

# Consumers' evaluations of journalistic and private news in different digital media – an experimental study

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT TO BE DEVELOPED INTO A FULL ARTICLE

First a short abstract:

## Abstract

It has been argued that news journalism is a prerequisite for the functionality and survival of democratic societies and also benefiting people's everyday decision making, based on its journalistic qualities. As the world is getting digitalized, news journalism is challenged by an increased exposure and consumption of other types of news, especially in social media, which may have affected consumers' evaluations of journalistic news.

A problem thus facing the news media industry and the society is if news journalism still has a unique value – a *unique selling proposition* – in the eyes of news consumers separating them from other types of news consumed, and making them more valuable to consumers than other kinds of news?

To test whether journalistic and private news (the latter created by non-journalist citizens, related to the private sphere and found in social media) are evaluated differently or similarly as to journalistic qualities, and whether type of medium or a journalist as sources have any influence on the evaluation of journalistic news, an experiment was carried out with 1,525 Swedish consumers, aged 20-40, sampled from a representative Swedish panel and randomly assigned the experimental variations. The study also includes analyses of structural equation models to explain the use of (interest in) journalistic and private news consumed, respectively.

The journalism qualities chosen as evaluation criteria were to what degree the news items were perceived as relevant and useful (of interest to the consumer), subjective or biased/objective or neutral, trustworthy/credible, critically scrutinizing, and thought-provoking.

The main findings are:

1. The influences of different types of media on the evaluations of journalistic news were rather limited. When it comes to the perception of trust in the news, the differences between different types of media distributing the news were much less than when asking a direct question about trust in the news reporting in general in the same media, as is done in many (most) other surveys. Although there are some significant mean differences, there is great overlapping of the frequency distributions of the evaluations of the news in different media.

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2. News items being signed by a journalist (making that source of the news salient) had in most cases no influence on the evaluations of journalistic news, and when it did, it was negative.
3. Although there were significant mean differences as to the evaluations of journalistic and private news, in favor of journalistic news for all but one news quality (trust), the frequency distributions of the evaluations were greatly overlapping. As to trust, private news was perceived (on average) more trusted than journalistic news.
4. Two structural equation models exploratively explaining interest in news items and causal relations between the different evaluative variables were tested, one for journalistic news and one for private news, also controlling for some demographic and other theoretical variables related to news consumption. It was found, for interest in both journalistic and private news consumed, that all evaluative variables used had direct or indirect influence on the interest in the news, and in a rather, but not completely, similar way for journalistic and private news.

The overall conclusion is that although there still is some advantages of journalistic news in some traditional news media over both journalistic and private news in social media as to journalistic qualities, the mean differences are rather small and the overlaps in frequency distributions rather great. This indicates a severe threat to news journalism and journalistic news media.

Thus, if news journalism is to survive, journalistic news media must reconsider on which grounds they compete: Shall they compete with the steady flow of all kinds of non-journalistic news, many with questionable journalistic qualities concerning for example relevance/ usefulness, objectivity, credibility, being critically scrutinizing, or being thought-provoking, or should they try to live up to journalistic qualities which usually requires a more thorough and time-consuming production process (when needed)?

## Introduction: Problem, research question and purpose

It has been argued that news journalism is a prerequisite for the functionality and survival of a democratic society, but also to benefit people's everyday lives by its qualified scrutinizing and reporting functions. The American Press Institute (API) states, based on Kovach & Rosenstie (2014), that "news is that part of communication that keeps us informed of the changing events, issues, and characters in the world outside. The purpose of journalism is thus to provide citizens with the information they need to make the best possible decisions about their lives, their communities, their societies, and their governments."<sup>4</sup>

News journalism thus focuses on societal issues of general interest to a number of citizens, of such qualities that it helps them to make better – even 'the best' – decisions. These qualities should then be the unique selling proposition (USP) of news journalism, and of news media companies or institutions focusing on producing and delivering such news; in other words, qualities that distinguish journalistic news from other types of news. The news media type or brand, and the journalist behind a news item, should thus be the primary indicators such qualities.

Journalistic news may also be used for other purposes than decision-making, such as fulfilling hedonic, eudemonic, or social needs (e.g., Kim et al., 2017), sometimes referred to as *infotainment* (Thussu, 2007) and most likely also personal (Perry, 2008) or social (Jenkins, 2014; Schulz et al., 2020) identity needs. In order to be considered journalistic news, they still need to have the unique qualities of such.

As the media world is getting digitalized, the production, distribution and consumption of news<sup>5</sup> are rapidly changing, resulting in increased competition on the news market. This has challenged the traditional news journalism industry, but also news journalism as such, by an increased production and consumption of both social or citizen news (news created<sup>6</sup> by others than journalists), auto-mated journalism, 'alternative' or fake news, content marketing, or native advertising distributed via an increasing array of different digital media (e.g., Goode, 2009; Graefe, 2016; Lazer, 2018; Nelson & Lei, 2018; Newman et al., 2020; Rowley, 2008; Taylor, 2017).

The new mixture of many different types of news in many different types of media composed by different kinds of authors, all with different qualities, may lead to new and different views on and evaluations of news, which may in turn change the usefulness of journalistic news as stated above, especially among younger news consumers who have been brought up with and thus to a greater extent exposed to this mixture than older consumers.

Some possible consequences may be less trust among consumers in news journalism, increased disbelief in facts in general, or less use of 'true' facts in decision-making, thus

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/what-is-journalism/>

<sup>5</sup> Since news may be attended to in different ways, for example hearing, watching, or reading them, and that we have a consumer perspective, we will use the word to *consume* and *consumption* of news, also indicating that the consumers get some kind of utility from attending to – consuming – the news.

<sup>6</sup> The word *create* is chosen since news can have many different formats such as oral, video, picture, or text, and usually consists of more than pure information or facts, which will be discussed later on.

affecting the quality of decision making in society in general negatively and in turn weakening democracy. What the consumption and use of all new types of news in new types of media will result in will then depend on how different news in different media is viewed, evaluated, and used by the consumers.

Annual surveys in Sweden (e.g., *Förtroendebarmetern*<sup>7</sup>) and globally (e.g., Newman et al., 2020) about trust in media show there is (still) a great discrepancy in the trust of different types of media and media brands (although varying among countries). The medium thus seems still to matter. However, all these surveys are based on direct questions about the trust in different media (as recommended by Strömbäck et al., 2020). The results do thus not show the trust in, and other perceived qualities of *the news actually consumed*.

In the cluttered digital media world, where the very same news item may be consumed in different media, for example by clicking on a link in a social medium or news aggregator to a news article in a public service (or any other type of) medium, it is an open question to what extent the medium or the journalist behind news items are perceived and matter as to the perception or evaluation and usefulness of news items. In other words, does news journalism and traditional news media still have a competitive edge to other types of news and media conveying news?

## **Purpose**

The study aims at answering the following specific research questions:

1. To what extent do type of digital news medium and a journalist as sources of journalistic news influence the evaluations of such news?
2. To what extent do consumers evaluate journalistic and private news<sup>8</sup>, respectively, in digital media similar or differently as to news journalism qualities?
3. How and to what extent are the usefulness of (measured as interest in) journalistic and private news, respectively, influenced by evaluations of such news as to news journalism qualities and other factors?
4. To what extent are the influences in research question 3 similar or different for journalistic and private news?

The target group – 20-40 years old – is chosen because they have been brought up with and exposed to the more mixed digital news world than older people and are also of more interest concerning consequences for the future of news journalism.

As to influencing factors, the focus is on types of digital news media and the role of the journalist, but we are also exploratorily looking into the influence of other factors related to news consumption and the appraisal of journalistic qualities of the news such as the extent of news consumption, general trust in news reporting in different media and in journalists, and socio-psychological variables related to news consumption.

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<sup>7</sup> For example [https://medieakademin.se/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Presentation\\_fortroendebarmetern\\_2021-1.pdf](https://medieakademin.se/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Presentation_fortroendebarmetern_2021-1.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> A sub-category to citizen news to be explained and defined later in the paper.

The study intends to add to earlier research of perceived journalistic qualities of news in digital media by focusing on evaluations of *news items* rather than news media, making comparisons between *journalistic news* in different media and *private news* in social media and give indications of possible causes to evaluations of journalism news qualities.

Although the analyses for the latter – specific research questions three and four – are based on hypothesized causal effects, they should be considered exploratory for a number of reasons. First, there are no strong theories behind the hypothesized causal relations. Second, there are possibly alternative theoretical reasonings about the effects. Third, when studying news actually consumed, the results may always depend on *what* specific news has been included in the study, since news may differ in much too many ways to be covered by one study. At present, it is thus primarily an empirical question yielding indications to be further explored by future research.

## **Theoretical background, earlier research, specific research questions and hypotheses**

This section discusses six things: 1) What is meant by ‘news’ and ‘news journalism’? 2) How are the concepts of news and news journalism organized in the minds of the consumers? 3) What are the qualitative aspects of news journalism by which news can be evaluated by the consumers, making journalistic news being of value to consumers as compared to any other kinds of news? 4) What are indicators of news journalism that may affect the evaluations of news? 5) What other factors may influence consumers’ evaluations of news? 6) What are the causal relations between different qualitative aspects of news?

### **The concepts ‘news’, ‘news journalism’ and ‘private news’**

Since the study is focusing on *news*, *news journalism* and *private news*, we need first to establish what we mean with these concepts. In Sweden, both among researchers and professionals, it is common to talk about *news journalism* (e.g., Öhrvall, 2015). In the international literature, however, news and journalism, respectively, are to a great extent used interchangeably – as substitutes. The American Press institute, for example, defines *journalism* as follows<sup>9</sup>, and many other definitions are similar:

“Journalism is the activity of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information. It is also the product of these activities.

Journalism can be distinguished from other activities and products by certain identifiable characteristics and practices. These elements not only separate journalism from other forms of communication, they are what make it indispensable to democratic societies.”

This and other definitions of journalism not only equate journalism with news (“the product of these activities”), they also emphasize the production process of journalism, resulting in

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/what-is-journalism/>

news that differ qualitatively from other types of news which, as pointed out earlier, should be the USP of news journalism.

News as such is, however, often defined differently than journalism, usually as “information about current events” (e.g., Stephens, 1997; Kovach & Rosenstie, 2014). This is a very broad definition, since any information about current events (e.g., quite a lot of any conversation among people) should then be news. It should also be obvious to any news consumer that quite a lot of news is not about current but past – even ancient – events or other phenomena<sup>10</sup>, but that news provides new information about such to the news consumer.

