


MEDIA MANAGEMENT IN POLISH HIGHER EDUCATION: EXPLORING THE LANDSCAPE


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ABSTRACT

The authors focus on the scope of media management's higher education in Poland. They investigate its scale by analysing and comparing academic curricula at selected public universities regarding categorisation and the identification of assessment systems. This exploratory research employs desk research, content analysis, and a comparative approach. A total of 20 Polish universities' curricula in the discipline of social communication and the media, with 80 different media management-related courses, are studied. As a result, the paper highlights the need for more comprehensive research on contemporary university education in media management, underscoring a demand to enhance the coherent understanding of media management education in Poland.

Keywords: media management, higher education, social communication and media studies, curriculum development

Introduction

In the 18th century, the British philosopher Edmund Burke recognised the power of media, referring to the journalists gathered in the Parliament as the fourth estate in the realm. Over time, this concept evolved, and media researchers began using the term “fourth power” (i.e. Pisarek 1995; Adamowski 2005). Later they started contemplating whether the media had become the primary power (i.e. Goban-Klas 2005). This is evidenced by their causality, unlimited universality and accessibility, thematic diversity, and mediatisation – which Strömbäck (2008) perceives as the process by which media become a crucial source of information and a communication channel between citizens and political institutions. Mediatisation encompasses changes in the dynamics of social interactions, where the logic of media influences how politics is perceived, formulated, and enacted. The position of the media is strengthened by the functions they perform, which – despite the dynamics of the media industry – have remained unchanged for years. One can mention, for example, providing information, shaping opinions, transmitting national heritage, education, culture-forming, entertainment and relaxation, control, and economic roles (Lazarsfeld, Stanton 1944; Lasswell 1948; Turska-Kawa 2013).

The above indications reveal much about the scale of the media’s obligations toward their stakeholders, covering not only every sphere of social communication but also, quite simply, human life. These roles become even more crucial in exceptional situations, such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks, or, most recently, the pandemic and war in Ukraine (Jupowicz-Ginalska, Wróblewska 2021; Jupowicz-Ginalska 2022; Appelgren 2022). In such circumstances, the issue of information matters the most, especially regarding its reliability, credibility, verification, and balanced dissemination. The abovementioned approach focuses on the media content and its reception. However, it is incomplete because the media – regardless of the situation – operate in the market to generate revenue (Terry 2010). This truth, which in turbulent times fades into the background, applies to both commercial and public media, because no organisation can survive without financial resources. This assumption is inherent in the media’s economic function, which includes obtaining and spending money (Kowalski, Jung 2021). However, media economics, seen as „the impact of economic and financial conditions on the development and quality of operation of various media enterprises in the modern market” (Mroczo 2013, p. 218), remains only one of the elements of the media enterprises.

Media management (further: MM) seems to offer a more cross-sectional approach, encouraging people to view the media enterprises through the perspectives of their owners, managers, and employees. According to McQuail, it encompasses „a set of laws, regulations, rules, and conventions that serve to exercise control over the media in the public interest, including the interests of the media themselves” (McQuail 2007, p. 242). Nierenberg understands it twofold: broadly, referring to “the media understood as a field relating to social, political, and economic phenomena,” or narrowly, referring to “the management of a media enterprise operating in a specific environment” (Nierenberg 2013, p. 157).

In this latter approach, some threads related to the media's practical functioning emerge, for example to their marketing activities. These aspects cover the convergent production of media goods and services, appearing whereby media technologies merge to create integrated media experiences. This phenomenon enhances accessibility and user engagement by disseminating the media content across various channels (Jenkins 2006). Additionally, media marketing encompass multiplatformisation, a strategy involving the simultaneous deployment of content across multiple platforms to maximise audience reach and interaction. This approach diversifies distribution channels and creates a cohesive brand presence across various media environments (Hesmondhalgh, Potter 2014; Jupowicz-Ginalska 2013). Furthermore, these aspects include the implementation of new business models, the modernisation of market activity processes, branding, internal and external promotion, as well as the roles and tasks of media personnel, including managers and brand ambassadors (Jupowicz-Ginalska 2010, 2013).

