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Erratum

The latest version (uploaded August 22nd, 2023) contains a correction of Figure 1 (Map of themes and sub themes around the perception of constructive journalism and its implementation on Covid-19 news) which was severely altered by our lay-outing process in the earlier version of the manuscript. This change was made in accordance with author's request.

Constructive Journalism: Indonesian Journalists' Perception and Implementation in the Covid-19 News

Kencana Ariestyani

Department of Communication Science, Faculty of Philosophy and Civilization, Universitas Paramadina. Email address: kencana.ariestyani@paramadina.ac.id

Abstract

Currently, the COVID-19 pandemic is getting under control, and people tend to adapt and live their lives in the new normal era. Despite that, media outlets carry on reporting the COVID-19 pandemic considering the information is still needed by the public. It is undeniable that journalists play an essential role in disseminating information about health risks to audiences. Nevertheless, news about health crises is often criticized for being sensational, incomplete, and inaccurate, giving rise to misunderstanding, panic, or even public neglect. Thus, it is hoped that the media outlets could present more constructive news to anticipate the effects of anxiety, panic, fatigue, stress, and depression encountered by the public after consuming information pertaining to COVID-19. This paper aims to explore how Indonesian journalists perceived the constructive journalism approach and its implementation in their journalistic work related to covering and reporting on Covid-19 news. Using constructive journalism theory and news framing and adapting qualitative research, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with eight journalists from various media outlets spanning from television, online news media, and daily newspapers to the weekly news magazine. This research revealed that most Indonesian journalists are not familiar with constructive journalism. Nevertheless, they conceived the approach of constructive journalism. The concept has been implemented in covering Covid-19 news by Indonesian journalists though it has not been shown as the optimal undertaking due to external and internal factors. As a result, there are still accounts of Covid-19 that could trigger public anxiety and cause them to endure other adverse psychological effects after consuming news stories. This research suggests that media outlets and Indonesian journalists could consider and comprehensively grasp the constructive journalism approach in their daily journalistic works to anticipate those negative psychological impacts.

Introduction

Most countries have lessened the social activity restriction along with the situation of Covid-19, which has been under control. In Indonesia, the government has set this regulation since March 2022. Currently, Indonesia is transitioning from pandemic to endemic, enabling people to do activities more flexibly than before (Agustiyanti, 2022). Even the government allowed them to depart to their hometown to spend the Ied Al-Fitr holiday after being held back for two years (Astasari & Anindita, 2022). Even though the activities have been relaxed, the government still requires people to implement health protocols such as wearing masks and maintaining hand hygiene (Supriatin, 2022).

In this new normal era where the COVID-19 pandemic situation is getting under control, the media outlets carry on reporting the COVID-19 pandemic considering the information is still needed by the public. It is undeniable that journalists play an essential role in communicating information about health risks to the public. Nevertheless, reporting on health crises is often criticized for being sensational, incomplete, and inaccurate, leading to misunderstanding, panic, or even public neglect (Parahita, 2021). Thus, it is hoped that media outlets could provide more constructive news to anticipate the effects of anxiety, panic, and fatigue as well as stress and depression that the public might feel after consuming news pertaining to Covid-19. If they continue to experience these adverse psychological effects, they will probably avoid COVID-19 information, whereas the pandemic has not ended yet. Information related to COVID-19 is still necessary for them to reference the current situation in carrying out their daily activities.

According to the Digital News Report 2022 released by the *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*, public interest and trust in news and news consumption have declined considerably in many countries. Likewise, there is a phenomenon of news fatigue, which is not only about Covid-19 news but also about political information and other various information, where the number of people who actively avoid news has increased sharply. Those who avoid news gave various reasons as follows (Newman et al., 2022):

> Across markets, many respondents say they are put off by the repetitiveness of the news agenda – especially around politics and COVID-19 (43%), or that they often feel worn out by the news (29%). A significant proportion say they avoid news because they think it can't be trusted (29%). Around a third (36%), particularly those who are under 35, say that the news brings down their mood. Others say the news leads to arguments they would rather avoid (17%), or leads to feelings of powerlessness (16%). A small proportion say they don't have enough time for news (14%) or that it is too hard to understand (8%).

