Solutions journalism: definitions, insights and criticism

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to present state-of-the-art results on solutions journalism in the world. We selected articles from academic journals based on Capes qualification, between 2018 and 2023, with the term "solutions journalism" in the title, summary, or keywords. 44 articles were located, 42 of which were in English. The main concept concerns solutions journalism as a branch of constructive journalism, which appropriates techniques from positive psychology (Seligam, 2000). Despite this, there are gaps in understanding, as other authors work with different perceptions. The question presented in this article is whether inserting solutions should be predominantly an action, thinking about "social well-being", or whether we should reflect the insertion of solutions based on journalistic practice.

Keywords

Introduction

The conceptualization of solutions journalism is not an easy task, especially within the academic realm. Some researchers interested in the subject attempt to define and operationalize the concept. Practically speaking, the concept has been developed since 2013 by the American Solutions Journalism Network (SJN), which states that "solutions journalism investigates and explains, critically and clearly, how people are attempting to solve widely shared problems" (Solutions Journalism Network, 2013).

From an academic standpoint, the most cited concept to date links solutions journalism as a branch of constructive journalism (McIntyre, 2015; Gyldestend, 2017). In an attempt to understand the discussions of the past 6 years on the topic, a state-of-the-art review was conducted. Scientific articles from 2018 to 2023 were selected using the term "solutions journalism" in the title, abstract, or keywords from internationally and nationally reputable journalism journals (Journalism Studies (A1), Journalism Practice (A1), Digital Journalism (A1), among others, located on the Sage Journals website and Taylor & Francis). In the Brazilian context, research was conducted in Capes journals and those classified with Qualis ratings from A1 to A4 (e.g., Matrizes (A1), Linguagem em (dis)curso (A1), Famecos (A2), E-Compós (A2), Intercom (A2), Observatório (A2), Comunicação, Mídia e Consumo (A3), Comunicação e Sociedade (A3), Contracampo (A3), Galáxia (A3)). This definition was aligned with the Njor research group, of which the author is a part. To ensure comprehensiveness, two additional databases, Scopus and Scielo, were consulted.

In this survey, which lasted approximately 6 months, 44 articles were located, with results showing that only 2 were authored by Brazilians, while the rest were available in English. Authors were primarily from North American, European, and Oceanian universities. One quarter (1/4) of the global literature articles are attributed to a single author: Karen McIntyre. The professor is a bibliographic reference in 75% of the foreign literature articles.

The main concept explored is the relationship between constructive journalism, stemming from positive psychology, and the proposal of solutions in journalistic coverage. However, there are gaps in understanding, as other authors interpret the terms differently, sometimes treating them as synonymous or not mentioning the constructive journalism aspect at all.

Solutions Journalism: Brief History and Concept

Despite solutions journalism gaining attention, particularly in the last 10 years, the topic has not begun to be addressed recently. In 1998, Benesch documented the rise of solutions journalism in an article published in the Columbia Journalism Review, where she described the practice as "reporting on efforts that seem to succeed in resolving specific social problems" (p. 37).

Although there isn't a specific historical milestone for the emergence of the term "solutions journalism," in 2013, in the United States, the Solutions Journalism Network (SJN) was founded by journalists David Bornstein, Tina Rosenberg, and Courtney Martin, with the understanding that "solutions journalism investigates and explains, critically and clearly, how people attempt to solve widely shared problems." The Network further explains that

> Although journalists typically define news as "what went wrong," solutions journalism seeks to expand that definition: responses to problems are also newsworthy. By adding rigorous coverage of solutions, journalists can tell the whole story (Solutions Journalism Network, 2013).

SJN aimed to bring 04 characteristics to this type of coverage, which involve presenting the response to a problem and its implementation, evidence of the response, insights for people, and

limitations in inserting the response. From an academic standpoint, the first thesis addressing solutions journalism is Karen McIntyre's (2015) from Virginia Commonwealth University, in her work "Constructive Journalism: The effects of positive emotions and solution information in news stories," where the author seeks to advance understanding of the impact of journalism on psychological well-being, based on the concept of constructive journalism coined by Cathrine Gyldestend (2011; 2015).