Considering the above, MM which is broader than media marketing, can be considered as a strategic approach to what, why, when, how, and to whom the media offer their products and services. In other words, the decisions made within MM shape editorial policy principles and their market-based implementation. Given its crucial role, it should be carried out by competent individuals. And that is when the longstanding discussion on journalist education appears. Many scholars state that some of the practitioners' notion that journalists do not need specialised education should be revised. For instance, Donaj echoing Sobczak, argues that in today's context, „the rapid development of new information technologies causes a growing demand for professional, educated media staff, including educated journalists” (Donaj 2009, p. 6). Malmelin, Virta, and Kuismin (2022) emphasise that comprehensively educated employees contribute to building the competitiveness of media companies.

We extrapolate this discussion to media managers, who are also undeniably tied with the practice. Unfortunately, it turns out that the topic of their education remains *terra incognita*. To the best of the authors' knowledge, in the 21st century (an era of the digitalisation, convergence, platformisation, transmediality, and datafication), contemporary university education in the field of MM has not yet been examined cross-sectionally, even though the demand for similar analyses was articulated by Hoag and Brickley (2001) or Förster and Rohn (2015). These researchers observed that developing education for innovative media management staff requires harmonising knowledge regarding what MM is, how it should be taught, what the areas of expertise are, and how to effectively prepare enthusiasts of this field for future work.

In this this paper we address the indicated problem identifying the following research goals: 1) mapping the scale of university education in the field of MM in Poland among selected public universities providing education in the discipline of social communication and media sciences; 2) analysing academic education programs in terms of MM.

Our study comprises theoretical and empirical components along with conclusions. The theoretical section focuses on the concept of “media management” and the current approach to academic education in this field. The empirical section, using the quantitative and qualitative analysis of secondary sources, presents preliminary research results. It is also important to note that the data described in this study are an integral part of the research project „Media Management: An Educational Approach. Mapping and Identifying the Needs of the Academic Community in Poland” funded by IDUB grant.

Literature Review: From Definition to Education of Media Management

Nierenberg defines MM as „a set of interrelated processes and activities involving planning, organising, leading, motivating, and controlling relating to all manifestations and levels of the media system” (Nierenberg 2011, p. 79). Later he also points to terminological complexities, emphasising the difference between the phrases „media management” and „management in media” (Nierenberg 2016). The first are the levels of management, ways of „influencing the operation of media organisations through various regulations [...] or regulators of the media market and public or commercial use of the media for various purposes” (Nierenberg 2016, p. 152). The second approach is more about „decision-making processes relating to the media organisations themselves, taking place at the „functional, process, and structural levels” (Nierenberg 2016, p. 152). Finally, he believes that „management in media” is included in „media management” (Nierenberg 2016, p. 153) and proposes that this term be understood in two ways: broadly („understood as a field relating to social phenomena, political, and economic”) and narrowly (managing “of a media enterprise in a specific environment”, (Nierenberg 2016, p. 157).

Despite the relatively short tradition of research in this area, we can discuss attempts to establish MM as a coherent theoretical construct (Picard 2006). For example, some researchers distinguish critical issues by focusing on specific media sub-industries, production and distribution processes, building a media brand, and media marketing (Wirtz 2011). Others argue that MM’s every day and diverse challenges make it challenging to identify or suggest a central theory around which research could focus (Albarran 2010). As Pavlik (2013) states, the definition-related issues may be caused by the interdisciplinarity of this area. After all, academics draw on many research traditions rooted in journalism, finance, management, political science, law, computer science, or even bibliology, combining managerial, business, and economic approaches (Förster, Rohn 2015; Malmelin, Virta, Kuismin 2022).

Mierzejewska and Hollifield examine the academic literature on MM and describe three research approaches to this topic: SCP (structure-conduct-performance that is, the relationship between structure and performance), RBV (resource-based-view, i.e., using unique resources in developing a company’s strategy), and niche theory (i.e., treating gaps as opportunities for development) (Mierzejewska, Hollifield 2006, p. 40-57). However, Nierenberg believes that researching the phenomenon is generally

„difficult because it is [...] poorly recognised and requires the creation of a specific conceptual apparatus, appropriate research tools, and the establishment of parallel and separate issues concerning classical management” (Nierenberg 2016, p. 157).