Previous studies have also shown that COVID-19 news in the mass media harms the psychological state of the public (Abdullah et al., 2020; First et al., 2021; Groot Kormelink & Klein Gunnewiek, 2021; Hikmah et al., 2020; Setiyaningsih, 2020; Zakout et al., 2020). The public in Indonesia has experienced anxiety due to frequent exposure to mass media related to Covid-19 news (Hikmah et al., 2020) and media panics due to high media exposure and saturation of the same content after consuming Covid-19 news on television (Setiyaningsih, 2020). It is caused by the media that is considered not sensitive to public needs, and they prioritize negative news or bad news because the stereotype of "bad news is good news" is still strong (Kartinawati & Gama, 2021). Traditional journalism focuses more on the negative side of events happening worldwide and its role as a "watchdog" (Grijalva, 2018). Furthermore, Grijalva stated that phrases such as "if it bleeds, it leads" and "no news is good news" have nurtured journalists to create a conflict-centered newsroom culture that has become the lens through which we "understand and interpret the world."

Therefore, the expected news model is the one that strengthens and motivates by providing positive, inspirational, and solution-based information to foster enthusiasm and optimism in the audience to work together in fighting Covid-19 (Kartinawati & Gama, 2021). It is in line with the spirit of constructive journalism, which involves positive psychology techniques and is solution-oriented and future-oriented. A study that was conducted to look into the effect of reporting constructive news among millennials shows that constructive news elicited a lower negative emotional response. On the other hand, millennials experienced higher positive and inspirational emotional responses after consuming constructive news. The study's results suggest that constructive journalism can be a viable strategy to attract younger news users, especially when the news topic is relevant to their lives (Hermans & Prins, 2020).

A constructive journalism approach has been used to report the COVID-19 pandemic in many countries (Din et al., 2021; Gong et al., 2021; Kuang et al., 2021; Tshabangu & Salawu, 2021; Yin, 2021; Overgaard, 2021; Serrano-Puche, 2020). As described by Yin, (2021), several media outlets in China utilize positive emotions to guide positive communication on Covid-19-related content produced and published by them for the public. News with a "heartwarming" or "touching story about the struggle against the pandemic" received a positive response from the audience. The focus of "heartwarming" news is to consider solutions and human concerns and reduce public confusion and anxiety with positive results to meet people's daily needs. Thus, "heartwarming" news is not sensational reporting (Yin, 2021).

In Zimbabwe, a constructive journalism approach is also used in Covid-19 news. It is explained in an article entitled *"An evaluation of constructive journalism in Zimbabwe: A case study of The Herald's coverage of the coronavirus pandemic"* (Tshabangu & Salawu, 2021). Constructive elements frequently used are solutions orientation, future orientation, and explanation and contextualization. A study conducted on the coverage of COVID-19 in *The Herald* newspaper shows that there were public health and political news dimensions. News with a public health dimension has an informational and educational value that aims to create awareness of the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, news with a political dimension usually contains propaganda that reflects the dominant mindset of the ruling elite, where *"a good COVID-19 story reflects the government's position"* (Tshabangu & Salawu, 2021).

Serrano-Puche (2020) suggests that the news organization could overcome the situation in which news audiences avoid news due to negative emotional implications by choosing a constructive journalism approach based on news coverage that aims to produce a positive social impact. It is in line with Gong et al. (2021), who studied media attention, media dependence, and prosocial behavior among television viewers in China in the face of COVID-19, with a positive news approach influenced by constructive journalism, where editors and journalists could perfect their journalistic practice to be constructive in critical situations.

Meanwhile, research on implementing constructive journalism in reporting on Covid-19 in Indonesia has not been widely carried out. So far, studies on this topic in Indonesia have revolved around utilizing constructive journalism by analyzing news, including news on climate change, conducted by Levina Chrestella Theodora (2022). The other study is a framing analysis on the issue of moral panic during the Covid-19 pandemic conducted by Heri Sevriyanto Siregar (2020) and framing analysis of the 2020 election news conducted by Iin Soraya et al. (2021), and research conducted by Wirawanda & Arrasyid (2021) examining the news text of the new variant of covid-19 on *Okezone.com* by applying Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. It means that previous research on the implementation of constructive journalism has only focused on the news produced by journalists. Study that examines the journalists themselves as media actors who use constructive elements in their journalistic work has not been

conducted yet.