In a qualitative pre-study (using focus group interviews with young digital media consumers) we found that the participants did consume news of many kinds. Quite a lot was created by private citizens (non-journalists; usually labeled *citizen news*, Goode, 2009), including family members, friends, and others that one has a personal relation to (i.e., belonging to one’s *personal sphere*), and quite a lot of such news being about personal or private (as opposed to societal) matters. We label such news *private news*, thus a sub-category to citizen news and the very extreme to societal news created by journalists.

Also, news was not talked about as consisting of only facts or information, but of *presenting* facts *within* a setting and a context – a text, video, or the like, using for example adjectives, adverbs or pictures chosen by the sender – and with the facts being selected by the sender<sup>11</sup>. News in the eyes of consumers is thus a *representation, including* some facts or information.

It was also found that the participants consume news in a steady flow in whatever digital medium they were visiting at the moment, usually browsing different digital media (including both traditional news media sites and social media), and news about different topics created by all kinds of different people (journalists, experts, influencers, friends, or other citizens etc.).

Thus, news in the eyes of consumers – what they consume as news – is not the same as journalism. What is consumed as news is instead different representations of all kinds of topics concerning events or other phenomena in the society, or private matters (i.e., private news), created by journalists or others, and distributed by all kinds of different media, including both traditionally journalistic news media and social media.

We thus define *news* as consumed by consumers as:

*A representation with some new information to individuals about a private or societal issue via a medium. (Thus, independent of who is the composer of the news or what kind of medium.)*

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<sup>10</sup> Such as new findings or discoveries about past wars or other conflicts, the origin of the universe or of mankind etc., which may relate to individuals’ interests and which thus need not be something happening – an event.

<sup>11</sup> Which may lead to biases. An example of a general such bias is the Guardian being mostly anti-Brexit, while the Daily Mail is more pro-Brexit. Similar biases exist for different news media in general. In some cases news items are even deluded (i.e., wrong or fake news) in all kinds of media, see for example:

[https://www.helahalsingland.se/artikel/oksanen-sa-spred-sig-lognen-om-manniskokottet-och-klimatet?fbclid=IwAR0vaVhYAi2ILJXEh83f9R1mFbENJKHkm\\_2OSICFRdgZuXfc87wXgl7KS\\_U](https://www.helahalsingland.se/artikel/oksanen-sa-spred-sig-lognen-om-manniskokottet-och-klimatet?fbclid=IwAR0vaVhYAi2ILJXEh83f9R1mFbENJKHkm_2OSICFRdgZuXfc87wXgl7KS_U)

We define *journalistic news* or *news journalism* as:

*Representations with some new information to individuals about societal issues, living up to journalism qualities that are not required for other types of news (the news thus most likely being created by a qualified journalist), and distributed via a medium.*

This definition separates news journalism from other types of news and thus makes the concept both meaningful and useful.

Finally, we define *private news* as:

*Representations with some new information to individuals about personal or private issues, without the requirement of news journalism qualities (a non-journalist as source), and distributed via a medium.*

Although private news may occur in journalistic news media – for example as family news about marriages, deaths, newborns etc. – they appear mostly in social media, while journalistic news may appear in any medium. Private news should not be created or distributed by a journalist as such (Knight & Cook, 2013), since ‘journalist’ is an indicator of news journalism. It may be difficult to disguise the professionalism of a journalist behind private news if the journalist is well-known as such. If such news – private news created or distributed by a journalist – is not living up to journalistic qualities, it may further impair the perceived qualities of news journalism. Such instances still occur (Dahlen Rogstad, 2014; Hedman & Djerf-Pierre, 2013)<sup>12</sup>.

### **Categorizations and schemas: News media, news journalism, private news and journalists**

Categorization theory explains how perceptions of phenomena are stored and organized in the brain – levels of different schemata – and thus made understood by the individual (c.f. Axelrod, 1973; McVee et al., 2005; Smith & Medin, 2013; Svahn & Lange, 2009). Our basic assumption is that news consumers have developed and internalized *categorizations* and *schemas* of different types of media, media brands, and types of news from how they have been exposed to and consumed such. These schemas are then assumed to be activated when consuming further news and influencing the evaluation of such news.

For long, the primary exposures to journalistic news were through news programs on TV and radio, or articles in newspapers or magazines (e.g., see statistics from Nordicom<sup>13</sup>), and usually within separate news categories or themes such as financial, business, political, culture, sport, health, or entertainment news. Since most news reporting in mentioned media have been – and still is – created by trained journalists, who in general should be guided by the qualitative criteria associated with news journalism, at least the qualitative evaluations of such news should be similar among news consumers, although possibly varying somewhat depending on what news categories they have mainly consumed (cf. Schrøder & Kobbernagel, 2010).

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<sup>12</sup> See also <https://www.dn.se/ledare/hanne-kjoller-anders-lindberg-och-hanif-bali-lever-bada-ett-dubbeltiv/> according to which a journalist has signed his tweet with (“Political editor-in-chief at Aftonbladet. Tweets as private person” (*authors’ transl.*)).

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.nordicom.gu.se/en/statistics-facts>

However, many studies have shown that people evaluate and trust different types of media – for example public service, broad-sheet, tabloid, aggregator, or social media – differently, as well as media brands within these types of media (e.g., Andersson & Weibull, 2018; EBU, 2018; Kiouisis, 2009). This should then cause some further variations in news consumers' evaluation of journalistic news, depending on exactly what types of media or media brands they have consumed news in.

As already mentioned, the supply and thus consumption of news has changed and is still changing following the digitalization of media, especially through the introduction of new digital news channels, including digital news aggregators such as Google News or Omni, and social media. News consumers are thus now exposed to a mixture of journalistic, social, blog, automated, tweet, fake, or 'alternative' news, and even marketing communications that may not be perceived as such but as news, intermingled with each other in a steady flow in different media.

Although news journalism is defined as being different from other types of news, living up to journalistic qualities not required or even expected from other types of news, such as citizen or private news, consumers' perceptions – categorizations and schemas – of journalistic news may have been blurred by new news consumption behaviors, and thus also the qualities associated with news journalism. Or it may have led to that all news – whether journalistic, citizen or private – are evaluated by the same criteria in a similar way, thus not separating journalistic from other types of news. This may in turn influence how different news are perceived as useful or need satisfying, consumed and used, with consequences for consumers' private decision making and thus life quality, or professional decision making, and ultimately affecting the functioning and development of the democratic society.

Another indicator of news journalism is, as already mentioned, that the news is perceived as having been created by a journalist. How a journalist as the creator of news affects an individual's schema of journalistic news should then be influenced by how journalists – or specific journalists – are perceived by the news consumer (cf. Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Pornpitakpan, 2006; Reich, 2011; Weintraub & Dong, 1994).

As already pointed out, this study does not focus – *per se* – on what criteria or news qualities that guide the news media or journalists when producing news, but how news is *evaluated* by consumers, assuming that they have internalized one or more schemas for *news journalism* related to criteria or news qualities aimed at by the news makers.

### **Qualities of news journalism**

There is extensive scientific literature on news and journalism from a production perspective, i.e., the 'values' that the producers – the news media and journalists – should consider and adhere to when producing news to yield the responses aimed at (e.g., Boyd, 1997; Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Gladney et al., 2007; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, 2016; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001, 2014), by which *news journalism* or *journalistic news* could be defined. However, according to Wallisch (1995), what is to be considered being of high or low quality is only a matter of convention.



Galtung & Ruge (1965) listed twelve factors of relevance to news makers concerning how to attract readers' attention to (the news being 'selected') and maintain interests in the news, which they called 'newsworthiness', later reconsidered and further developed by Harcup & O'Neil (2001). Most of the qualities concerned the content – what the news should be about – and how it should be written (e.g., with positive or negative overtones, or having elements of surprise or contrast).

Gladney et al. (2007) summarized six types of criteria, evaluated by online editors, not by consumers: Content (including credibility, relevancy, and utility, but also format aspects such as good writing and illustrations), navigation (ease of use), look and feel (ease of comprehending), functionality (other utilities), community relevance (closeness to reader), and interactivity.

As to values – or rather 'qualities' – of news journalism that fulfill its purpose "to provide citizens with the information they need to make the best possible decisions about their lives, their communities, their societies, and their governments"<sup>7</sup>, some such are included among those referred to above, such as being credible and relevant, and thus useful. Dennis & Merrill (1984) added qualities such as being objective, based on facts (true) and balanced (unbiased or neutral). Kovac & Rosentiel (2001, 2014) stressed verification as "the essence of journalism", and Zelizer (2004) considered facts, truth, and reality as the "god terms" in journalism.

However, the objectiveness quality has been criticized by for example Maras (2013), Gans (2004), McQuail (1992) and Gitlin (1980). Johansson (2015) summarized the critique as concerning the essence of knowledge – what knowledge is, the democratic purpose of journalism and that the ideal sometimes conflict with other professional values. He concluded that the principle of verification still applies, and that journalism must not be fictitious. There is also an extensive literature on source credibility, focusing on the trust in the sources such as the medium and the journalist, and in the message conveyed<sup>14</sup>.

Another denomination of news journalism has been *quality journalism* (Lacy & Rosenstiel, 2015). Traditionally, quality journalism has been associated with the main objectives of public service (e.g., make quality content, supply good information, and involve people in a democratic culture). It should be objective and serious, as well as skillfully crafted/produced (cf. Albers, 1996; Legatt, 1996). Content that fulfills these objectives is regarded as high in the quality aspect.

Meijer (2005) suggests another way to look at "quality" (specifically with regard to television, but arguably generalizable to other forms of media). She argues that what qualifies as quality depends on the goal of the medium and that this goal depends on how the medium views its audience, viewing the news consumers as *citizens*. Quality is then related to the extent it educates and informs the audience, activates democratic involvement etc.

An alternative is to view the audience as *consumers*, as commercial actors do. As such, the audience represents potential buyer of products and services. Signs of quality would then be

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<sup>14</sup> Originating from Aristotle (2014), and then developed and tested by many researchers during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, among the pioneers Hovland and Weiss (1951).

viewership ratings, that the audience experience pleasure or other kinds of utility from news consumption or is transformed into potential buyers of products and services.

A third conceptualization of the audience focuses on impact, and is what Meijer (2005) calls *enjoyers*, which relates more to popular journalism. The main quality indicator here is that viewers really enjoy consuming a certain program, article, or genre. If quality journalism is summarized as “need-to-know” content, then popular journalism would be described as “want-to-know” content (Meijer, 2007).