McIntyre (2015) understands this as an emerging form of journalism that applies techniques from positive psychology to create more engaging and committed news stories aligned with the core functions of journalism. Positive Psychology emerged in the late 20th century (1997/1998) with professor and researcher Martin Seligman. For him, it represents a science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions aimed at enhancing quality of life, preventing pathologies, and promoting,

> Well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past); hope and optimism (for the future); and flow and happiness (in the present). At the individual level, it concerns positive individual traits: capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skills, aesthetic sensitivity, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future-mindedness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom. At the group level, it pertains to civic virtues and institutions that guide individuals toward better citizenship: responsibility, nurturing, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.5).

Cathrine Gyldestend, who theorized "constructive journalism," pointed out that it should apply techniques from positive psychology, as she believes that the field of positive psychology was built on the recognition that psychologists traditionally focus on treating mental illnesses without paying attention to other aspects related to well-being. Thus, Gyldestend notes that "the aim of positive psychology is to study, measure, and apply the conditions that enable individuals, communities, and societies to thrive (Seligman, 2011), and this aim aligns with the ultimate goal of constructive journalism - to enhance individual and social well-being by applying positive psychology tactics to journalistic work" (McIntyre & Gyldestend, 2017, p.23).

In light of this, they explain several positive psychology techniques that should be applied in constructive journalism: firstly, considering the global well-being model, evoking positive emotions in the news, including positive emotions, engagement, and good relationships, using different interviewing techniques, and finally, focusing on solutions in reporting.

In an attempt to academically consolidate the concept, in 2017, the article "View of Constructive Journalism: Applying Positive Psychology Techniques to News Production" (Mcintyre & Gyldensted, 2017) points out that solutions journalism is a specialization within constructive journalism, meaning one of its branches, aimed at rigorously reporting on how people respond to social problems while remaining faithful to the functions of journalism. Thus, the authors advocate for the concept of solutions journalism based on constructive journalism. However, this is not the only definition or understanding of the concept.

Bro (2018), a Danish professor at the University of Southern Denmark (SDU), argues that there are issues related to the concept's authorship, definition, and potential problems that could weaken the movement, as seen in some research forms associated with journalism that subsequently lost momentum.

For instance, Bro (2018) presents two perspectives from authors advocating for the inclusion of solutions in journalistic coverage: Cathrine Gydenstend (2015) and Ulrik Haagerup (2014), both Danes. While Gyldensted (2011) is more inclined to focus on the effects of journalism in her work, Haagerup (2014) concentrates on what affects journalists themselves. Gyldensted (2011) is more closely tied to aspects of positive psychology, whereas Haagerup relates to journalistic practices and how they impact daily production.

In 2016, the first peer-reviewed article on this topic was written, focusing on the implementation

of solution-oriented practices in university courses (Thier, 2016). Also in 2016, Andrea Wenzel, Daniela Gerson, and Evelyn Moreno, members of the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Graduate School of Journalism of Columbia University, published research using focus groups as a method, defining solutions journalism as an approach that explores responses to systemic social problems through critical investigation (Wenzel, Gerson & Moreno, 2016).

In Brazil, the term has been introduced by institutions such as the Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism, as well as some news outlets like BBC Brazil in the program "Cities and Solutions," initiatives from the RBS group, affiliated with Rede Globo in Rio Grande do Sul, and particularly in independent media outlets such as Amazônia Vox and Agência Eco Nordeste. Academically, we identified the only Brazilian master's dissertation on the topic in the Capes theses and dissertations database - "The coverage of drought on TV Sergipe: an analysis of journalistic coverage in light of solutions journalism" (Farias, 2022), defended at the Federal University of Sergipe (UFS).