This study, therefore, aims to fill this gap by focusing on how Indonesian journalists perceive the constructive journalism approach. It is crucial to gain knowledge of their perceptions to see how constructive journalism could be accepted in news organizations in Indonesia. Thus, its implementation in their journalistic work could be optimized. In addition, this research also wants to examine the challenges faced by Indonesian journalists in applying constructive elements in their daily journalistic routines to cover and write news about COVID-19.

The researcher formulated two research questions: *(1) How do Indonesian journalists perceive and comprehend constructive journalism?* This research question explores whether constructive elements are seen as a good change in journalistic work, whether journalists are familiar with the constructive approach and whether they implement it in their routine. *(2) How do Indonesian journalists implement constructive journalism in reporting and writing news of Covid-19 pandemic?* This research question explores how journalists framed the COVID-19 news with constructive elements, whether constructive elements are optimally applied in writing Covid-19 news, and what kind of challenges Indonesian journalists face in producing covid-19 news using constructive elements.

Literature Review

Constructive Journalism and Frame-Building in Covid-19 News

Traditional journalism rests on objective news reporting in which journalists function as a watchdog. Its main goal is to disseminate information and control the power ruled by the government, and journalists decide what is essential for the public to know. In contrast, constructive journalism goes beyond these traditional functions and includes more facilitating and mobilizing functions (Bro, 2008; Hanitzsch dan Vos, 2016; Weaver dan Willnat, 2012 in Hermans & Gyldensted, 2018).

Constructive journalism stands on the pre-existing concept of journalism, civic journalism, also known as public journalism, which integrates journalism into the democratic process, where news media not only provide information to the public but also involve citizens and create public debate (Hermans & Drok, 2018). Constructive journalism supports this mission but is grounded in positive psychology and aims to balance negative bias, improve public welfare by involving citizens to care, eliminate citizen cynicism by replacing it with hope, and reduce polarized debate (McIntyre & Gyldensted, 2018).

K. McIntyre & Gyldensted (2017) define constructive journalism as a form of journalism that involves implementing positive psychological techniques to the process and production of news to create productive and engaging coverage while still upholding the core functions of journalism. One way to practice constructive journalism is to reframe news stories to focus on solutions rather than conflicts, public-oriented, future-oriented, and action-oriented, and trying to avoid bias toward negative things in the news (Aitamurto & Varma, 2018; Mclntyre, 2020; Hermans & Drok, 2018; Serrano-Puche, 2020).

According to Hermans & Drok (2018), various forms of constructive journalism principles have been used widely by news media outlets even though they often indirectly refer to constructive journalism as their source of inspiration. Those news organizations could mainly be found in the North-Western part of Europe and extend to the United States: The *Guardian*, *Swedish National Television*, *Danish Broadcasting Company*, *Dutch Persgroep*, the Dutch newspaper *Trouw*, *Danish paper Politiken*, *The Economist*, the Dutch digital platforms *De Correspondent*, *BBC World*, and *Deutsche Welle*. Furthermore, Hallin and Mancini (2004), as cited in Hermans & Drok (2018), emphasize that it seems no coincidence that constructive journalism is

Table 1. Six elements of constructive journalistic (Hermans & Gyldensted, 2018)

Elements	Description
Solutions	When covering problems, also add a solution-oriented framing of news.
Future Orientation	Adding a 'What Now?' question to the traditional journalistic questions (who, what, where, why, how).
	Adding a future orientation allows for a possible productive perspective about the future and about our ability to get there.
Inclusiveness and diversity	Include more voices and perspectives in the news.
Empower people	Ask other questions and include variety to empower so-called victims and experts. Questions should inquire about possible resources, collaborations, common ground, and solutions.
The Rosling	Explain the news and give context. Use data to create clear infographics explaining the news. The intent is to go from covering incidents to covering contexts.
Co-creation	Engage and empower the public. Co-create the journalistic content with citizens.

thriving in countries where interest in civic journalism is also higher than elsewhere in Europe. These countries have relatively strong traditions of public service, pluralism, and problem-solving through coalitions and cooperation.

Furthermore, the constructive journalism approach in the newsroom has been implemented in two ways (Grijalva, 2018). The first is a one-of-a-kind approach to news, as applied by *De Correspondent* and the German web magazine *Perspective Daily*. The other way is it is used in specific news writing projects, such as "World Hacks" from *BBC*, *The Guardian*'s "Keep it in the ground," and "What's working" that has been done by *The Huffington Post*. The changes in the newsroom indicate a cultural shift in journalism.