Kovach & Rosenstie (2014) describes journalism as “storytelling with a purpose”, which API (op. cit.) interprets as “*anything* can be news. But not everything is *newsworthy*. Journalism is a process in which a reporter uses verification and storytelling to make a subject news-worthy.” News should thus be *of interest to the citizen, the consumer, or the enjoyer*, for whatever purpose or reason, determined or defined by the consumer. Since any news – also personal news from friends (i.e., private news) – may be worthy to the consumers, the key element of journalism should be the *process of making* the news – the story – in which *verification* is important.

API states that the “value [of news journalism] flows from its purpose, to provide people with verified information they can use to make better decisions [thus being of interest to the news consumer], and its practices, the most important of which is a systematic process – a discipline of verification – that journalists use to find not just the facts, but also the ‘truth about the facts.’” This enhances the type of medium and the journalist behind the news as indicators of news journalism quality to the news consumer.

API then discusses the concepts of *objectivity* and *bias*, again referring to the process and method used to make the news. API states that “objectivity called for journalists to develop a consistent method of testing information – a transparent approach to evidence” and that “the method is objective, not the journalist”. API further claims that “the job of journalists is not to stamp out bias. Rather, the journalist should learn how to manage it.” Høyer & Pöttker (2005) researched how the quality of “objectivity” came to dominate the conceptualization of “news” within the news industry.

API also lists a number of elements of journalism, referring to Rosenstiel & Kovach (2001), which indicate expected qualities of news: 1) Journalism’s first obligation is to the truth, 2) its first loyalty is to citizens, 3) its essence is a discipline of verification, 4) its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover, 5) it must serve as an independent monitor of power, 6) it must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise, 7) it must strive to keep the significant interesting and relevant, 8) it must keep the news comprehensive and proportional, and 9) its practitioners must be allowed to exercise their personal conscience.

### ***Qualities of news stated by Swedish news media***

Some news media in Sweden are communicating to their consumers the journalistic values they intend to follow in their news reporting by stating these on their sites, most of them relating to the elements of journalism listed by API.

SVT News, produced by the Swedish public TV service, states the journalistic values of SVT News as follows (actual text in Figure 1): “SVT’s news shall stand for objectivity and impartiality. What we publish should be true and relevant. In urgent news situations, it may be difficult to get all the facts confirmed. In those cases, we shall tell you what we know – and do not know”<sup>15</sup>. The SVT’s manifesto is unique – as far as we know – in taking up how they work with news in situations when they do not have all the facts. Referring to SVT’s public service agreement with the Swedish Government, it further states that their broadcasting license shall include critical scrutinizing of phenomena, and that it is its responsibility to analyze and evaluate events. It also states that their news reporting should make people perceive “us” as trustworthy.

## SÅ ARBETAR VI

SVT:s nyheter ska stå för saklighet och opartiskhet. Det vi publicerar ska vara sant och relevant. Vid akuta nyhetslägen kan det vara svårt att få alla fakta bekräftade, då ska vi berätta vad vi vet – och inte vet. [Läs mer](#)

Figure 1: Copy of SVT’s statement of how they work and what qualities they aim for.

DN.se, another broadsheet brand on-line, defines news in different ways. The first is a general definition of their “quality journalism” as follows (actual text in Figure 2): “This is how DN work with quality journalism: DN’s newsroom works impartially – we do not take sides politically or in other issues. What we publish should be true, verified, not be heavily biased and be characterized by quality and trustworthiness.”<sup>16</sup> It further states that the news should be relevant. That it should not be heavily biased and at the same impartial (i.e., neutral) is somewhat contradictory.

# Så jobbar DN med kvalitetsjournalistik

PUBLICERAD 2016-10-19

**DN:s nyhetsredaktion arbetar opartiskt - vi tar inte ställning politiskt eller i andra frågor. Det vi publicerar ska vara sant, bekräftat, inte hårdvinklat och präglas av kvalitet och trovärdighet.**

Figure 2: Copy of DN’s statement of how they work and what qualities they aim for.

The second is what DN calls *commentary* – a blog or chronicle text – which has the footing text (actual text in Figure 3): “This is a commenting text. The writer is responsible for analysis and positions taken in the text.” Since the responsibility of the context is clearly assigned

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/sa-arbetar-vi-pa-svt-nyheter>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.dn.se/nyheter/nyheter-hem/sa-jobbar-dn-med-kvalitetsjournalistik/>

to the writer, and that a 'position' (i.e., a side) is assumed to be taken, the logical conclusion by the reader is that DN does not take responsibility of its qualities, and thus does not consider it news journalism. The third kind of news have no trailing text at all – none of the above. All three kinds of news articles, however, are signed by a DN journalist. It may thus not be clear to the consumer what the difference between the news are as to journalistic qualities. This may be confusing to the news consumer.

*"Detta är en kommenterande text. Skribenten svarar för analys och ställningstagande i texten."*

Figure 3: Copy of DN's statement about commentaries

Expressen and Aftonbladet, two tabloids, and UNT, still another broadsheet brand, do not have similar footers, nor any other easily found manifesto on how they define journalistic news. We contacted them asking for their guidelines of their definition of journalism. Expressen sent us a manifesto which covers daily work routines down to dress codes, but also mentioning the need for multiple verifications of stories.

There is an ongoing debate about news distributed via social media such as Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat, and what news to allow<sup>17</sup>. However, many studies still seem to focus on production and organizational aspects rather than the qualities of news journalism that consumers should expect, for example<sup>18</sup> (*our italicizing*):

*"... positive and negative outcomes for journalists and news organizations. New products, design, and even financial support, albeit relatively small, have taken into account new publisher concerns. At the same time, algorithm changes aimed at elevating only a small subset of stories have had an equally negative effect on some news organizations."*

### **Empirical studies of trust in news media**

One news quality aspect not only repeatedly mentioned but also often measured is *credibility* or *trust*, although not in news items actually consumed but in news media – the type of or the specific brands of such media – or in the news in general in such media.

As already mentioned in the introduction, one example is *Förtroendebarmetern*, an annual survey by Medieakademin and Kantar Sifo about consumers' trust in different institutions in Sweden, including some news media brands. The latest survey (2021<sup>19</sup>) shows most trustworthiness in public service, followed by broadsheet media, then tabloids and least trust in social media in the surveyed population<sup>20</sup>. The general long-term development of trust in different media is diminishing, although somewhat increasing for public service during the last few years. Whether the trust – or lack of such – extends to news *items* published by

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<sup>17</sup> Some examples: <https://about.fb.com/news/2021/05/taking-action-against-people-who-repeatedly-share-misinformation/>; <https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/combating-misinformation-on-instagram>; [medium.com/@TowCenter/the-platforms-publishers-relationship-2018-cbeeebe89368](https://medium.com/@TowCenter/the-platforms-publishers-relationship-2018-cbeeebe89368).

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.cjr.org/tow\\_center\\_reports/the-platform-press-at-the-heart-of-journalism.php/#conclusion](https://www.cjr.org/tow_center_reports/the-platform-press-at-the-heart-of-journalism.php/#conclusion)

<sup>19</sup> [https://medieakademin.se/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Presentation\\_fortroendebarmetern\\_2021-1.pdf](https://medieakademin.se/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Presentation_fortroendebarmetern_2021-1.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> A random sample of the Swedish population, aged 16-74.

these media brands is still an open question. Another similar annual study is carried out by the SOM institute at Gothenburg University showing similar results (Andersson and Weibull, 2018; Falk, 2020).

### ***The news journalism qualities chosen for this study***

Based on the above literature review, the following qualities of news journalism were chosen to answer the first two specific research questions, to examine to what extent type of digital news medium and a journalist as sources of journalistic news influence the evaluations of such news, and to what extent consumers evaluate journalistic and private news, respectively, in digital media similar or differently as to news journalism qualities:

- a) *Degree of trustworthiness (credibility in the news)*: The extent to which one trusts the news, (i.e., believes the contents to be true).
- b) *Degree of subjectivity/objectivity – facts or opinion – and degree of bias*: The extent to which one considers the news to be facts or opinions, as well as neutral or biased. Thus, degree of subjectivity/objectivity and degree of neutrality/bias is assumed to be highly correlated.
- c) *Degree of critically scrutinizing*: The extent to which one considers the news to be critically scrutinizing of what is reported.
- d) *Degree of thought provoking*: The extent to which the news gives rise to new thoughts, make oneself start thinking etc. increasing the ability to make own judgements and decisions, or possibility to find excitement or joy from the news.
- e) *Degree of being of interest to the news consumer*: The extent the news consumer considers the news being interesting, whatever the use of the news, which we consider the ultimate dependent variable.

### **Hypothesized explanatory models of interest in journalistic and private news, respectively**

The third specific research question, how and to what extent the usefulness of (measured as interest in) journalistic and private news, respectively, are influenced by evaluations of such news as to news journalism qualities (the very same as listed above), and by some other factors, is in fact adding results to the two first two specific research questions by including the influence of media type and journalist as explanatory variables to interest in consumed journalistic news and to perceived other qualities of these news, while also assuming causal relations between these qualities. We reason as follows:

1. The more critically scrutinizing one considers news consumed, whether journalistic or private (if news consumers are able to evaluate the latter at all by journalistic qualities), the more objective or neutral/less subjective or biased, and more thought-provoking they should be perceived. As to objectivity and bias, scrutinizing usually involves analyzing a phenomenon from different angles, thus not taking a clear stand in a specific direction. And the more angles presented, the more thought-provoking the news is assumed to be.

2. The more objective or neutral/less subjective or biased one considers news consumed, whether journalistic or private, the more trusted they should be.
3. A consequence of the first two hypotheses is an indirect effect of degree of being perceived as critically scrutinizing on trust in the news consumed: The more critically scrutinizing they are perceived, the more they are trusted. There are some indications that two-sided argumentation result in more trust than one-sided (e.g., Mayweg-Paus & Jucks, 2018). Thus, there may be an additional positive direct effect on trust in news consumed by the mere fact of being critically scrutinizing, whether perceived as subjective or objective.
4. Degree of trust and of being thought-provoking is, in turn, assumed to directly influence the interest in news consumed positively: The more trusted and thought-provoking, the more interesting the news consumed should be considered.
5. The hypotheses stated so far also means that, indirectly, the more critically scrutinizing and objective/neutral news consumed are perceived, the more interesting they are considered. However, the critically scrutinizing of a news may lead to a conclusion contrary to the beliefs of the news consumer, thus having a direct negative effect on interest in the news at least partly counteracting the positive effect via the news being thought-provoking.
6. As to type of media as source of journalistic news consumed, it is expected that the more/less associated with news journalism the medium is – as part of the schema for the medium – the more the news should be perceived as living up to, thus having a positive effect on the perceived qualities of news journalism presented above. Considering the surveys referred to earlier in the paper about trust in different media, public service and broadsheet media should have the highest positive effects, followed by tabloids and news aggregators, while social media should have negative effects.
7. If it is made salient that the journalistic news is created by a journalist, that is also expected to have positive effects on the perceived news journalism qualities mentioned above, as an important indicator of such.