Given the ongoing discussions about the identity of MM, understanding its current status in today’s education is crucial for its further development (and the development of the discipline of social communication and media studies). Meanwhile, ensuring high-quality education in the discussed area is a real academic challenge. On the one hand, Zhang, Ma, and Huang consider it „significant and useful [...] not only for journalism students but for all students studying media and communications” (Zhang, Ma, Huang 2022, p. 21). They claim that implementing MM into curricula prepares students to function in a highly competitive market. Other researchers raise the encountered difficulties. They include interdisciplinarity (Shaver 2000), constant transformations of the media, intensifying under the influence of internationalisation, convergence, and continuous development of new technologies (Murschetz 2020), and challenging relationships between the theory with practice, both in the areas of teaching and cooperation between the academy and media enterprises. For example, the traditional approach to MM teaching improves students’ performance moderately, while using practical case studies has greater potential (Zhang, Li 2021). As Lowe and Picard state, there is still much to be done in the area of UIC/university-industry collaboration (2020). Although this field has gained more stability over time, it still exhibits variations. The prevailing practice adheres to existing traditional norms, privileges publishing in peer-reviewed journals, and successfully attains funding. Interestingly, the media industry itself postulates the need to develop competencies in media employees, such as focusing on finding solutions (Petzold, Knuth 2022), implementing innovations (Belda, Gonçalves 2021) and new technologies (Mierzejewska, Hollifield 2006), or practising work-oriented teamwork (Förster, Rohn 2015).

Considering this, the everyday demands of the academic and media communities should be reflected the universities’ MM curricula and result in upgrading the MM teaching levels. As it is known, „effective, high-quality education is a key condition for the development of society” (Stachel 2011, p. 138). This statement becomes particularly powerful now when global education systems have transformed from elite to mass, undergoing a process of mediatisation (Jiang 2022). However, before improving the processes, the current state of MM should be known. Unfortunately, the existing *state of art* does not provide a sufficient knowledge on this topic. On the contrary, it brings more questions that need to be addressed:

- RQ1) what is the scale of the university education in the field of MM in Poland?
- RQ2) what is the specificity of the university education in the field of MM in Poland (categories, assessments, etc.)?

Methodology: From Methods to the Selection of the Research Sample

To conduct the research process for this article, we reached for the desk research method (supported by content analysis and a comparative approach).

As Apanowicz notes, “each institution [...] produces and stores various documents” that “concern [...] the task and organisational-reporting system” and “include the scope of tasks, organisation, structure, financial effects, implementation, and reporting on core activities” (Apanowicz 2002, p. 68). Such a document may be “any human product [...] that expresses a thought, vision, mission, achievement, and proposal and is used to reproduce the actual activity or state of the examined organisational structure in a legal form” (Apanowicz 2002, p. 68). This method enables estimating the actual picture of “events, facts, and achievements” and characterising the quality, tools, and methods of operation of the examined entities thanks to comparing the analysed “data, facts, phenomena, and processes” (Apanowicz 2002, p. 69).

We decided that our source material will be the curricula of public universities offering education in social communication and media studies. We based the selection on the annual “Ranking of Study Fields – *Perspektywy*¹ 2023 („Ranking Kierunków Studiów – *Perspektywy* 2023”; *Perspektywy* 2023). Table 1 presents the list of the universities offering the best teaching for the field of „journalism and communication”. The private institutions are coloured with grey and we did not take them into consideration in analysis.

Table 1. “Ranking of Study Fields – *Perspektywy* 2023” for „journalism and communication”

| Rank in 2023 | Name of university (we use the Polish official names further) |
|--------------|--|
| 1 | Uniwersytet Warszawski [University of Warsaw] |
| 2 | Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu [Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań] |
| 3 | Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie [Jagiellonian University Cracow] |
| 4 | Uniwersytet Wrocławski [University of Wrocław] |
| 5 | SWPS Uniwersytet Humanistycznospołeczny w Warszawie [SWPS University] |
| 6 | Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej w Lublinie [Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin] |
| 7 | Uniwersytet Łódzki [University of Lodz] |
| 8 | Uniwersytet Zielonogórski [The University of Zielona Góra] |
| 9 | Uniwersytet Śląski w Katowicach [University of Silesia in Katowice] |
| 10 | Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu [Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń] |
| 11 | Uniwersytet Opolski [University of Opole] |
| 12 | Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny im. Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Krakowie [University of the National Education Commission in Krakow] |
| 13 | Uniwersytet Kazimierza Wielkiego w Bydgoszczy [Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz] |