Despite these definitions, the term "solutions journalism" is not consolidated under a single concept, as some authors do not differentiate between solutions journalism and constructive journalism, while others associate the terms (Aitamurto & Varma, 2018; Mcintyre & Gyldestend, 2017, 2018). It is possible to view a focus on solutions as one of the strategies that will be adopted by constructive journalism, which, according to the authors (Mcintyre & Gyldensted, 2017), represents an alignment. However, upon examining other characteristics, there are particularities within constructive journalism that would not allow it to be treated as synonymous with solutions journalism. Nevertheless, this state of the art reveals that some authors consider the terms synonymous, possibly due to limited conceptual discussion of the terms and preferences for usage in Europe (constructive journalism) and the United States (solutions journalism).

Methodology

Through the state-of-the-art, a literature review on the topic was conducted. Research related to the state of the art,

> appears to commonly share the challenge of mapping and discussing a certain academic production across different fields of knowledge, attempting to answer which aspects and dimensions have been highlighted and privileged in different times and places, in what ways, and under what conditions certain master's dissertations, doctoral theses, publications in journals, and communications in conference proceedings have been produced (Ferreira, 2002, p.258).

In other words, this method consists of a literature review on a specific topic aimed at demonstrating how this literature has been approached by other authors. Methodologically, articles from the last 6 years (2018-2023) were selected to locate more recent bibliography on the subject.

To locate relevant literature, the term "solutions journalism" was used in the title, keywords, or abstract of Brazilian and international journalism journals classified as A1-A4. These include Journalism Practice (A2), Digital Journalism (A1), European Journal of Communication (A1), Journalism (A2), Journalism Studies (A2), African Journalism Studies (A1), Brazilian Journalism Research (A2), available on the Taylor and Francis and British Journalism Review websites, as well as Sage Journals.

Within the Brazilian context, an investigation was conducted in Capes journals and Brazilian journals with A1-A4 rankings. These include Matrizes (A1), Linguagem em (dis)curso (A1), Famecos (A2), E-Compós (A2), Intercom (A2), Observatório (A2), Comunicação, Mídia e Consumo (A3), Comunicação e Sociedade (A3), Contracampo (A3), Galáxia (A3), Eco-pós (A3), Estudos em jornalismo e mídia (A3), Intexto (A3), Lumina (A4), Contemporânea (A4), and Logos (A4).

This survey identified 32 articles, 30 in English and 2 in Portuguese. Additionally, investigations

were conducted in two reputable academic databases: Scopus and Scielo, where 12 articles that had not been previously read in the journals mentioned above were located. These articles were found in the following journals: New Media and Society, Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies, Newspaper Research Journal, The Routledge Companion to Media and Poverty, Journalism and Media, Visual Communication, Journalism and Mass Communication Educator, International Journal of Communication, Afrika Focus, Revista Poetics, and The International Journal of Press/Politics.

Table 1 - Articles identified in the survey (2018-2023)

YEAR	QUANTITY	PERCENTAGE
2018	08	18,1%
2019	11	25%
2020	04	9,09%
2021	10	22,7%
2022	07	15,9%
2023	04	9,09%

Prepared by the article's author

Findings

During the bibliography survey, considering the years 2018 to 2023, as well as journals classified as A1-A4 and the aforementioned databases, 44 articles were located. Among these, only 02 were authored by Brazilians and were found in the Brazilian Journalism Research (SBPJor) and Eco-Pós journals. The remaining material (42 articles) was primarily available in English, predominantly distributed across Journalism Practice (9), Journalism Studies (6), Journalism (6), and Journalism and Media (2) journals.

Geolocation of Discussions

The first point of investigation concerns the nationality of universities associated with the authors, aiming to understand where in the world the topic has been most frequently discussed. Out of the 44 articles, 26 (or 59,09%) had at least one author affiliated with a North American university.