#### ***Other explanatory variables to control for in the analyses***

It has already been mentioned that people may have developed somewhat different schemas of news journalism, depending on what news media and news they have consumed. Since that consumption, in turn, is caused by a number of factors differing among news consumers, such variables may also have a direct effect on the perceived qualities of news consumed in addition to the specific media brand delivering news in our study. Since possible effects of such variables depends on the combination of many factors, we do not propose any specific hypotheses about the possible effects, just settle for controlling for them. Such variables that have been added to our causal models are:

- *Consumption of news in different types of media:* The extent of consumption of news in different media is assumed to influence one's evaluations of journalistic qualities due to different schemas of news journalism resulting from such consumption.

- *General trust in news reporting in different news media:* It is assumed that trust in the news reporting in different media has a positive effect on one's inclination to consume news in these media, thus indirectly influencing evaluations of news consumed. Such trust may, however, also have additional direct effects on such evaluations, since trust is far from the only thing driving news consumption.
- *General trust in journalists:* It has also already been hypothesized that trust in journalists may differ among news consumers, thus possibly also influencing how they evaluate news as to news journalism qualities.
- *Personal and social identity, and hedonic needs related to news consumption.* In our pre-study we identified the following such needs (assumed to be highly correlated):
  - a) *Norm-based personal identity need for knowing.* Consumption seems to some extent be driven by a sense of duty (based on the notion of *deontology* – the normative ethical position that judges the morality of an action based on rules), in this case the sense that one as a member of a democratic society *should* – has the duty to – keep oneself informed about what is going on in the society (in this study used for journalistic news), or about one's friends, family members, relatives, colleagues etc. (concerning private news). This identity need is thus assumed to have different focuses, although being the same *type* personal identity need.
  - b) *Self-esteem personal identity need for knowing.* Instead of a need to fulfil a duty, the driving force behind news consumption may be feeling a positive self-esteem by perceiving oneself as a well-informed person (i.e., by knowing). This need may as well concern either societal issues (journalistic news in this study) or the private sphere (private news).
  - c) *Social esteem identity need for knowing.* While personal identity concern how one perceives or wishes to perceive oneself, social identity is about group-belonging, in the case of news consumption how one wishes to be perceived by others. The assumption is that a need for being perceived as a well-informed person, whether about the society or about one's friends, family members, relatives, colleagues etc., leads to more news consumption.
  - d) *Hedonic need for news:* The assumption is that the more pleasure – hedonic satisfaction – one gets from reading news (e.g., that it is exciting or fun), the more news consumption. Since satisfying personal and social identity needs should also be satisfying, they are as such also hedonic needs.
- *Need for social connectedness.* While the need for social esteem by knowing concerns how one is perceived by others, need for social connectedness is about the need for relations to others through actual interactions with them. It is assumed that the more pronounced this need – the more one interacts with others through digital media – the more news consumption in order to use that for creating and upholding such relations and interactions. More such interactions are assumed for private than for journalistic news, since private issues adds to societal issues.

- *Need for cognition and verification.* Need for cognition concerns the need for intellectual challenges, where news consumption may contribute to such challenges. Thus, the more need for cognition, the more news consumption. The assumption as to need for verification is that if one is generally incredulous or skeptical to what is reported and wish to make sure that the content is true, the more one wish to check news from different sources. This should thus result in more news consumption.
- Gender, age and education will also be controlled for, in case they have any significant influence.

**Summarizing visualizations of the hypothesized causal models**

Figure 4 shows a summarizing visualization of the hypothesized causal model for interest in journalistic news consumed, and Figure 5 shows the same for interest in private news consumed.

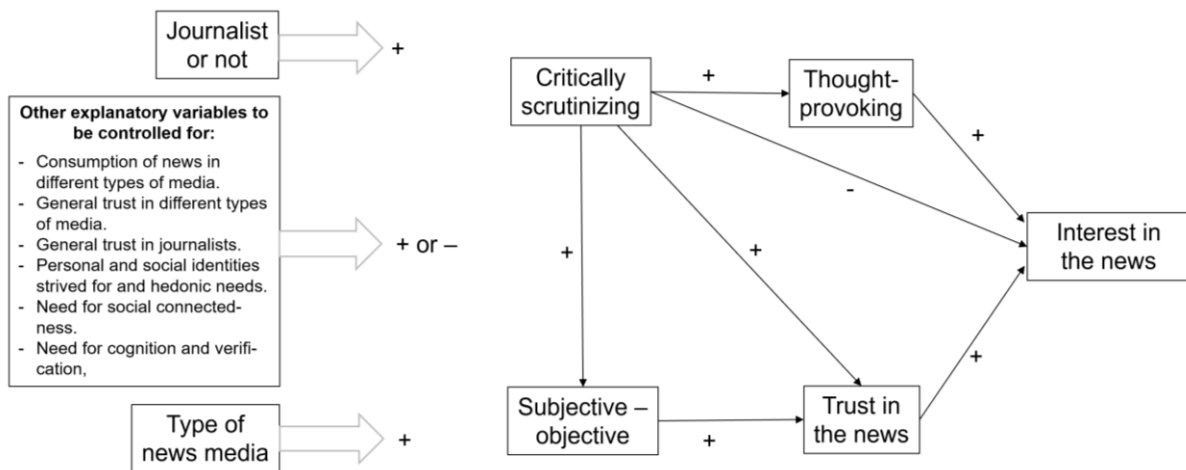


Figure 4: A hypothesized structural causal model of interest in journalistic news consumed, focusing on evaluations of journalistic qualities of the news as explanatory variables.

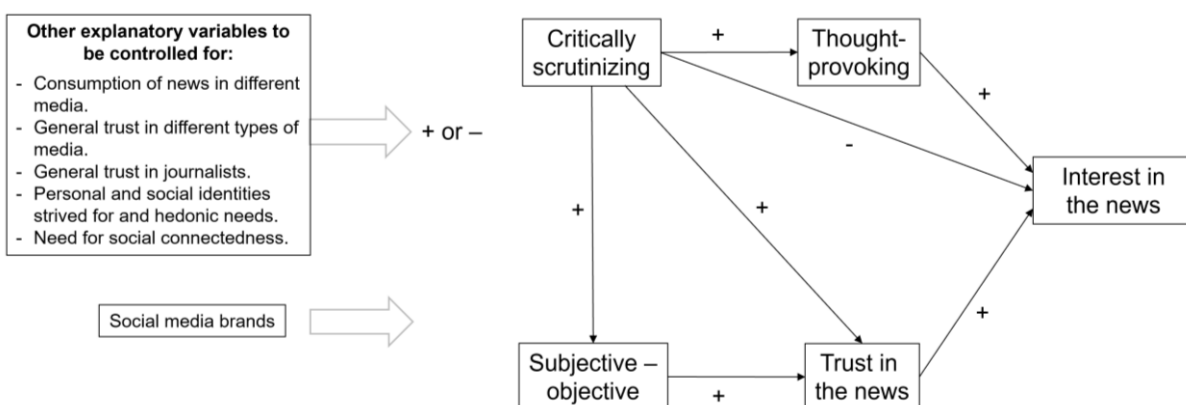


Figure 5: A hypothesized structural causal model of interest in private news consumed, focusing on evaluations of journalistic qualities of the news as explanatory variables.



## Method

Since the purpose of the study is to study causality concerning evaluations of digital news in different digital media, a *digital questionnaire based experimental method* was chosen as research method, where news items could be presented in a digital environment, the experimental variables be controlled, and the dependent variables and other explanatory variables easily measured.

### The experimental design

The respondents were first presented and asked to read three news items, either three journalistic news items, or three private news items. They were also told in what media brand the news items appear, and shown the media brand logo, which were randomly assigned each respondent. The respondents were then asked to evaluate the news thus consumed by the journalistic qualities presented earlier. Then followed questions about all other variables to be included in the analyses.

For journalistic news, a journalist was randomly added in half of the cases as a source of the news, making that salient. Further for journalistic news, two control groups were added not showing any media source of the news, one with and one without making journalist a Salient source of the news. There was also a control group for private news, not showing any media source.

### Measures of news journalism qualities

Semantic differentials with seven-point scales were used for all measures of journalistic qualities, except for the interest in the news items consumed for which a seven-point Likert scale was used. Interest in the news consumed (68.8%; 0.77<sup>21</sup>), and three of the news journalism qualities – perceived degree of trust in the news (75.4%; 0.84) of being critically scrutinizing (64.9%; 0.84), and of being thought-provoking (69.7%; 0.78) – were measured by three measures each. The perceived degree of being subjective/objective, and neutral or biased, was measured by five indicators (53.6%; 0.78).

For the analyses concerning the first two specific research questions – to what extent type of medium and a journalist influence the evaluations of journalistic news, and to what extent these evaluations compare with corresponding evaluations of private news – summative indices were used. For the last two specific research questions (analyzing causal structures), SmartPLS was used where factor loadings and weights of manifest variables on latent variables were estimated as part of the analysis.

### News items used

1. As for *journalistic news*, each respondent was asked to read three news items randomly assigned from 13 real such items from different news categories (sports, politics, health, business, international and local news, crime, and culture). The news items included in

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<sup>21</sup> Within brackets: Explained variance in a principal component analysis, and Cronbach  $\alpha$ , respectively, for each measured quality.

the study were chosen from a quantitative pre-study (about 200 respondents) including much more items. The items chosen had a mean between 3.5 and 5.5 (on a seven-digit scale) on the evaluations made of them by the respondents in the pre-study and a standard deviation above 1 in order to allow for variation among respondents in the experimental study.

2. As for *private news*, the respondents were randomly assigned three news items from five items selected in a similar way as the journalistic news items.
3. Three news items were chosen to emulate a *flow* of news items since news are mostly read in such a way according to our qualitative pre-study. To use more than three items were assumed to severely reduce the willingness to read them and thus the validity of the study, as indicated by respondents in the quantitative pre-study.