¹ „*Perspektywy*” is a magazine addressed to students, focusing on education issues,

| Rank in 2023 | Name of university (we use the Polish official names further) |
|--------------|---|
| 14 | Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II w Lublinie [John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin] |
| 15 | Uniwersytet Gdański [University of Gdansk] |
| 16 | Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie [Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw] |
| 17 | Uniwersytet Szczeciński [University of Szczecin] |
| 18 | Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie [University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn] |
| 19 | Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach [Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce] |
| 20 | Uniwersytet Rzeszowski [University of Rzeszów] |
| 21 | Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie [Jesuit Ignatianum in Krakow] |
| 22 | Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie [The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow] |
| 23 | Spółeczna Akademia Nauk w Łodzi [University of Social Sciences] |
| 24 | Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach [University of Economics in Katowice] |
| 25 | Uniwersytet Dolnośląski DSW we Wrocławiu [DSW University of Lower Silesia] |

Source: *Perspektywy*, 2023.

In the next step, we visited the websites of the remaining universities. We searched for teaching programs for the discipline of social communication and media studies. In two cases, we had significant issues accessing the website or obtaining information on the educational offer. Firstly, Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie did not publish detailed descriptions. Secondly, while attempting to access the website of Uniwersytet Śląski w Katowicach, we encountered “error” messages. Considering these challenges, the final research sample comprised 20 universities.

Subsequently, we searched the curricula (for the academic year 2023/24) by identifying the elements related to MM: either directly (the phrase “media management” or “management in the media”) or indirectly (e.g., “media marketing / marketing in the media”, “media economy / media economics”, “media branding”, “media production”, “media distribution”, “media people”, etc.).

Then we coded the obtained data by the following criteria: university, name of the unit (faculty / institute / department), degree of study (BA / MA), mode of study (full-time / part-time), name of the field of study, name of specialisation, names of offered courses, type of courses (lecture / seminar / workshop), method of assessment (exam / pass). After this we reached for the quantitative data analysis using a comparative approach.

We conducted the research in November 2023. We performed a cross-check at the beginning of December 2023 which led to any necessary corrections.

Results

Media Management in Educational Offer – General Approach

Table 2 presents the data for the university units, degree of study and the name of the field of study. As observed, every university offers at least one course connected with MM. Among the 23 identified fields of study, three namely refer to the management of media entities (directly: “Journalism and Media Management” in Szczecin, and indirectly: “Logistics and Administration in the Media” in Warsaw and “Media Production” in Lublin). The remaining units mostly repeat the name of the discipline in which they are taught (13), with additional references to media (3), digital media (1), or information. Thus, it can be seen that MM it is mostly interwoven into existing, journalism-wide offerings.

The educational offer is evenly distributed in terms of degree programs: almost similar degrees are available for both BA and MA students (9), for BA 7, and for MA – 7. However, the mode of study differs: in eight cases, MM can be studied by full-time and part-time students, but in as many as 15 cases, only full-time students have this option.

The most extensive offer with elements of MM is provided by the Uniwersytet Warszawski (four fields of study), UMCS, Uniwersytet Łódzki, Uniwersytet Szczeciński, and the Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie (all of the offer MM within two fields).

Table 2. Media management in higher education in Poland – general data

| No. | Name of the university | Name of the faculty | Name of the unit | Name of the field of study | BA / MA | Stationary / Non-stationary |
|-----|---|---|------------------|---|---------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Uniwersytet Warszawski [University of Warsaw] | Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies | n.a. | Journalism and Media Studies | Both | Both |
| | | | | Contemporary Publishing | Both | Both |
| | | | | Logistics and administration in the media | Both | Both |
| | | | | Architecture of Information Spaces | MA | Stationary |
| 2 | Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu [Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań] | Faculty of Political Science and Journalism | n.a. | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | Both |

| No. | Name of the university | Name of the faculty | Name of the unit | Name of the field of study | BA / MA | Stationary / Non-stationary |
|-----|---|---|---|--|---------|-----------------------------|
| 3 | Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie [Jagiellonian University Cracow] | Faculty of Management and Social Communication | Institute of Journalism, Media and Social Communication | Journalism and Social Communication | Both | Both |
| 4 | Uniwersytet Wrocławski [University of Wrocław] | Faculty of Philology | The Institute of Journalism and Social Communication | Journalism and Social Communication | Both | Both |
| 5 | Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej w Lublinie [Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin] | Faculty of Political Science and Journalism | Institute of Social Communication Sciences and Media | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | Stationary |
| | | | | Media Production | Both | Stationary |
| 6 | Uniwersytet Łódzki [University of Łódź] | Faculty of Philology | Department of Journalism and Social Communication | Journalism, Media and Social Communication | Both | Stationary |
| | | | | Journalism, media and communication design | BA | Stationary |
| 7 | Uniwersytet Zielonogórski [The University of Zielona Góra] | Faculty of Humanities | n.a. | Journalism and Social Communication | BA | Stationary |
| 8 | Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu [Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń] | Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences | Institute of Information and Communication Research | Journalism and Social Communication | BA | Stationary |
| 9 | Uniwersytet Opolski [University of Opole] | Faculty of Political Science and Social Communication | Institute of Political Science and Administration | Journalism and Social Communication | BA | Stationary |