In the Handbook for Constructive Journalism, Jørgensen & Risbro (2021) emphasize that the unique strength of constructive journalism is that it complements the watchdog role of journalists by encouraging conversation and proposing solutions to existing problems; it helps positively build society. Meanwhile, constructive journalists also keep conducting interviews, researching, and critically analyzing, which are essential in a constructive journalism approach.

Hermans & Gyldensted (2018) stated six classifications of constructive journalistic elements developed by the Journalism Department at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands in 2016. The six constructive elements are shown in Table 1. These constructive elements in journalism can be applied to several stages of the news process, including storytelling, information gathering, and production (McIntyre & Gyldensted, 2018). In this research, the above constructive elements are used as a theoretical basis to explore the perceptions and understandings of Indonesian journalists regarding the constructive journalism approach.

Moy et al. (2016) stated that journalists must choose the situation elements that best convey the essence of an event or issue. They gather the information that could be used in a story and decide how to present the story interestingly and understandably. One of the important choices a journalist makes is choosing a frame

for an issue or event. In covering and reporting Covid-19 news, journalists also frame the news that will be delivered to the public. Therefore, the researcher also uses the concept of news framing as a foundation to explore how Indonesian journalists implement a constructive journalism approach in covering and writing news about the Covid-19 pandemic.

The framing process has two stages: frame-building and frame-setting. Frame-building refers to the development of frames and their inclusion in the news. Meanwhile, the second one describes the effect of frames on the audience's beliefs and feelings about issues, problems, and policies. It is because the basic idea of frame-setting is that the audience has a perception of public issues and problems. Thus, the frame-building examines the journalist's side as a media actor, and the frame-setting focuses on the audience who consumes the news written by journalists. Hence, the researcher only uses the frame-building concept for the needs of this research.

Frame-building occurs when journalists construct news from bits and pieces of everyday events. In the construction process, journalists do not arbitrarily choose the available information. Instead, they choose information containing ideas and frames suggested by various sources, including people and groups interested in the issue at hand. Moy et al. (2016) asserted the factors that are very strong in shaping the production of the frame: "culture and social norms, organizational pressures and constraints, and frame advocates (e.g., interest groups, corporations, government actors) … the set of beliefs and perceptions that journalists bring with them".

Applying constructive elements to daily journalistic work is a challenge for journalists. In addition, it takes time to adapt to changing the journalistic culture in the newsroom. Haagerup (2015) emphasized that to be a constructive journalist, one needs to have a "change in identity, in culture, in approach, in workflow, in the questions we ask, in the headlines we write, and in the content we produce."

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative method with in-depth interviews of data collection from eight journalists from various news media outlets, including television, newspapers, and online news media. Given the limited schedule and distance, interviews were conducted through video call Zoom for six informants, and two other informants were interviewed face-to-face. The eight informants were selected based on the criteria of having experience in covering and reporting news of the Covid-19 pandemic. For the convenience of the informants, their names were eliminated in this study. However, the researcher listed their role in the news organizations they have been working on.

The interview questions were managed based on the constructive elements and news framing described in the literature review section. Interview data were analyzed by thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) in data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and also involves interpretation in the process of selecting codes and constructing themes (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). The purpose of the thematic analysis is to identify themes that are important or interesting patterns; these themes are then used to discuss research or describe something related to a problem that is the focus of research (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Furthermore, Kiger & Varpio (2020) explain that themes are actively constructed patterns (or meanings) derived from data sets that answer research questions, not just summaries or code categorizations.

The researcher utilizes six-level processes in conducting the thematic analysis. Braun & Clarke (2006) asserted that the six steps are *"familiarizing yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes; and producing the report."* The first step in the thematic analysis proc-

Table 2. Informants

Informant number	Title	News Organization
I-1	Journalist	Kompas TV
I-2	Journalist	KOMPAS / Kompas.id
I-3	Journalist	Detik.com
I-4	Journalist	CNN Indonesia TV
I-5	Journalist & News Presenter	tvOne
I-6	Journalist	Kompas TV
I-7	Journalist	GATRA.com
I-8	Journalist	Metro TV

ess is to become familiar with the entire data set, which requires repeated and active reading of the data. After the first stage, the researcher recorded the code data, not the theme. Codes identify data features of interest to analysts and refer to data elements or raw information about the research phenomenon. The third step involves examining the compiled data extract to look for potential themes.

