center’s formative years.

Impact on University Curricula

In a very real sense, the Knight Fellows do work abroad that professional educators and trainers do in an institutional setting in the United States and other westernized countries. In this sense, they stand in opposition to the universities that might otherwise provide journalism training, and the relationship

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 25

between many of the organizations that host the Knight Fellows and the universities has been strained. Many of those we spoke to at the host organizations said their work was necessary because the universities were not doing their jobs and were too inflexible to adapt to the rapid changes taking place in the host countries.

In two of the 11 countries we studied, Fellows were assigned directly to universities, which served as the host. One of those countries was Poland; the other was Chile. In Poland a Knight Fellow taught public relations at a private business school. In Chile, two Knight Fellows taught journalism at an old, well-established Catholic university. In both cases, the Fellow provided instruction not otherwise available to the students. In both cases, the Fellow had impact on the instructional approach of the universities.

The Polish business school, as a consequence of the influence of the Knight Fellow, plans to begin a master's level program in public relations in late 2000. It will be the only such program in the country and will be built on a general undergraduate business degree. One of those we interviewed put it simply:

“He (the Knight Fellow) left us a curriculum for public relations...PR is very important to us, and he gave it special support while he was here.”

In Chile, hosting the Knight Fellows was part of a plan by the Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile to strengthen that institution's journalism program and develop a new model of journalism instruction for the whole of Latin America. One of the leaders explained:

“In the 1980s we started a movement to change what was thought about journalism in Latin America. We thought social information was the most important thing. We thought if Latin America didn't have a good press system we would not have a stable regime.

“We changed all of our curriculum into a very professional curriculum. We thought what was being done by (many in journalism training) had nothing to do with the Latin American people. We built a new model. Now we are explaining to other journalism programs in Latin America other ways to do journalism. We want to help them to change the way they do journalism.”

Part of the approach was to model the curriculum after curricula in the United States. The University now is the first journalism program outside the United States to be accredited by the U.S. Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism in Mass Communication.

Inviting Knight Fellows to teach at the university fit into these plans. The Fellows provided American experience and an American approach to journalism and journalism education. In addition, the Knight Fellows helped the program build in at least one area it was weak in—radio journalism. Faculty at the university worked with the Fellow while he was there to assist them and to learn from them so that expertise could be fed back into the curriculum. Another of the administrators said:

“They (the Fellows) came here and helped us with our weaknesses--methodologically and in terms of how to get along with things. It will have influences afterwards. We can make an impact in the long term.”

The Chilean university operates an outreach center that provides training programs for media around the country. Its resources are limited, however, and serving the areas outside of the Capital of Santiago is difficult. Each of the Knight Fellows was sent to regional media outlets, where they conducted workshops for journalists. This activity contributed to the professional development of the journalists, but it also bolstered the status of the University’s outreach program, increasing the probability it will be able to do such work in the country and region in the future. This is yet another example of the organizational impact of the Knight Fellowship Program.

Summary and Implications

This evaluation study was designed to answer a simple question, as well as to raise questions for future study. The simple question was: Does the Knight International Press Fellowship Program have an impact in the countries in which it operates? The evidence—drawn from 11 countries in which the Program had a significant presence in the 1994 to 1998 period—is unambiguous. The recipients of the training offered by the Knight Fellows answer affirmatively. There is concrete evidence as well that the Fellows changed key organizations in those countries.

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 27

The recipients of the Knight training say the Fellows changed their attitudes, gave them new knowledge, and changed their behaviors. Many said their attitudes toward their own countries had changed as had their attitudes toward the United States. Many said they were more committed to journalism, and that they were more likely to strive for journalistic independence as a result of the work of the Knight Fellows. Many said they noticed differences in how stories were written in their countries and how other key organizations, such as those providing journalism education, went about their jobs. Many said they also saw evidence that the functioning of democracy in their countries had improved.

In addition to the impact on the individuals, the study showed evidence of impact of the Knight Program on institutions within the host countries. Specifically, the Fellows helped create training centers, provided programming for training Centers, and influenced the curricula of existing universities. In some cases their work was in opposition to existing institutions offering journalism training; in others it was in support of them. In a very real sense, the Knight International Press Fellowship Program became an extension of American journalism training models in the host countries.

These foreign initiatives at journalism training should be seen in the context of the larger effort at aiding democracy, the effectiveness of which remains very much in question. In the view of Wedell (1998), for example, western efforts to build democracy in Central Europe and Russia in the 1990s often led to corruption and anticapitalist sentiments rather than to the desired outcome. Carothers (1999) is guardedly more optimistic in his assessment.