| No. | Name of the university | Name of the faculty | Name of the unit | Name of the field of study | BA / MA | Stationary / Non-stationary |
|-----|--|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| 10 | Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny im. Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Krakowie [University of the National Education Commission in Krakow] | n.a. | Institute of Journalism and International Relations | Journalism | BA | Stationary |
| | | | | Nature journalism | MA | Stationary |
| | | | | Social journalism | MA | Stationary |
| 11 | Uniwersytet Kazimierza Wielkiego w Bydgoszczy [Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz] | n.a. | Institute of Social Communication and Media | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | Stationary |
| 12 | Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II w Lublinie [John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin] | Faculty of Social Sciences | Institute of Journalism and Management | Journalism and Social Communication | Both | Stationary |
| 13 | Uniwersytet Gdański [University of Gdansk] | Faculty of Social Sciences | Institute of Media, Journalism and Social Sciences | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | Stationary |
| 14 | Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie [Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw] | Faculty of Theology | Institute of Media Education and Journalism | Journalism | BA | Stationary |
| 15 | Uniwersytet Szczeciński [University of Szczecin] | Faculty of Humanities | n.a. | Journalism and Social Communication | BA | Stationary |
| | | | | Journalism and Media Management | MA | Stationary |

| No. | Name of the university | Name of the faculty | Name of the unit | Name of the field of study | BA / MA | Stationary / Non-stationary |
|-----|---|---|---|--|---------|-----------------------------|
| 16 | Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie [University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn] | Faculty of Humanities | Institute of Journalism and Social Communication | Journalism and Social Communication | Both | Stationary |
| 17 | Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach [Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce] | Faculty of Humanities | Institute of Journalism, Media and Social Communication | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | Stationary |
| 18 | Uniwersytet Rzeszowski [University of Rzeszów] | n.a. | Institute of Polish Studies and Journalism | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | Stationary |
| 19 | Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie [The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow] | Faculty of Social Sciences | Institute of Journalism, Media and Social Communication | Digital media – creativity, analysis, management | BA | Both |
| | | | | Journalism and Social Communication | Both | Stationary |
| 20 | Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach [University of Economics in Katowice] | Faculty of Information Technology and Communication | Institute of Journalism, Media and Social Communication | Journalism and Social Communication | Both | Both |

Source: own study

Media Management as a University Course: A Specific Approach

After identifying the MM within the fields of study, we take the narrower approach. We focus on MM-related courses. Across all curricula offered by the universities studied, we selected 80 different subjects which we divided into two categories, that is direct or indirect embedding in MM.

Direct embedding in MM

The results presenting the category of direct embedding in MM refer to 15 courses offered by 12 universities (Table 3).

Table 3. MM-related courses: direct embedding

| No. | University | Name of the field of study | BA / MA | Stationary / Non-stationary | Course |
|-----|---|---|---------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Uniwersytet Warszawski [University of Warsaw] | Logistics and administration in the media | MA | both | Nowoczesna organizacja i procesy zarządzania firmą mediową [Modern organisation and management processes of a media company] |
| 2 | Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie [Jagiellonian University Cracow] | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | stationary | Zarządzanie przedsiębiorstwem medialnym [Management of a media company] |
| 4 | Uniwersytet Wrocławski [University of Wrocław] | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | both | Zarządzanie mediami [Media management] |
| 5 | Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej w Lublinie [Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin] | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | stationary | Zarządzanie mediami [Media management] |
| | | Media Production | BA | stationary | Zarządzanie przedsiębiorstwem wielomedialnym [Management of a multi-media company] |
| 7 | Uniwersytet Zielonogórski [The University of Zielona Góra] | Journalism and Social Communication | BA | stationary | Zarządzanie mediami: praca, kariera, rynek [Media management: work, career, market] |
| 9 | Uniwersytet Opolski [University of Opole] | Journalism and Social Communication | BA | stationary | Zarządzanie mediami [Media management] |