The fourth step is a two-level analysis, reviewing and refining the theme. The first-level analysis researcher needs to read all the data extracts collected for each theme and examine whether the data extracts form a coherent pattern. The first-level analysis is considered complete when the researcher is sure that the thematic map includes all the codes in the final analysis. The exact process is also carried out at level two but is related to the entire data set. The researcher considers each theme's validity and ensures the thematic maps reflect the meaning of the data set. After that, the researcher defines and refines the theme that will be presented for analysis and then performs data analysis. The final step in the thematic analysis is to write down the results of the data analysis carefully to convince the reader of the benefits and validity of the analysis. It is essential that the writing includes an analysis that provides a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive, and exciting explanation of the entire theme.

Results

Indonesian Journalists' Perceptions of Constructive Journalism

Indonesian journalists are not familiar with Constructive Journalism. The first sub-theme relates to the relationship between journalists and a constructive journalism approach. Most informants do not know or have never heard of constructive journalism. Findings show that constructive journalism is perceived as an academic concept; hence journalists are not familiar with this journalistic genre in their daily journalistic work where they consider practical aspects more in the field.

> "Sometimes, as practitioners, we do not rely on journalism theories, and we do practice what we know based on experience in the field." (I-2)

Furthermore, constructive journalism is perceived as the same as development journalism. The informants admitted that they were more familiar with other journalism genres, such as disaster and narrative journalism, which they had studied at university.

> "..." I have read at a glance; my imagination at that time was it like development journalism." (I-7)

Only one of the eight informants claimed to have heard of a constructive journalism approach and understood that this genre focuses on solutions rather than conflicts in the news covering and reporting.
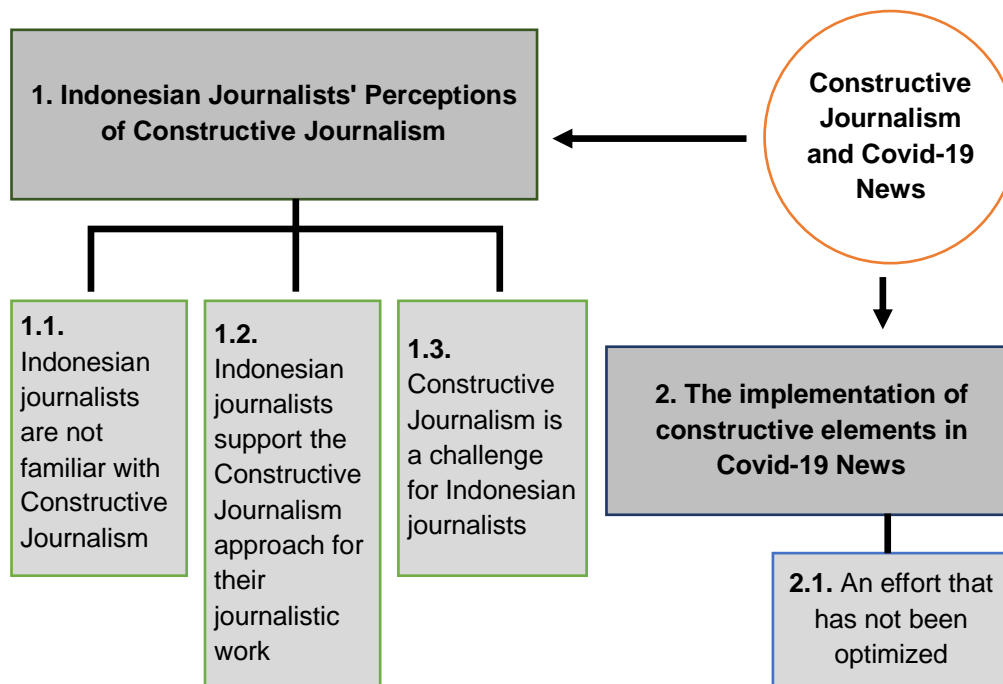
Figure 1. Map of themes and subthemes around the perception of
constructive journalism and its implementation on Covid-19 news

"The perspective should indeed be wider to be more constructive, it means not only on one side or two sides but wider…, so if we just focus on the problem only it is not constructive, but we provide a solution… ." (I-4)

Although the informants are not yet familiar with constructive journalism and still consider it something new in the world of journalism, they agree that this approach can be applied to their journalistic work. The study results indicate that Indonesian journalists have a positive perception of constructive elements. In fact, without realizing it, they have used it even though it has not been optimized. A more detailed explanation of this is described in the next subthemes.