### ***The experimental variables***

1. For journalistic news we included both different types of journalistic news media and social media. For private news we included only social media since journalistic news media rarely (and should not) include private news.
2. For the operationalization of types of media, two media brands were used for each of public service (SVT and Sveriges Radio), broadsheets (DN and SvD), tabloids (Expressen and Aftonbladet), and news aggregators (Omni and Google News), and three brands for social media (Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, which all provide both private and journalistic news). For each brand we used its logo (shown in Figure 6).
3. The second experimental variable for journalistic news was the news being signed by "N.N., Journalist" or none. "N.N." was used instead of a (e.g., randomly assigned) name since it was assumed that any name may influence the responses (as is also indicated by one of the measures of general trust in journalists).
4. For all private news (in social media) the respondents were told they were written by "a good friend of yours".



Figure 6: The media brand logos used in the study.

### ***Other explanatory variables***

Most theoretical variables used in the analyses were measured by three or more statements and seven-point Likert scales, randomly distributed in the questionnaire. The consumption of the news reporting in each media brand used in the experiment was also measured by a seven-point scale, but then showing different levels of extent of consumption. Demographic and socio-economic variables were measured last in the questionnaire.

### **The target population, the sample, and data collection**

1. Our focus is on the *future* of news journalism in *digital* media. We therefore wanted the respondents to have digital news reading experience, but also ability to answer our questions. A younger but not too young target population was thus chosen, aged 20-40 years.
2. We reduced the geographical area to Stockholm and its surroundings since we needed the local news to be valid, and the local broadsheet and tabloid brands to be commonly well known. (If expanding the area and the number of broadsheet and tabloid brands, the sample would have needed to be extended more than the budget allowed for.)
3. Norstat<sup>22</sup> provided a random sample of the target population from their panel, assumed to represent the Swedish population, and administrated the data collection. The questionnaires were, however, made by us and the actual data collected using Qualtrics.
4. The number of respondents was 1,525 and they were randomly distributed among the different experimental groups by Norstat for the three groups journalistic news without journalist, journalistic news with journalist as a salient source, and private news in social media, and by us in Qualtrics for all other sub-experimental groups and randomly distributed measures. See Table 1 for the distribution of respondents in the different experimental groups and Table 2 for some demographic and socio-economic statistics.
5. The randomness and thus representativeness of the sample from the target population should be questioned (see descriptive statistics in table 1 and 2). The focus is, on the other hand, on explanations to variances in responses using a random experimental design. And in the test of structural equation model, all variables – including demographic and socio-economic variables, found to have an effect have been controlled for.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://norstat.se/>

Table 1. Number of respondents in each experimental group

Media ↓	Type of news and author →	Journalistic news <i>without</i> journalist	Journalistic news <i>with</i> journalist	Private news from friend	Total
<b>Public Service</b>		(93)	(99)		192
The Swedish Public Service Television (SVT)		47	49	-	
The Swedish public service radio company (SR)		46	50	-	
<b>Broadsheets</b>		(105)	(104)	-	209
Dagens Nyheter		53	49	-	
Svenska Dagbladet		52	55	-	
<b>Tabloids</b>		(109)	(100)	-	209
Expressen		55	51	-	
Aftonbladet		54	49	-	
<b>News Aggregators</b>		(100)	(102)	-	202
Google News		53	55	-	
Omni		47	47	-	
<b>Social Media</b>		(151)	(153)	(230)	534
Facebook		49	54	79	
Instagram		50	48	75	
Snapchat		52	51	76	
<b>Control group</b>		53	49	77	179
<b>Total</b>		611	607	307	1 525

Table 2. Demographic and socio-economic statistics of the sample

Variables	% of the respondents	Variables	% of the respondents
<b>Gender</b>		<b>Highest education</b>	
Females	63.3%	Elementary school (9 years)	2.5%
Males	35.3%	Vocational education (post elementary)	5.6%
		Folk school ("folkhögskola")	3.2%
<b>Age</b>		Gymnasium (upper secondary / high school)	29.6%
20-24 years old (5 years)	18.2%	University	59.1%
25-29 years old (5 years)	30.7%		
30-34 years old (5 years)	25.2%	<b>Present occupation (not exclusive)</b>	
35-40 years old (6 years)	25.9%	Part time work	14.0%
		Full time work	60.6%
<b>Income (SEK per month before taxes)</b>		Studying	21.7%
Less than 10' SEK per month	13.4%	On parental leave	6.2%
10' – less than 20' SEK per month	16.6%	On long time illness leave or pre retiree	2.4%
20' – less than 30' SEK per month	25.7%	Unemployed	2.2%
30' – less than 40' SEK per month	29.2%	Other	1.0%
40' or more SEK per month	15.1%		

## Results

The four specific research question will be analyzed and answered in listed order.

### **Specific research question 1: To what extent do type of digital news medium and a journalist as sources of journalistic news influence the evaluations of such news?**

Results from three different analysis of the evaluations of journalistic news will be reported. First, mean comparisons of the different experimental groups as to media types and a journalist as sources will be presented. Second, to what extent the frequency distributions of the evaluations overlap will be shown. Third, a comparison of the experimental results concerning trust in consumed news items in different types of media with the results from a direct question about the trust in the news reporting in the same media.

#### ***Mean comparisons of perceived journalistic news qualities***

Figures 7–11 show the results of mean comparisons of the different experimental groups for evaluations of journalistic news, where:

*C* = Comparison with the control group (no medium as the source presented).

*SM* = Comparison with the social media group.

*J-NJ* = Signed by a journalist compared with no such source (sender) mentioned.

Significant differences are marked with **blue** if the mean is higher than the group compared with, and **red** if the mean is lower than the group compared with.

As to interest in the consumed news, the only significant mean differences are for broadsheets and tabloids, in which the interest in the news is *less* than in the control group (no media mentioned). As to trust in the consumed news, they are trusted more when consumed in public service and broadsheet media than both in the control group and in social media. The news consumed in news aggregators are also more trusted than in social media, and the news items consumed in the latter were also less trusted than in the control group.

Most differing means are found concerning perceived degree of subjectivity/bias or objectivity/neutrality. The news consumed in all news media – public service, broadsheets, tabloids, and aggregators – are all perceived to be more objective/neutral, or less subjective/biased than both in the control group and in social media. As to being critically scrutinizing, the news consumed in public service and broadsheet media were perceived more so than in social media, while only news consumed in broadsheets were more so than in the control group. Finally, as to thought-provoking, news consumed in tabloids were perceived *less* so than in the control group, which was the only significant difference. The effects as to mean differences were in general rather limited, although some were significant.

When it comes to the effect of making a journalist salient as a source of news items consumed, only some negative effects were found concerning being considered critically scrutinizing in public service media and being perceived as thought-provoking in broadsheet and social media, thus no general effect.

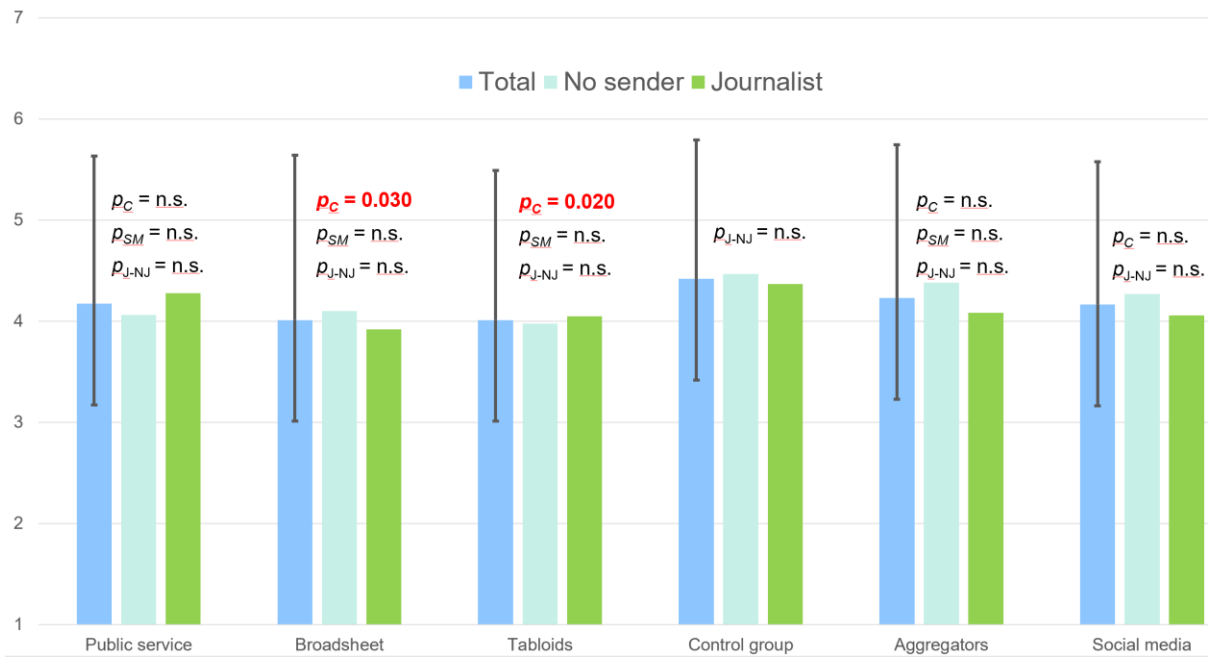


Figure 7: Mean interest in journalistic news in different types of media, signed or not signed by a journalist.

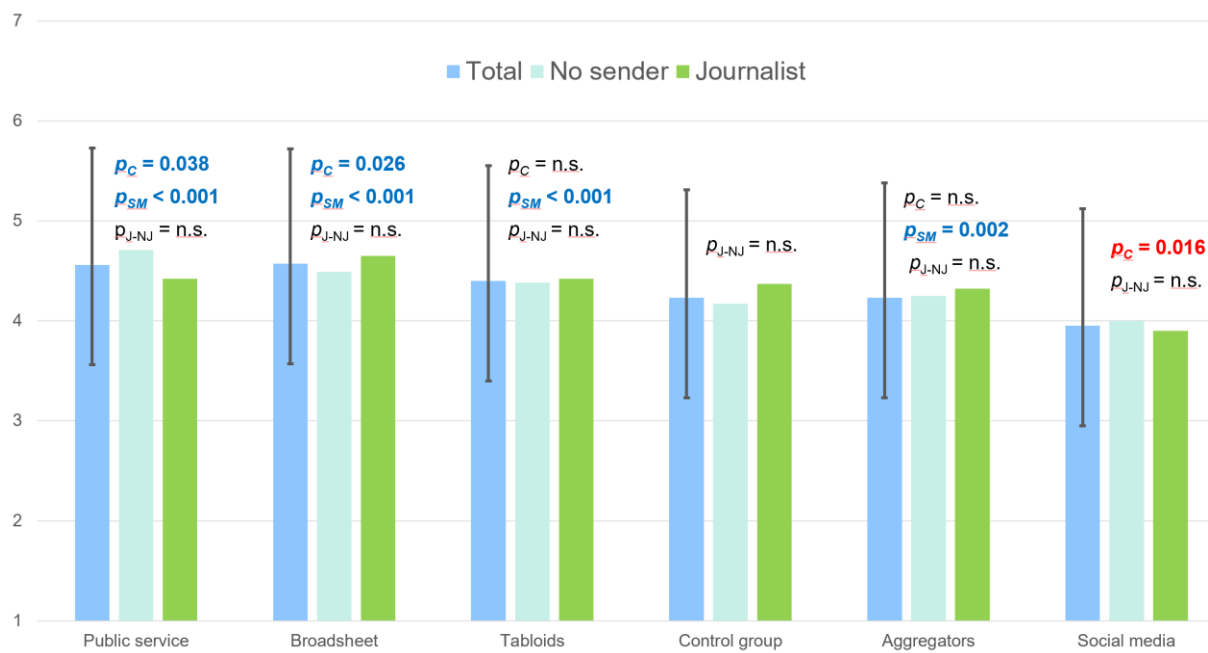


Figure 8: Mean trust in journalistic news in different types of media, signed or not signed by a journalist.