Table 2 - Articles by location (2018-2022)

COUNTRY	QUANTITY
USA	26
United Kingdom	05
France	01
Italy	01
Finland	01
Germany	01
Belgium	01
Denmark	01
South Africa	02
Brazil	02

Netherlands	01
Australia	06
Cyprus	01
United Arab Emirates	01

Prepared by the article's author

Other 12 articles, just over ⅓ of the total, had at least one author affiliated with a European university. The possible reason for the research being linked to the United States and Europe may be because the Solutions Journalism Network is American, and the Constructive Institute, founded in 2017 by Ulrik Haagerup, is affiliated with the University of Aarhus in Denmark. In other words, there is significant American and European influence in the discourse surrounding solutions journalism. However, it's worth noting the prominence of Oceania, represented by Australia, which was outside the USA-Europe axis and accounted for 06 articles found in this state-of-the-art review.

Authors with Major Production and Academic Relevance

One of the goals of this state-of-the-art review was to identify relevant authors in terms of academic production. It was evident the considerable presence of articles by Karen McIntyre. For instance, out of the 44 articles analyzed, 10 were authored by her, accounting for nearly 1/4 of the literature located. It's noteworthy that out of these 10 articles, 8 were co-authored with other researchers, some affiliated with universities outside the United States. She was the first to attempt to conceptualize solutions journalism through her thesis (McIntyre, 2015) and believes it is a branch of constructive journalism (McIntyre & Gyldestend, 2017).

Table 3 - Articles located by author (2018-2023)

AUTHOR	QUANTITY
Karen McIntyre (USA)	10
Kyser Lough (USA)	07
Nicole Smith Dahmen (USA)	05
Kathryn Thier (USA)	04
Andrea Wenzel (USA)	02
Natasha van Antwerpen (AU)	02

Prepared by the article's author

Karen McIntyre and Kyser Lough have collaborated on 05 articles, either attempting to systematize and operationalize the concept or to analyze the effects of solutions journalism on the emotions of a specific group. In this regard, due to the absence of a "universal" definition of the topic, it's interesting to note the article "Toward a clearer conceptualization and operationalization of solutions journalism" (McIntyre & Lough, 2019), which represents an attempt to operationalize the concept.

> Through in-depth interviews, journalists familiar with solutions offered by journalism provided insights into defining and measuring the practice. These insights reinforce traditional journalistic norms while defining the distinct practice of solutions-oriented reporting and how it is carried out in practice. Journalists noted that solution-oriented stories contribute to more accurate and balanced analysis (2019, p.12).

The article proposes a possible operationalization for solutions journalism reporting, involving aspects linked to characteristics presented by SJN, such as including the causes of a social problem but framing it to give more weight to a response to the problem. It emphasizes the need to present a tangible response with details on its implementation and limitations. Furthermore, the authors argue for including information that mobilizes the public to support societal change (McIntyre & Lough, 2019).

In addition to Karen McIntyre and Kyser Lough, authors Nicole Smith Dahmen and Kathryn Thier also stand out in terms of bibliographic quantity and work within a mixed line of research, whether in the visual analysis of solutions journalism, its relationship with investigative journalism, issues related to public trust, and audience studies.

An analysis of the bibliographic references in the 44 articles located reveals that Karen McIntyre was cited in 33 of them, accounting for 75% of the articles referencing her. An additional review of this bibliographic survey also highlighted other authors and works outside the specified timeframe of this article (2018-2023) that appear to have significance in terms of citation and bibliography.

Cathrine Gyldenstend was cited 28 times, either through her book written in 2015 or her work with McIntyre in 2017, linking solutions journalism to constructive journalism, framing it as a branch. Other authors are also frequently cited, such as Curry (21 times), renowned for his work "The Power of Solutions Journalism" (Curry & Hammonds, 2014). This article is highly cited, possibly due to its exploration conducted by the Solutions Journalism Network, aiming to understand how the audience responds to solutions-based news. One of the findings presented by the authors showed that solutions journalism is a potential tool to increase reader engagement.

Nicole Smith Dahmen is cited 18 times through works related to solutions journalism applied to photography and visual aspects (traditionally, the primary focus was on text), as well as other articles that relate to investigative journalism.