Indonesian journalists support the Constructive Journalism approach for their journalistic work. Although the informants have not been familiar with and comprehensively understood the genre of constructive journalism, they showed enthusiasm and support for it. Even newsrooms are expected to be able to apply constructive elements to the news they produce, although it is not easy to change the work culture that has been running for years. By using these constructive elements, it is hoped that the media could become hope and reassurance for the public through the information published amidst the current turmoil. Another opinion was expressed by one of the informants that journalism should indeed be constructive regardless of the genre or categorization of journalism itself.

"I think every journalist and editor should play the role of constructive journalism. Media is hoped to play its role as expectancy and reassurance for people who consume information from them, especially amid the vicious covid 19 situation last year." (I-8)

"... in my view, all journalism must be constructive, in general, to improve something. ...logically, all journalism goes there. All of my efforts in covering issues are also for something constructive." (I-7)

As a new approach to journalism thriving in academia, constructive journalism is based on news reporting that focuses on solutions and the future rather than stories

based on conflict and sensation. The majority of informants supported the concept and stated that it needed to be well understood by journalists. They admit that at present there are still many media outlets that publish sensational news rather than constructive ones, so the implementation of this genre needs to be pursued again.

Furthermore, they agreed that providing solutions to the news also helps the public to have a more solution understanding and attitude towards an event. The idea behind constructive journalism is to provide more background to news stories and stories with more context and report on what is good. Informants emphasized that it is vital for journalists to do this. However, they also emphasize providing insight or solutions to news that has a negative tone so that the public remains vigilant without feeling anxious or panicked.

> "How we convey it is following what is true. … not frighten or give panic, but also opens their eyes … also make them think of solutions." (I-6)

By providing another side or insight from a negative tone of news, the information disseminated to citizens is more comprehensive so that they could have a broader horizon or view of an event. However, reporting positive things from a phenomenon and channeling optimism to the public should still be based on facts. In other words, journalists should not ignore the facts even though they want to disseminate positive messages.

> "…no matter how bad the condition at that time, it is a fact, it should be reported as it is, but on the other hand, there might be positive things that we can also report."(I-3)

> "…I do not think we can focus on having to say positive and negative… journalism is essentially based on facts. If it is good, you have to say it is good. If it is bad, then why do we say it good." (I-2)

Criticism conveyed politely in the news to the public is considered a form of implementing constructive journalism. The informant emphasized that doing that in news coverage, for example criticizing the government, is a form of proposing solutions where the proposed solutions are obtained from the interviews with competent experts to overcome related problems.

> "Criticism, I think, is also a constructive framework for the government to fix these problems. It is not we criticize continuously … report bad news all the time, but if there are shortcomings, in my opinion, it must be informed." (I-2)

However, reporting positive things and providing optimism and solutions in producing news stories is challenging for informants as journalists. It is because each news media outlet has different policies regarding the information to be published. The media setting agenda is one-factor influencing journalists when covering the field. Sometimes, they should face limitations in developing coverage theme ideas because the elites in the newsroom have projected it.

Constructive Journalism is a challenge for Indonesian journalists. The demand for fastness in disseminating information to the public becomes one of the challenges for journalists when they would like to apply a constructive journalism approach to news coverage in the field. Regardless of the type of media they work in, they have a workload that frequently requires them to write more than one story daily. As a result, it seems arduous for them to produce daily news reports and in-depth reporting with constructive elements.

> "I believe that if journalists are given a long time, and not too much workload, as well as provided a good welfare, they will produce news that tends to be constructive." (I-7)

"This is a big challenge...not just for me but for every TV station... How do they maintain what is good and constructive to give to the public. So, it is not just a rating, it is not just a lot of people watching, but how it is conveyed…" (I-6)

In addition, the editorial policy that has projected news angle coverage is also a challenge, rather than an obstacle, for informants in applying constructive elements to their journalistic work. Although they could improvise it by adjusting the situation in the field, the time flexibility is still insufficient. Another thing that is also considered a challenge for informants when they want to apply constructive elements is the lack of time in terms of covering news in the field because they also serve as news presenters, which requires them to commit to the fixed broadcast schedules.