These journalism training initiatives were undertaken in the case of Eastern and Central Europe at least at a time of dramatic change when old institutions, including the universities, were undergoing significant change. The need for journalists independent of the old regimes and able to compete in the rough and tumble world of commercial journalism was great. The universities did not have the resources, the personnel or the programs to satisfy the need quickly—a situation largely unchanged even today (Woodard, 2000). The outside initiatives offered a quick “solution” to the problem.

The recipients of the training of the Knight Fellows did not say the Program was perfect. Some recipients criticized the Fellows for their limited language skills and gaps in their knowledge of the

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 28

particulars of the society that was hosting them. Several stressed that the Program should be viewed more as a true exchange: Fellows need to realize that they will be learning from people who have a lot to teach. These responses raise questions about the appropriateness of exporting the values of journalism as practiced in the United States. A greater awareness of cultural context and of the cultural and social assumptions inherent in the program would doubtless be helpful to recipients and fellows alike.

Yet even when given the opportunity, many recipients struggled when asked to give specific suggestions to those who operate the Knight Program. Recipients were not strident in denouncing the aims of the program or the premises on which it was based. On the contrary, recipients often appeared to be searching for a framework within which to make sense of their newfound journalistic skills. The news librarian from the Ukraine serves as an example. This recipient said while she had been performing her work tasks for some time, it took the intervention of the fellow to make sense of her efforts and to show her the hows and the whys of her work. It seems that the most successful efforts changed skill levels while also changing the conceptual framework behind the skills. After all, a journalistic skill -- reporter neutrality for example -- is born of a certain set of values and assumptions. It is interesting to note that the program was more successful teaching skills than changing attitudes about the role of journalism in society or about democracy. This begs the question, what are the consequences of teaching skills apart from their conceptual underpinnings?

It is impossible to set a firm standard against which to evaluate the reports of those who worked with the Knight Fellows and the evidence of organizational change observed. No other study of the impact of the Knight Program has been undertaken. No other comparable data from other such programs are available. Ideally, the evaluation would have incorporated a comparison with journalists and journalistic programs that received no training. The change from the Knight program could have then been more rigorously assessed. However, this was not possible within the confines of allowable resources.

The evaluation study also did not cover every country in which the Knight Program operates. Limitations of time made it necessary to select. The countries visited were many of those where the Knight Program has operated the longest and where it has sent large numbers of Fellows. Is it a

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 29

certainty that the Program was equally successful in others countries? No. It is unlikely, however, given the success observed in the 11 selected countries, that it had no impact elsewhere.

The variation in results among the 11 countries are interesting and raise certain questions. Why were fellows more successful changing attitudes in some countries than in others? And why, as mentioned earlier, were fellows more successful in changing journalistic skills than in changing attitudes about the role of journalism in society and in attitudes about democracy? Likely there was often a less-than-perfect fit between the assumptions of the training and the social and cultural contexts of the recipients. The regression models showed that degree of receptiveness accounted for a notable portion of the variance in the success of these ideas. All was not under the control of the change agents. Variability in country, variability in age of recipient and variability in the degree of association between the recipient and the Center staff were all significant predictors of success, but none of these factors were under the control of program designers or of fellows.

However, fellows did have some control over time spent with recipients and the types of contact between fellow and recipient. Sufficient amounts of time and variability in types of contact allowed fellows to break through otherwise unfavorable conditions and effect change. The implications are that programs with abundant resources should have more success effecting change than those without resources. Success is not solely determined by the degree of receptivity of those being trained.

It is important to remember what the evaluation study might have found. There was no guarantee that people would come out of the countryside, cross political borders, take time out from their busy lives and work, and do all of the others things that the respondents to this study did to make sure their voices were heard. Those we found could have said the Program was a waste of their time. People did talk, and what they said was clear: The Knight International Press Fellowship Program meant a great deal to them.

This assessment of a single example of such a training initiative suggests it had impact on those who participated in it. Perhaps more importantly it suggests the program had impact on other institutions that are likely to offer journalism training in the future. In some cases, those institutions were established

**Independent Journalism Training Initiatives:
Their Impact on Journalists and Journalism Education**

Page 30

university programs. In other cases, the institutions were new centers that now are in the position to compete with or complement the programs offered by universities. Only across time will it be possible to determine the consequences of these developments on journalism education and journalism in the host countries and more globally.

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