| No. | University | Name of the field of study | BA / MA | Stationary / Non-stationary | Course |
|-----|---|--|---------|-----------------------------|--|
| 11 | Uniwersytet Kazimierza Wielkiego w Bydgoszczy [Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz] | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | stationary | Zarządzanie w mediach [Management in the media] |
| 16 | Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie [University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn] | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | stationary | Organizacja i zarządzanie mediami [Media organisation and management] |
| 17 | Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach [Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce] | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | stationary | Zarządzanie firmą medialną [Management of a media company] |
| 18 | Uniwersytet Rzeszowski [University of Rzeszów] | Journalism and Social Communication | MA | stationary | Zarządzanie instytucją medialną [Management of a media institution] |
| 19 | Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie [The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow] | Digital media – creativity, analysis, management | BA | both | Zarządzanie instytucjami i organizacjami medialnymi [Management of media institutions and organisations] |
| | | | BA | stationary | Wstęp do zarządzania mediami [Introduction to media management] |
| | | | BA | stationary | Media management |
| 20 | Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach [University of Economics in Katowice] | Journalism and Social Communication | BA | both | Zarządzanie z elementami zarządzania mediami [Management with the elements of media management] |

Source: own study

The presented data demonstrates a need for more of a consensus on naming the phenomenon. In seven cases, we encounter “media management”, but other terms also appear. Furthermore, there is no consistency in naming the enterprise being managed, with terms such as “media,” “organisations,” “companies” (including multimedia), and “institutions.” These terms are not synonymous, and using them may imply a focus on different elements of the media industry.

As a general course emphasising knowledge about MM processes, one might assume that it would be widely available. However, it is only offered by 12 universities. Additionally, while its availability for BA and MA students is evenly distributed

(seven and eight, respectively), it remains uneven for the full-time and part-time students (11 subjects are offered to full-time students, while only four are offered to both full-time and part-time students).

To deepen the outcomes, we examined the courses assigned to specialisations offered within the fields of study. In nine cases MM is provided equally to the students of all specialisations. It happens for example at UMCS (specialisations: “Multimedia”; “Media Production Organisation”, “Editorial”, “Public Relations”, “New Media”); Uniwersytet Opolski (“Communication and Film in a Global World”, “Print Journalism”, “Broadcast Journalism”, “Public Relations and Advertising”), Uniwersytet Jagielloński (“Media Analysis and Monitoring”; “Multimedia Production”, “Media Logistics”; “Promotion”), Uniwersytet Rzeszowski (“Media Research and Documentation”, “Copywriting and Image Creation”), Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie (“Broadcast Journalism”, “Image Communication”), Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach (“Economic Journalism and Public Relations”, “New Media”, “Communication in Organisations”, “Visual communication and Narrative Design”), Uniwersytet Warszawski (“Media Management and Marketing”, “Management of New Technologies in the Media”, “Organisation of Audiovisual Production”) and Uniwersytet Jagielloński (“Audiovisual Journalism”, “Specialised Journalism”, “Photography and Film”, “Media Relations”). Only in one case is MM offered for selected specialities (at the Uniwersytet Zielonogórski, for “Information Broker” and “Online Journalism”). In the remaining cases, there was no specialisation or accessible information about it.

On the one hand, we can cautiously speak of a particular spread of the subject within the specialisations. However, it can be noted that only few universities offer specialisations focused directly on MM; in fact, only the Uniwersytet Warszawski does it so explicitly. Elements of MM in specialisations appear in Lublin (“Media Production Organisation”), Kraków (“Multimedia Production and Media Logistics”), and Zielona Góra (“Information Broker”).