Another challenge is the perception of journalists who have not comprehensively understood constructive journalism. Hence, when they have gained more in-depth knowledge, they tend to think that constructive journalism is the same as other journalism genres, such as precision journalism and "journalism makna," implemented by the news organization where they work. Precision journalism is used to avoid reporting sensational news. Meanwhile, "jurnalisme makna" is applied to be able to interpret an event. News is not just information about facts, but it should present the meaning and significance of events. The way to do it is by doing in-depth, investigative, and responsive reporting, not just facts according to the sequence of events, but facts that include background, process, and history.

The implementation of constructive elements in Covid-19 news

An effort that has not been optimized. The research results show that the informants had implemented constructive elements in the coverage and reporting of Covid-19 news. Unfortunately, its usage has not been maximized due to various factors. The researcher examined further to get a detailed picture of how journalists use these elements to write pandemic news.

In general, they agreed to add solution-oriented news framing. The solution should be obtained from interviews with news sources such as experts (e.g., epidemiologists and doctors), citizens who have experienced or survived Covid-19, people affected by the pandemic, activists, including the government, and policymakers. Writing the Covid-19 news describes the problems and includes practical and applicable solutions obtained from interviews. It is hoped that the public could easily carry out the proposed solution.

"Sometimes we choose experts whom we think their opinions are not too extreme. But we did not change their statements. We are more based on suggestions or solutions that are practical and applicable." (I-2)

The Covid-19 news that had added solution elements includes the innovation of a booth made by health workers to carry out PCR tests and a shopping entrusted goods service for food products.

"I have ever reported... they are from a community... they are making booth innovations for health workers to do PCR. … they made innovations so that health workers are more comfortable but safe to do their jobs." (I-8)

"…… I follow an Instagram account called "dari halte ke halte (from one bus stop to another bus stop)" … it has been a long time since the pandemic. …this account usually popularizes food around the bus Trans Jakarta shelters, MRT and train stations... As I have been following for a long time, so I know the followers of this account are making services for "jasa titip" (shopping entrusted goods service) of culinary food and beverage due to pandemic." (I-3)

Furthermore, regarding the constructive element, the informant stated that asking the question *"what now?"* to their news sources is necessary. This *future orientation* perspective is valuable and could give hope to the public. So, they put their effort into applying it in the coverage and reporting of Covid-19 news even though there are limitations or obstacles such as the news duration for television journalists. Apart from this, the informants also interpreted this *future orientation* element as a form of the question *"what are the hopes for the future?"* or *"what is next?"* which they automatically inquire to their sources during pandemic coverage.

Using various perspectives and voices in the news is also considered an essential constructive element to be carried out by most informants. They cover both or even all sides, as they perceived the elements of *inclusiveness and diversity* to make the public comprehensively understand information related to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the sources they interviewed had frequently been managed by the editors.

Similar to other elements, the use of data to create infographics that complement the narrative has also been utilized by some informants in reporting Covid-19 news, for example, in reporting "long covid" news, a symptom that might be experienced by Covid-19 survivors or fluctuating data of Covid-19 patients that were analyzed before included in the news. The intention is to make it easier for the public to understand the information. Meanwhile, some other informants claimed to use the data even though it was not visualized in the form of infographics. Data related to Covid-19 news was informed to the public during live reports by television journalists or written in narrative form by other journalists. The limitation of the team that produces infographics is also a technical obstacle for them. Another reason is that news writing is more focused on humanist themes around Covid-19, so the data had only used as a background for news stories.

Although it has not been maximally implemented, several informants claimed to involve other parties. Developing coverage ideas, they provide space for several parties such as citizens, experts, colleagues, people who have experience, or even the government to discuss and provide suggestions. According to them, this constructive element of *co-creation* could enrich the reporting point of view. They even admit that ideas for coverage of Covid-19 were frequently obtained from small conversations with other people, and most importantly, they realize what kind of information the public needs. They then developed and sharpened the idea to be covered and written as news.

It is also worth noting that the pandemic had altered the mindset of the informants, and it affected them in their coverage of Covid-19. They believe and are optimistic that the pandemic situation will likely turn into an endemic. Hence in reporting Covid-19 news, they tend to choose news angles that do not cause people to experience adverse psychological effects. They have also carried out humanist theme coverage of Covid-19 but still being critical and skeptical.