Benesch (1998) wrote the first article citing the term "solutions journalism" and was cited 11 times in the literature review. The same applies to Andrea Wenzel (2016) through the work "Engaging Communities Through Solutions Journalism" (Wenzel, Gerson & Moreno, 2016). Andrea Wenzel's research focuses on community journalism, proposing approaches to community engagement. It's worth noting that while Karen McIntyre was cited in nearly 75% of the foreign articles, in Brazil she was cited only in one of the two articles analyzed.

Branches Advocated

Through the state-of-the-art survey, it was possible to observe that there are several branches in the pursuit of defining what solutions journalism entails. Specifically, McIntyre and Gyldestend (2017) argue that solutions journalism is a branch of constructive journalism, referenced and associated in 22 articles found in this state-of-the-art review. The remainder either do not link the concept to constructive journalism or provide different references, particularly regarding the understanding within the American solutions journalism network.

> "Most practitioners do not bother themselves with the differences between the two terms and tend to use them to mean the same thing. It appears the distinction is mostly a geographical preference, where those in Europe lean toward the word 'constructive' and those in the U.S. prefer 'solutions', likely because these were the terms chosen by the respective organizations leading the efforts to promote the approaches. The terms may not be important for many working journalists, but for scholars studying the concepts, the differences matter. (McIntyre & Lough, 2023, p.1071)

Thus, McIntyre and Lough (2023) pointed out that treating solutions journalism as synonymous with constructive journalism will lead to confusion and hinder operationalization. In this respect, there

are three branches to be considered: solutions journalism as a branch of constructive journalism, solutions journalism as similar yet distinct from constructive journalism, and solutions journalism solely as a distinct practice without clear association with constructive journalism. Faced with these three branches, researchers in the field encounter a problem related to the definition itself, as there is no clear operationalization of what solutions journalism is or whether it stems from a previous aspect. What these studies share is the belief that integrating solutions into journalistic coverage is beneficial for the public.

The question raised from the analyzed articles is whether the inclusion of solutions in journalistic coverage occurs more due to a belief that it brings positive effects to the audience rather than fitting as one of journalism's functions or responsibilities. The argument presented relates to news historically biased towards negativity, with research indicating public dissatisfaction with digital news consumption under this bias (Reuters, 2022).

Professor Simões (2022, p.23) authored the first book on solutions journalism in Brazil and argues, "The problem is that, most of the time, it is assumed that the negative will capture more attention from news consumers." In this context, where the media historically plays a "watchdog" role and presents a negative bias in its coverage, Simões (2022, p.28) asserts that solutions journalism "goes beyond merely reporting events that generate common positive news." Simões (2022) emphasized the importance of thorough investigation and data research to substantiate the relevance and effectiveness of the presented responses. This involves listening to various social actors with different perspectives and outlining the limitations of the presented solutions.

Ultimately, the author argues that solutions journalism innovates by breaking away from the predominant logic in traditional journalistic production routines, which highlight social problems and almost ignore the solutions to these woes (Simões, 2022, p.85). In other words, this type of journalism proposes coverage that does not overlook social problems but also seeks to understand which responses can or should be developed for a particular community or location.

The question posed in this article is whether integrating solutions should predominantly be an action aimed at "social well-being" (as advocated by constructive journalism, incorporating techniques from positive psychology) or if we should consider integrating solutions based on journalism's goals, such as reducing stereotypes and respecting the plurality of voices. In response to this question, the following two aspects discussed in this state-of-the-art review pertain to the themes investigated in the articles and the theoretical framework that serves as the basis for advocating solutions journalism.

Themes Investigated in the Articles

The main themes addressed by the authors were observed, and it was noted that only 06 articles deal with the operationalization of the concept, whether in terms of systematizing and discussing the definition or outlining the characteristics of solutions-oriented journalism. The Solutions Journalism Network (SNJ) identifies 04 key characteristics for this coverage: presenting a response and its functioning, providing evidence of the response, offering insight to people, and finally, presenting the limitations of the response. Based on this framework, 14 articles mention these characteristics proposed by the Network, not to question or add to them, but rather to assess their presence in reporting, engage with journalists regarding their integration into coverage, or simply cite them.