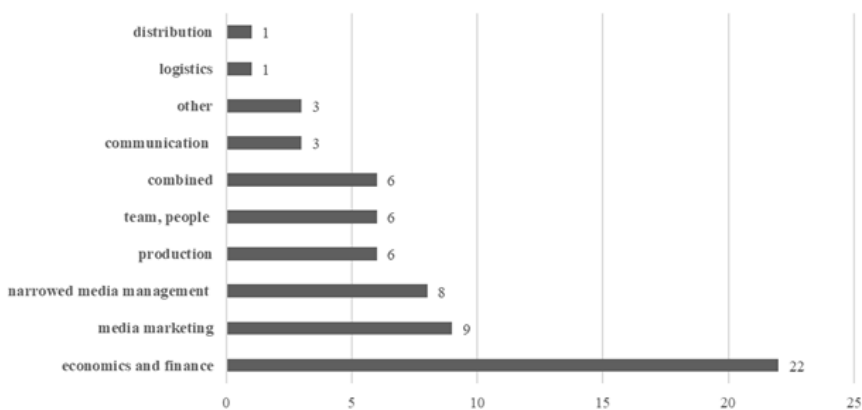
We also examined how the courses were run and how they could be passed. In four cases, the course was a lecture with an exam (at the Uniwersytet Warszawski and Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie). In Opole, Olsztyn, and Wrocław, students are offered exercises ending with credits with grades (one time) or “pass / fail” (without any grades). Uniwersytet Jagielloński and UMCS run seminars (one with and one without grades). Only Zielona Góra implements workshops (with pass or fail). Four universities (Katowice, Lublin, Kielce, and Bydgoszcz) introduce a combination of courses, for example, a lecture with exercises (one time), a lecture with a seminar (two times), and exercises with a seminar (one time). Two of them ended with grades and two without grades. Without delving into the debate whether subjects ending in grades require more effort from students, it is worth pointing out another issue. Namely, just a few universities decided to introduce differentiated forms of MM teaching to offer the audience a broader perspective, not limited to theory, discussion, and practical exercises.

Indirect embedding in MM

We found 65 courses, offered by 17 universities (all from the select sample except Bydgoszcz, Olsztyn, and Zielona Góra). We identified the following subcategories (Figure 1). Due to editing constraints, we will discuss the three of them.

The most significant subcategory is connected with economic and financial issues in the media. We can identify several sub-groups of subjects in this set, including those directly related to financial matters (economics or media economics, financing media activities) or indirectly through apparent links to money flows (e.g. Krakow's "Business models in digital media" or Warsaw's "Assessing the profitability of publications", "Optimising the operations of a publishing company"). Interestingly, one could observe some inconsistency in naming. For example, Lublin, Wrocław and Warsaw offer "Media Economy", while for the other institutions – "Media Economics".

Figure 1. Subcategories of indirect embedding in media management



Source: own study

UMCS is the only university providing the subject for both BA and MA students (for full-time students only). In eight cases, the subject appears only in BA programs (four times for full-time students only, and in four cases for full-time and extramural students combined, e.g. at Wrocław, Kraków or Warsaw), and in 13 cases in MA programs (eight times for full-time students only, and in five cases for full-time and extramural students combined, e.g. at Warsaw, Poznań or Katowice). Despite the greater prevalence of the subject, it is slightly more accessible to full-time students. Courses in 17 cases are available to all students, while in three cases, they are open for students of selected specialisations (in Lublin for "Media Production Organisation", in Cracow for "Journalism", and at the University of Warsaw for "Logistics and Marketing in Media").

Generally, the course consists of 11 lectures (ending with an exam), a seminar (six times, ending with a "pass with a grade") and an exercise (three times, ending

with a “pass with a grade”). Two universities offer a combined form: a lecture with a training and workshop (ending with a “pass with a grade”).

The second subcategory of indirect embedding in MM consists of courses related to media marketing. We identified nine of them, with quite incoherent nomenclature. There is “Marketing Management in the Media” (Szczecin), “Media Marketing” (Warsaw, Kielce, Rzeszów), “Marketing in the Media” (Warsaw), “Marketing on the Media Market” (Toruń), or “Integrated Media Marketing” (Warsaw). The subject is available to BA students (four times, including four times for full-time and twice for part-time studies) and MA students (four times, but exclusively for full-time studies). Once again, non-full-time students have limited access to topics related to MM. The University of Warsaw implemented lectures, seminars, and workshops, concluding with an exam and a pass/fail assessment. The combination of different subject forms was also proposed by Rzeszów and Kielce (in both cases, ending with a pass/fail assessment).

The third subcategory of indirect embedding in MM relates to narrowing down MM to a specific topic, e.g., information (“Information Management” at the Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny im. Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Krakowie, “Information Management in the Media” in Szczecin), content (“Media Content Management” in Wrocław), types of media (“WWW Management” in Toruń, “Publishing Project Management” at the Uniwersytet Warszawski), or media projects (“Digital Media Project Management” in Cracow or “Project Management in the Media” in Szczecin). These courses are offered mainly at the BA level (five times) and full-time studies. They primarily end with a pass / fail (five times), a pass without a mark (twice) or an exam (once). They are conducted in a practical form: lectures are delivered only in Toruń and at the University of Warsaw.