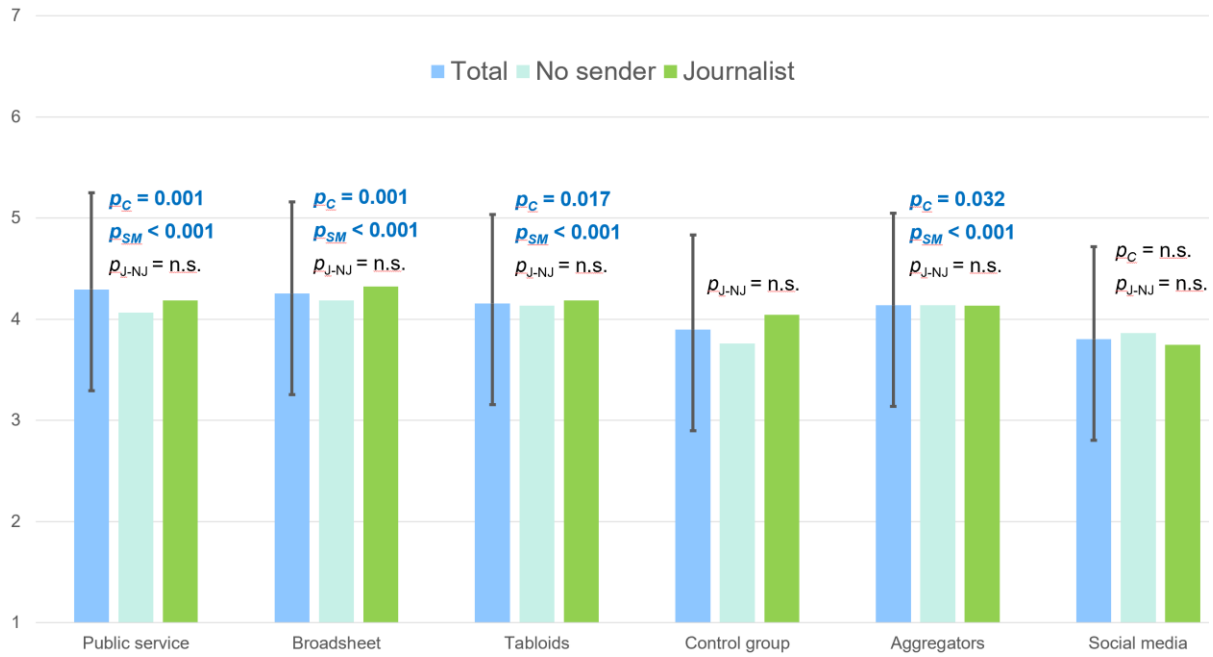


Figure 9: Mean degree of perceived subjectivity/bias or objectivity/non-bias in journalistic news in different types of media, signed or not signed by a journalist.

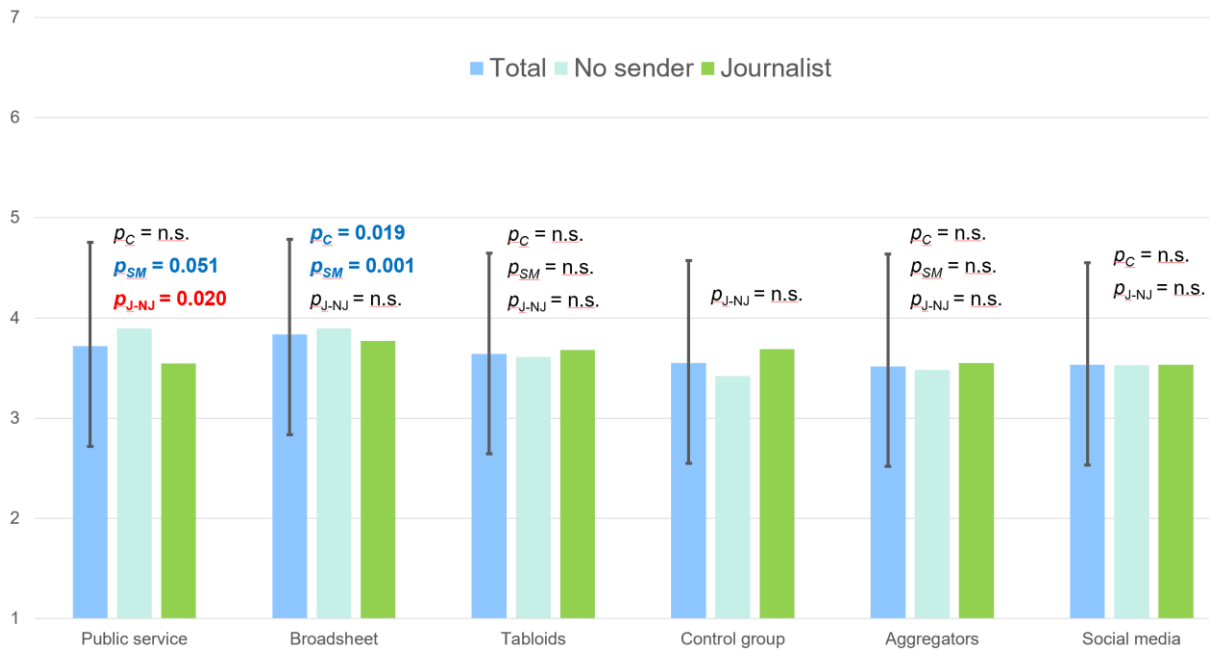


Figure 10: Mean degree of journalistic news being perceived as critically scrutinizing in different types of media, signed or not signed by a journalist.

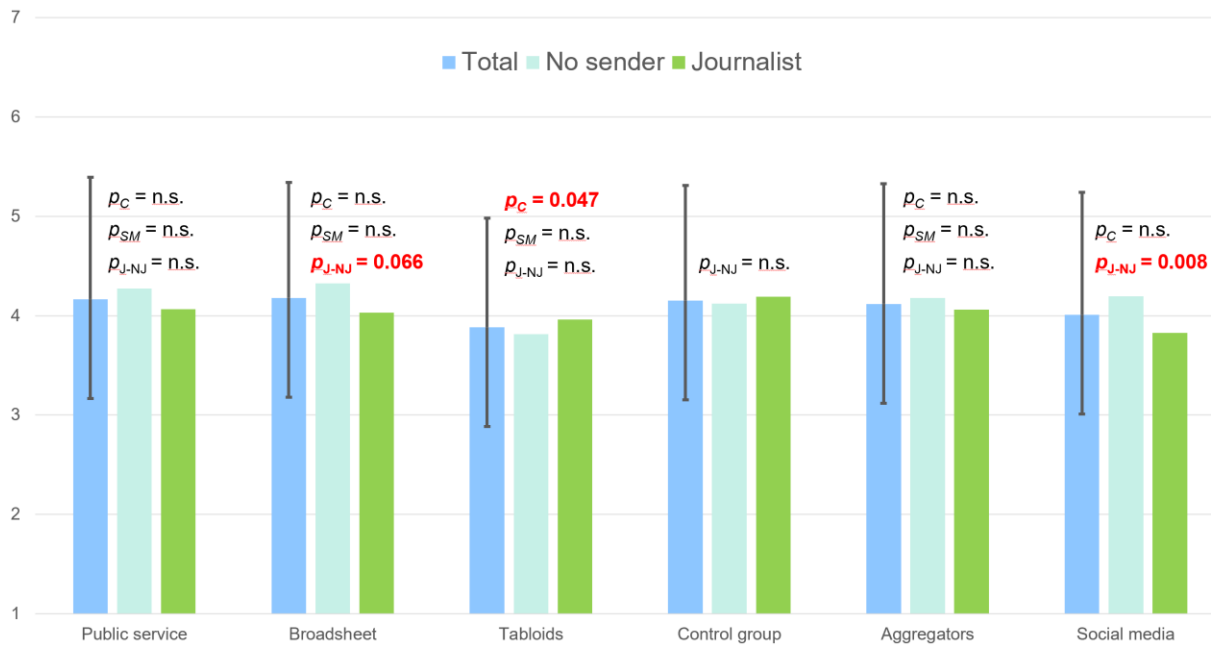


Figure 11: Mean degree of journalistic news being perceived as thought-provoking in different types of media, signed or not signed by a journalist.

### ***Degree of overlapping frequency distributions of perceived journalistic news qualities***

Figure 12 shows density estimations<sup>23</sup> of frequency distributions of the perceived journalistic qualities of the journalistic news consumed in the experiment (n = 1218). The results show great overlap of the frequency distributions, which means that the medium means very little to a great majority of the respondents as news consumers.