This raises questions about why these characteristics were chosen over others and whether, in some ways, these proposed characteristics are not already part of what is considered traditional journalism. For instance, providing evidence on an issue, explaining how something works, and even the aspect of "offering insights" in terms of guiding or drawing attention to a content. Moreover, it prompts reflective consideration on whether these characteristics do not simply define high-quality journalistic coverage and whether there are other crucial characteristics in such coverage, such as plurality of voices

and community engagement, as discussed, for example, by Wenzel (2016).

In general, 39 articles are divided into 02 predominant aspects in their approach: 22 address aspects related to the production of solutions journalism, either through analyzing reports or interviewing journalists who claim to work with this type of content. However, 17 of them focus on the effects, seeking to understand whether solutions journalism has been able to change the perception of interviewees, motivate behavior, evoke positive emotions, or indicate social change (which reinforces an alignment with the main concept of a branch of constructive journalism, applying techniques of positive psychology to promote well-being or positive emotions). In these articles, there is a justification that solutions journalism should be used to provide better feelings or emotions to the audience, although results have shown variability, especially in terms of engagement and sharing. Our critique of this approach is that only 06 articles attempt to address an operationalization of the concept, which is quite nebulous because there are at least 03 perspectives on a possible concept of solutions journalism.

In this regard, how can one test the effects of something that is still in the process of operationalization in academic terms and with characteristics initially presented by a network of journalists? It is worth noting that McIntyre and Lough (2019) presented an article proposing an operationalization of these characteristics, which remains based on what was initially presented by the Network, without adding new features.

Out of the 44 articles analyzed, only 04 provided some critique of solutions journalism, linking it through marketing and market discourses. One of them analyzed the integration of solutions journalism in French newsrooms.

> While we do not contrast solutions journalism in France with its practice in the United States, we can note that solutions journalism fits with long-held views of the French regional press as a community service. This fact certainly helped some journalists embrace it, partly because they see the model as a continuation of past practices. More broadly, our approach suggests that models are more likely to be appropriated when journalistic autonomy is weakened, and their primary effect is to translate external changes into journalistic language. This is not precisely adoption or adaptation; rather, it is an effort to reorient how journalists value their work. It may produce journalism that looks similar or dissimilar to US journalism, but will nonetheless validate marketing discourses (Amiel & Powers,2019, p.13).

Another significant article in terms of critique is by Noha Mellor and An Nguyen (2023). Titled "Engaging audiences with local news: can solutions journalism be a solution to local media crisis?", the article, while advocating for the importance of integrating solutions into journalistic coverage, explains that this cannot be done randomly but with context and without market bias. Additionally, there is criticism of the idea of "positivity," which is discussed in constructive journalism, for example. The study indicated that the public's expectation regarding local news revolves around norms of accuracy, objectivity, and a watchdog role (Poindexter, Heider & McCombs, 2006) rather than positivity. Furthermore, it showed that research participants emphasized the value of journalism in providing solutions within a context.

Another aspect is that only 07 articles deal with other forms of production in journalism, apart from text in its various forms (digital or print). Only 05 articles address the analysis of images and photography in solutions journalism, and 02 study television or video-related aspects.

Methodologies Employed

It was also observed that 15 out of 44 articles (34,09%) employ more than one methodology to achieve their objectives. In a breakdown, four methodologies are predominantly used: online research and/or online experiment application (40,9%), in-depth or semi-structured interviews (29,5%), bibliographic research and/or literature analysis on the topic (11,3%), and content analysis (18,1%). Generally, online

experiments or questionnaire applications were accompanied by interviews with some participants.

Regarding the predominant methodology, which was online research and/or online experiment application (40.9%), two distinct elements were identified: firstly, the use of online surveys with a sample of society (especially university students) to understand their perception of a topic related to a specific news item. Secondly, some researchers conducted experiments involving simulations of news stories that presented a negative aspect and others that showed solutions to a particular problem in their approach. This was a way to test participants' perceptions of a subject and the impact that solutions-based journalism news had on them.