Conclusions

We mapped the landscape of university education in the field of MM in Poland, focusing on selected public universities that offer programs in the discipline of social communication and media sciences. We also analysed the structure and content of academic programs related to MM. Therefore, the research questions regarding the scale and specificity of university education in the field of MM in Poland have been answered.

Although Zhang, Ma, and Huang (2022) claim that the inclusion of MM in university curricula could significantly enhance the readiness of students to navigate the evolving media landscape, we prove that this is a rare phenomenon. As evidenced, MM as a direct focus of study is scarcely present in the names of courses, specialisations and subjects. Most classes are offered predominantly to full-time students, which limits the overall reach and accessibility. Only a few courses end with an exam and include a practical, dual approach combining theory and hands-on experience. This imbalance between theoretical knowledge and practical application may limit the readiness of graduates to manage the complex media environment. This

concern is echoed by Förster and Rohn (2015), who emphasise the need for greater integration of practical competencies into MM education.

Another interesting observation concerns the inconsistency in terminology. There is no uniformity in how terms like media management, marketing, media economics, or the media itself are used across different universities. This inconsistency complicates curriculum development and hinders the interdisciplinary growth of the field. It seems that discussion on terminology highlighted by Nierenberg (2016) still has a *raison d'être*. Given these findings, it would be valuable to revisit the relationship between MM and broader areas like management or economics, to develop a more cohesive understanding and dissemination of MM as an academic subdiscipline. As Mierzejewska and Hollifield (2006) suggest, harmonising MM's terminological and theoretical framework could foster its integration across interdisciplinary research, addressing the current fragmentation within the field. This could also facilitate a more systematic integration of MM into the wider field of social communication and media studies, expanding its interdisciplinary reach (cf. Hofman 2019).

Additionally, addressing the gaps in MM academic education could support the media industry. By refining MM curricula, universities could not only better prepare students but also contribute to the industry's innovation pipeline, as noted by Murschetz (2020).

This paper has several limitations. The focus on public universities and the reliance on quantitative data analysis narrow the scope of the findings. However, the primary aim of this article was to initially map the scale of MM education in Poland; and this objective was achieved. This exploratory approach opens up new theoretical and practical possibilities. In terms of future research, it would be beneficial to continue the analysis of MM education in Poland with a qualitative method, such as focus groups and in-depth interviews, to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in MM education.

From the practical perspective, the findings can contribute to the ongoing discussion about the place of MM in the academic discipline. They also provide inspiration to develop more robust and specialised programs in MM better aligning with the needs of the evolving media industry. This goes in hand with the observations by Malmelin, Virta and Kuismin (2022), who claim that developing specialised MM programs could improve the competitiveness of media professionals and, by extension, the media organizations they work for.

The results of this study underscore the importance of rethinking how MM is taught and integrated into university curricula, offering valuable insights for educators and academic institutions. As an effect, the interdisciplinary nature of MM, spanning management, economics, and media studies, could be more prominently reflected in curricula. This would ensure that graduates are not only equipped with technical skills but also a holistic understanding of media systems and market dynamics. As Pavlik (2013) points out, the intersection of different academic traditions is essential for fostering innovation in media management.

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STRESZCZENIE

Mapowanie akademickiego nauczania zarządzania mediami w Polsce

Autorki skupiają się na mapowaniu edukacji wyższej w dziedzinie zarządzania mediami w Polsce. Analizują jej skalę poprzez porównanie programów akademickich na wybranych publicznych uczelniach, kategoryzując je według trybu, formuły studiowania czy sposobu zaliczenia przedmiotu. Badania eksploracyjne obejmują analizę dokumentów, analizę treści oraz podejście porównawcze. W sumie zbadano programy nauczania na 20 polskich uczelniach, realizowane w ramach dyscypliny nauki o komunikacji społecznej i mediach (co dało 80 różnych przedmiotów związanych z zarządzaniem mediami). Autorki podkreślają potrzebę bardziej kompleksowych badań nad współczesnym kształceniem uniwersyteckim w zakresie zarządzania mediami oraz konieczność wzmocnienia spójnego rozumienia edukacji w tej dziedzinie w Polsce.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie mediami, szkolnictwo wyższe, nauki o komunikacji społecznej i mediach, rozwój programów studiów

First View