<sup>23</sup> [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Density\\_estimation](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Density_estimation)



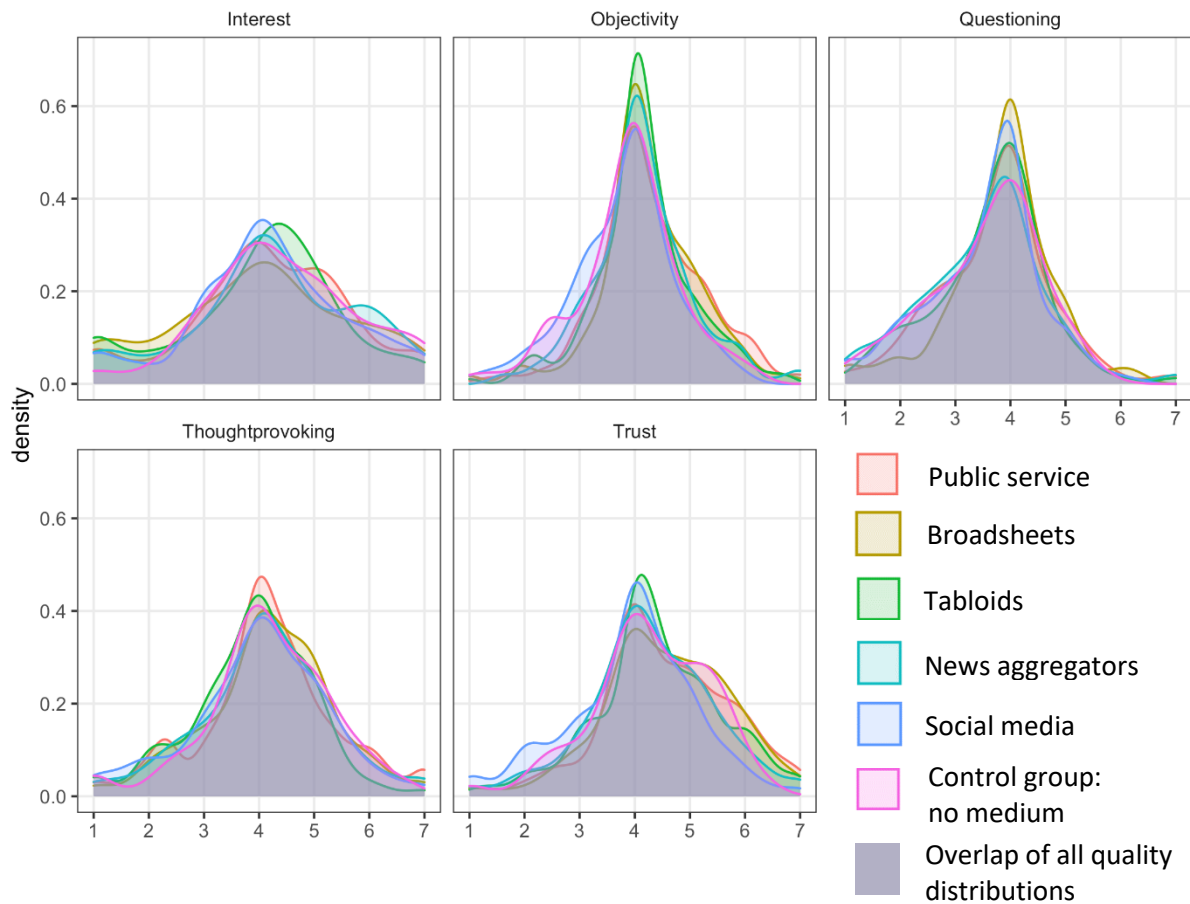


Figure 12: Frequency distributions, shows as density estimations, of different perceived journalistic qualities of journalistic news consumed in the experiment.

***Comparison of experimental results concerning trust in news with the results from a direct question about the trust in the news reporting in the same media***

Figure 13 shows the mean trust in the journalistic news items for different types of media in the experiment compared to the mean trust in the news reporting in general in the same type of media for the same group of respondents, according to a direct question about that. For news in public service and broadsheet media, there is no difference. However, for all other types of media – tabloids, news aggregators, and social media – a direct question leads to much less trust in the news reporting in general in these media, than in news items actually consumed in the same type of media. The direct question thus seems to overestimate the importance of these media as to trust in the news reporting.

In Figures 13 and 14 the frequency distributions of the two different measures of trust (in consumed news items in different types of media in the experiment vs. a direct question about the general trust in the news reporting in the corresponding types of media) are shown, further indicating discrepancies in the resulting responses.

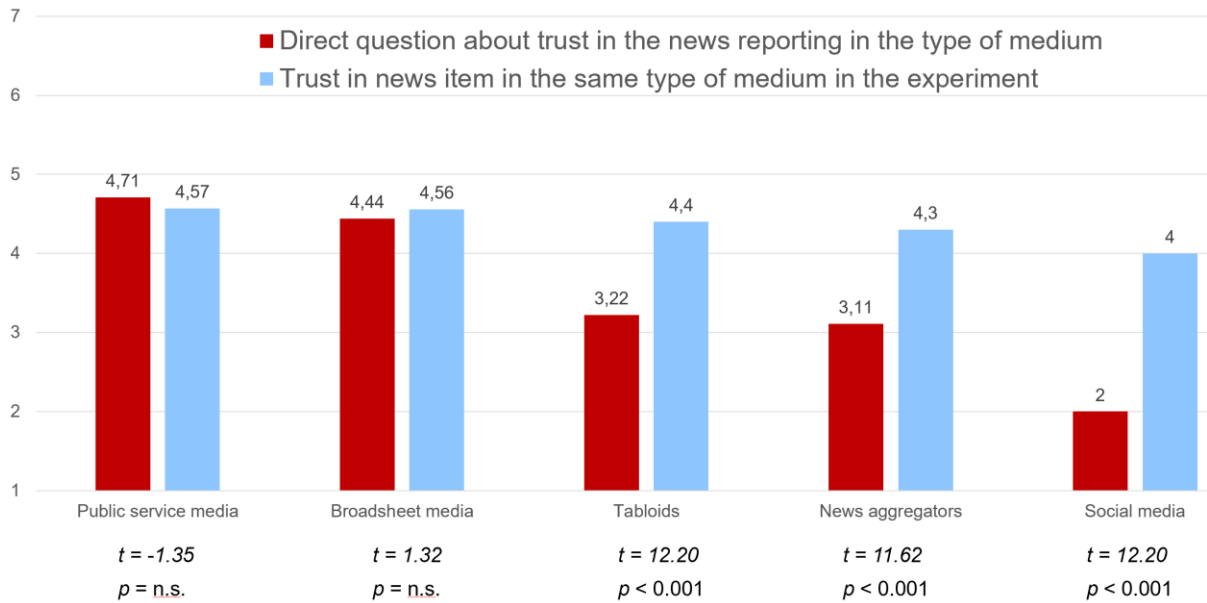


Figure 12: Frequency distributions, shows as density estimations, of different perceived journalistic qualities of journalistic news consumed in the experiment.

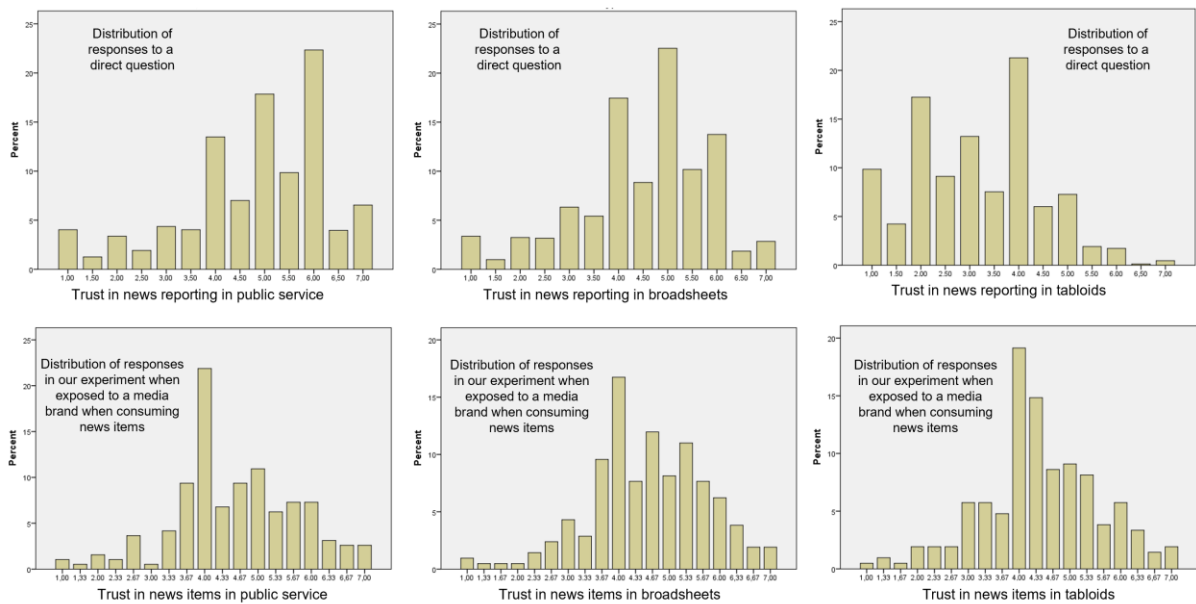


Figure 13: Frequency distributions of trust in journalistic news consumed in public service media, broadsheets and tabloids in the experiment, compared to frequency distributions of trust in news reporting in general in the same type of media (all respondents).

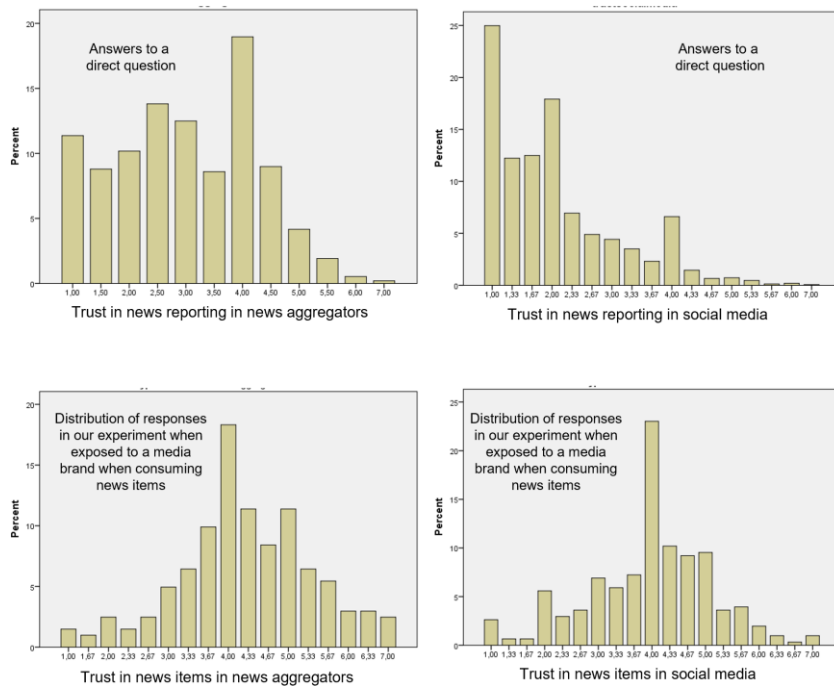


Figure 14: Frequency distributions of trust in journalistic news consumed in news aggregators and social media in the experiment, compared to frequency distributions of trust in news reporting in general in the same type of media (all respondents).