It is also noted that researchers, through interviews, sought to understand solutions journalism from the perspective of journalists who claim to work with the theme, to comprehend the operationalization of the concept and the application of the four characteristics proposed by the network. Other methodologies were present in smaller numbers, such as focus groups (01), essays (01), report analysis (selection, treatment, and analysis) (01), critical and/or metaphorical analysis (02), action research (01), case study (01), among others.

Theoretical framework

During the analysis of the articles, it was possible to perceive that the authors used several theoretical frameworks in an attempt to validate the importance of incorporating solutions into journalistic coverage. Predominantly, we observed the Theory of Positive Psychology (19), Entman's Framing Theory (1993) (6), the Theory of Social Responsibility (4), and theories related to the practice and normative roles of journalism, whether in its social functions or as a "watchdog" (14). It is worth noting, as well, 6 articles that deal with aspects of local or community journalism, arguing that solutions journalism is one way for journalism to engage with society. Additionally, one of these articles (Wenzel, 2021) critiques journalistic objectivity, asserting that it reinforces white supremacy through the hegemony of male and white sources, as well as a detachment from the community.

Furthermore, other theories from psychology are cited in some articles, such as Constructionist Theory (CLT), linked to the marketing field. Two articles also addressed aspects related to misinformation, post-truth, and post-modernism. One of the articles explored Bourdieu's concept of habitus and framing through a Bourdieusian approach, field analysis, and media frame analysis (Benson, 2013; Benson & saguy, 2005; Broadbent et al., 2016; Champagne & Marchetti, 2005; Saguy, Gruys, & Gong, 2010; Soneto, 2010).

It is important to highlight that some articles point to more than one reference, potentially blending journalistic practices with positive psychology. Specifically concerning positive psychology, certain authors in the field are cited in the texts (Veitch, Dewood & Bosko, 1977; Seligman, 1997), which is used as a foundation for what constructive journalism proposes (Gyldensted, 2011, 2015; McIntyre & Gyldensted, 2017; Baden, McIntyre & Homberg, 2019). Positive psychology aims to evoke positive emotions in individuals, and some journalists believe that adopting these characteristics is important for media coverage. Thus, there is a proposal ranging from news that evokes positive emotions to those that highlight solutions to social problems.

The theory of social responsibility was present in 4 articles and has been discussed since the Hutchins Commission in 1947, which deals, for example, with aspects of journalism in the service of social welfare (Christians & Nordenstreng 2004, p. 3–4; Mcintyre & Sobel 2017, p. 1). Hautakangas and Ahva (2018), grounding their article on constructive/solutions journalism from the perspective of social responsibility, argue that it is necessary to rethink the social role of journalism amidst current societal changes.

Regarding journalistic practices and their functions, authors discuss aspects of journalistic functionality, objectivity, the "watchdog" role, and the negativity bias in news. This serves as a basis

for further questioning, seeking to understand if journalism should not also serve other functions, and criticizing the overly negative bias of news. For instance, Lasswell is referenced for his identification of environmental surveillance, which includes the reporting of threats (1948).

Furthermore, Harcup and O'Neill (2017) argue that journalists and editors often prioritize alarming information, operating under the premise that bad or conflict-oriented news is newsworthy. Despite this, Nelson (2016, cited in Baden, McIntyre, and Homberg, 2019, p. 1941) suggests that "news journalism can serve as a tool to catalyze positive changes." This viewpoint challenges journalistic practices and encourages researchers to reconsider the profession's functionality.

Regarding framing theory, Entman (1993) is the primary referenced author, particularly noting in his work that there is a selection of elements within a narrative that makes it more salient/attractive to the audience. Additionally, Entman identifies four functions of framing: defining problems, diagnosing causes, conveying moral judgments, and offering potential solutions.

The function of pointing out potential solutions to a particular issue is a criterion highlighted by Entman in framing theory used by some authors (Mindberry, Brown, Potter & Comfort, 2022). In the Brazilian context, one article links solutions journalism to news values, noting that "journalists follow production routines according to criteria of newsworthiness and news values, through explicit and/or implicit rules of editorial policies and business models (Breed, 1955; Erbolato, 2008; Tuchman, 1978) of the companies they work for" (Jonhsson & Freitas, 2022, p. 417).