Discussion

The discussion of "constructive journalism" is currently receiving much attention in the newsrooms of broadcasting stations, newspapers, and online news media. In addition, academic discussions about it are also increasing. "Constructive" means that journalism should focus not only on social problems but also on possible solutions and spaces for action in its coverage (Ahva & Hautakangas, 2018).

This article included a study from the journalists' side to gain knowledge about their perceptions of constructive journalism and apply the constructive elements to journalism practice. Findings show that Indonesian journalists are not familiar with this approach. In their routine work, they are more concerned with practical aspects that are sometimes not based on a particular genre of journalism. When carrying out journalistic work, they adhere to independent principles, facts and data, loyalty to the

public, be accurate and credible, deliver important and impactful information to the public, and uphold the journalistic code of ethics. However, they perceived that constructive journalism is a good approach and must be applied in their daily journalistic work.

Findings also show that they have implemented constructive elements in the coverage and reporting of Covid-19 news, even though they did not realize it. Some Indonesian journalists have written pandemic solution-framed news while conveying facts according to actual conditions. Even though the news has a negative tone or conveys criticism about a policy, journalists provide suggestions or offer solutions from interviews with competent and credible news sources. It seems that the constructive elements of *solutions, future orientation, inclusiveness & diversity, and The Rosling (explain the news and give context)* utilize data to create infographics that explain news that are more familiar to Indonesian journalists. It is also important to note that journalists perceive the element of *explaining the news and give context* with infographics to help the news narrative be more accessible for the public to understand. In fact, Hermans & Gyldensted (2018) emphasize that *The Rosling's* constructive element aims to provide a context in the news coverage rather than simply covering events. It is also worth noting that Hermans & Gyldensted (2018) did not explain the six constructive elements in more detail about whether journalists should use those elements in one news story or could take just a few elements.

Meanwhile, Indonesian journalists rarely apply the other two constructive elements: *co-creation* and *empowering people*. Throughout the pandemic coverage that has been done, they had only a few times been involved and provided space for citizens to give their suggestions or ideas in developing news coverage themes.

Hence, it can be said that the application of the constructive elements in their daily journalistic practice has not been optimized. It is due to various factors and situations, such as editorial policy, limited coverage time, and the duration of news on television. Journalists on duty in the field, to take one as an example, have been given projected angles of coverage and sources to be interviewed. It is a reasonable situation because, in their routine, journalists have to do a *frame-building* process in which they select information based on suggested ideas and frames from various sources, including *organizational pressures* and *constraints,* as emphasized by Moy et al. (2016).

In addition, the demand for velocity in reporting the latest news to the public also limits their flexibility. As a result, it won't enable journalists to maximize the implementation of constructive elements in their daily journalistic work. The only possibility they could try to optimize the constructive journalism approach is when they cover and write in-depth accounts where they could have more time.

Furthermore, findings show that Indonesian journalists perceived constructive journalism as challenging. In addition to the technical constraints described above, their understanding which has not been comprehensive yet, of the constructive elements is also an obstacle to its optimization. As a result, the public would probably be exposed to news about Covid-19 produced by Indonesian journalists—news that might cause anxiety, worry, and news fatigue. Even worse, they would avoid news (Bruin et al., 2021; Newman et al., 2022).

Conclusion

Changing the work culture in news media outlets is not an easy thing to do. Moreover, each newsroom has its policies and goals that align with the news organization's values. Nevertheless, socialization regarding applying a constructive journalism approach for Indonesian journalists is essential to anticipate the harmful effects of the news published by the media. Especially news related to disasters, conflicts, or climate change often causes adverse psychological effects. Hence, this

research suggests that media outlets and Indonesian journalists should consider and comprehensively grasp the constructive elements in their daily journalistic works to anticipate those negative psychological impacts. Socialization could be carried out at two levels: (1) the elites in the editorial room, such as news editors, producers, and even news managers and editors in chief, and (2) journalists who directly do news coverage in the field. The goal is to get a shared vision and mission regarding implementing the concept of constructive journalism at the level of policymakers and executors in the field, the journalists themselves.

As emphasized by Haagerup (2015), to become a constructive journalist, it is necessary to adapt to changes, including culture and workflow. It is time for the media outlets to provide information and enlighten the public to be wiser in responding to a problem optimistically by offering solutions in their reporting. Additionally, future-oriented news could also make the public feel hopeful amid the problems they face.

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