

From describing problems to providing perspectives

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Important elements in constructive journalism

- Stimulating participation *in* and *through* journalism
- Solution-oriented framing of news
- Broader context: more diverse and inclusive
- Look beyond negative news angles (critical but never cynical)

Research program

**Constructive
Journalism**

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graph TD; A([Constructive Journalism]) --> B[Professionals]; A --> C[Product]; A --> D[Public];
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Professionals

Product

Public

Results (professionals)

Table Journalists' perceptions of the importance of professional roles (normative vs factual) that relate to CJ (N=522)

	Normative	Factual
Social engagement	+	-
Stimulate and facilitate public debate in large sections of the population	3.92	2.95
Develop peoples interest in society	3.84	3.36
Motivate people to participate in social or political activities	3.16	2.62
Solution oriented	+	+
Provide information that contributes to solutions for problems	3.76	3.50
Broader context: inclusive and divers	+	-
Promote tolerance and cultural diversity	3.42	2.77

Results (Product)

Local newspapers (7 titles: 1297 articles) quantitative content analyses

First results: **24% had elements of constructive journalism**
(solution mentioned, future orientation, growth)

In-depth analyses:

- **Social relevance often human interest**
- **Discrepancy between Title (negative) and article**
- **Half did not have 'diversity and inclusive' perspectives**

Results (Public)

Table News preferences in relation to elements of CJ (N=4160)

Solution oriented	+
News content should contribute to the solution of social problems	3.3
Broader context: Inclusive and diverse	+
News should include more diverse sources and perspectives	3.4
Social engagement	+
Motivate people to get socially involved	3.3
More positive approach	≈
News is too negative, the tenor of news items should be more positive	3.1
Co-creation with audiences	≈
People themselves should be able to contribute more to the news	3.0

Research: what we know

- **Presumption of professionals people are attracted by negative news**

Biologically right, but paying attention at something does not mean that it is seen as most important

- **Negative bias in news → not representative for the world,**

people think it is much worse in the world than it actually is

- **Negativity in political news → cynicism**

Gap between citizen and politics getting bigger

- **Negativity leads to anxiety and drop outs → not engagement**

Citizens like the young consumers turning their back towards traditional news because they are fat up with the negativity.

Future research Windesheim

Focus on effects of elements of Constructive Journalism for

- individuals
- society

Future research?

- How can research support journalism to adopt Constructive Journalism?
- What kind of insights are needed to start discussion and reflection?