Based on this, Brazilian authors investigated articles from The Guardian using solutions journalism and understand that it can "contribute to the deconstruction of traditional practices of newsworthiness and news values that privilege hegemonic agendas and discourses. It is a choice anchored in a differentiated business model, democratic principles, and editorial independence" (2022, p. 433). This article does not address the relationship between solutions journalism and constructive journalism.

On the other hand, the second article discusses aspects of positive psychology, as it aligns with the perspective of constructive journalism and critiques what is considered "traditional" journalism.

> It is a materialistic world, whose reality ultimately reduces to the material, concrete physical instances of existence. Hence, the belief in journalism is that for there to be news, there must be facts. It is a fragmented world, divided into specialized areas. Hence, the editorial sections in conventional newsrooms. It is a simple, linear, logical world, tending toward static conditions. Therefore, in journalism, the focus on current events, that abrupt and blind slice through time, reduces it to a tiny portion of its scope and not quite grasp the long-term dynamism in events, which causes sudden occurrences within the social fabric to suddenly emerge, seemingly piquing media coverage interest. It is a world inspired by a mechanical view of things [...] (Lima, 2018, p. 882).

In this sense, the author argues that journalism presents a simplistic view of things and advocates for literary journalism as an element that would add greater understanding and insight into reality. "It is not enough to merely report facts. There is a need for contextualization and to illuminate to the fullest extent the broad understanding of stories – and their related themes – contemplated within narratives. The approach should be phenomenological, systemic, holistic, and integrated" (Lima, 2018, p. 882). From this perspective, the author aims, through constructive journalism, to establish a relationship with what is considered literary journalism, without delving into solutions journalism.

Conclusion and Future Directions

The state of the art on solutions journalism allowed for an overview of predominantly American and European literature, highlighting several issues regarding the operationalization of the concept. Only two articles were found with Brazilian authors. There is a mixture of definitions: some American articles focus on definitions presented by the Solutions Journalism Network (without academic connection), while

others relate the concept to constructive journalism, prevalent in European articles. This issue remains unresolved, as some authors present the terms as synonymous and others as a branch of constructive journalism. In some cases, the term "solutions journalism" appears dissociated from "constructive journalism".

This raises reflections on the need to operationalize the concept, which has only occurred in 6 articles without presenting a "closed/official" idea about the term. Nevertheless, the term "constructive journalism" appeared in the keywords of 40.9% of the articles, reinforcing the strength of this relationship. Several reasons may justify this data, including who produces the literature on the topic, with Karen McIntyre alone producing a quarter of the articles found and advocating solutions journalism as a branch of constructive journalism. Moreover, the researcher was highly referenced in other articles. Furthermore, the idea of evoking positive emotions, derived from Seligman's positive psychology (2000), is reflected in methodological aspects linked to the need to investigate the effect of solution-oriented news on samples of the public (38.6%).

However, it is worth noting that 50% of the articles also sought to identify productive aspects within newsrooms, whether through contact with editors or journalists. This is important to reinforce the hypothesis, which lacks investigation, that solutions journalism can be seen as a practice or tool that may (or may not) be employed within newsrooms.

The reflection of the relationship between constructive and solutions journalism also emerges from the theoretical framework that served as the basis for article development. However, it is noteworthy that despite positive psychology theory appearing in 19 articles, none of them delved into the theory or explained why techniques from positive psychology were appropriated in the context of solutions journalism. Other theories seem to have a stronger connection when advocating for the integration of solutions or alternatives to social problems in journalistic coverage, including Entman's framing theory (1993), present in 6 articles, social responsibility theory, and theories related to the practice and normative roles of journalism.

Therefore, what this state of the art concludes concerns the need to operationalize the term, identifying what solutions journalism is and how it can and has been practiced, including bridging the gap with the Brazilian reality, which has been little explored thus far.

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