**Specific research question 2: To what extent do consumers evaluate journalistic and private news, respectively, in digital media similar or differently as to news journalism qualities?**

Figure 15 shows the mean perceived journalistic qualities of journalistic news in all types of media vs. the same of private news in social media, and Figure 16 the same but for journalistic news only in social media as well. The journalistic news items are in general evaluated, on average, more favorable than the private news in the experiment, with exception of trust; the private news are more trusted than the journalistic news.

In Figure 17, showing frequency distributions as density estimations of different perceived journalistic qualities of journalistic news vs. private news in social media, and the percentages of overlapping distributions of total distributions. The overlapping distributions are between 73 percent for objectivity/subjectivity and 81 percent for trust. Thus, the similarity as to perceived journalistic qualities of journalistic and private new, respectively, are much greater than the differences.

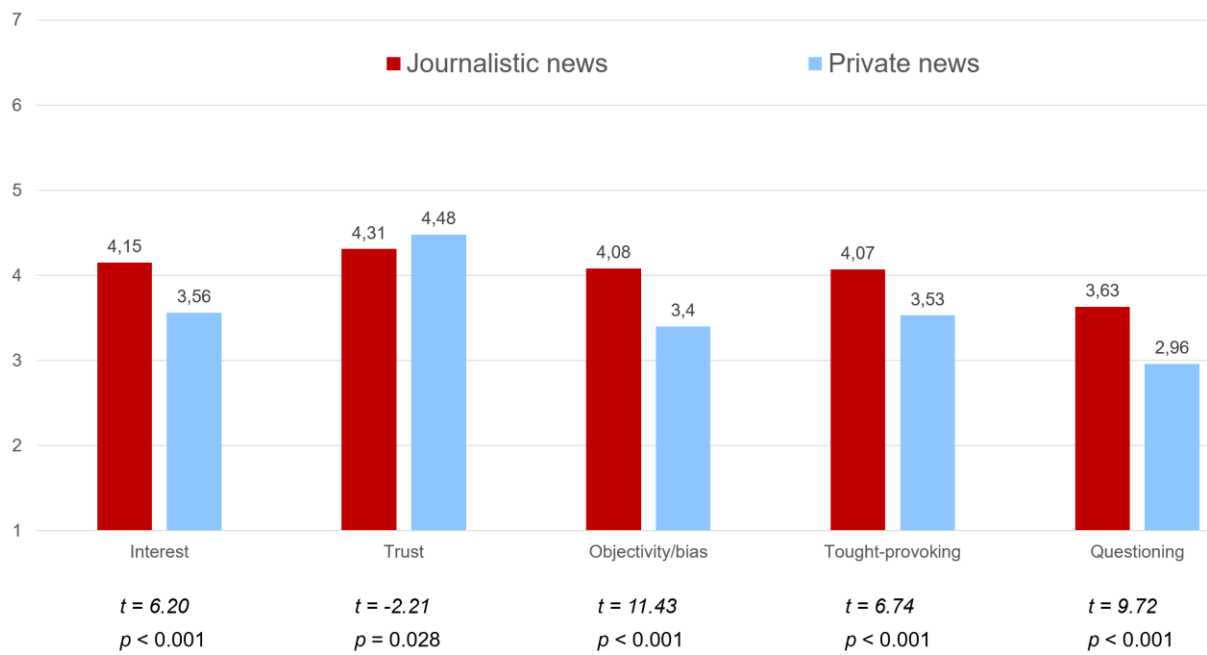


Figure 15: Mean perceived journalistic qualities of journalistic news in all types of media vs. the same of private news in social media.

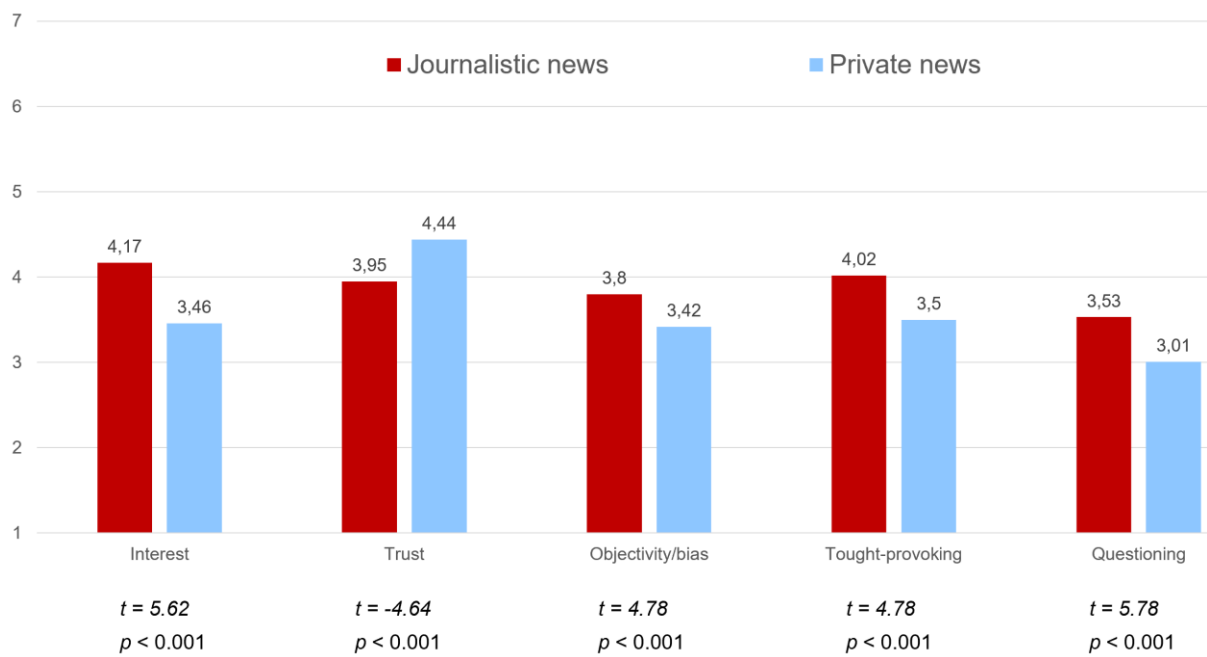


Figure 16: Mean perceived journalistic qualities of journalistic news in social media vs. the same of private news in social media.

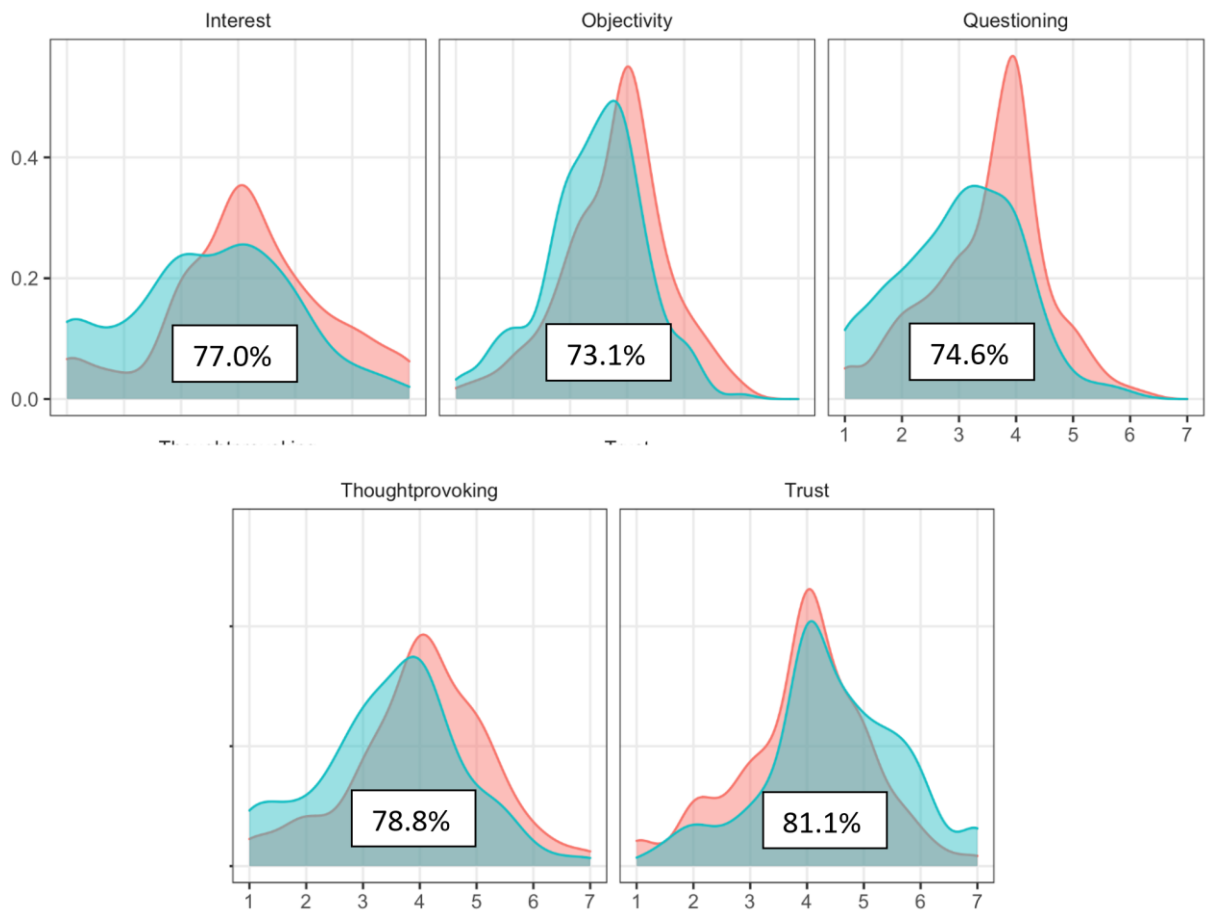


Figure 17: Frequency distributions, shows as density estimations, of different perceived journalistic qualities of journalistic news vs. private news in social media; percentage is share of overlapping distributions of total distribution.

**Specific research question 3: How and to what extent are the usefulness of (measured as interest in) journalistic and private news, respectively, influenced by evaluations of such news as to news journalism qualities and other factors?**

Figure 18 shows the results of testing the hypothesized structural causal model of perceived journalism qualities of journalistic news, and Figure 19 the same for private news.

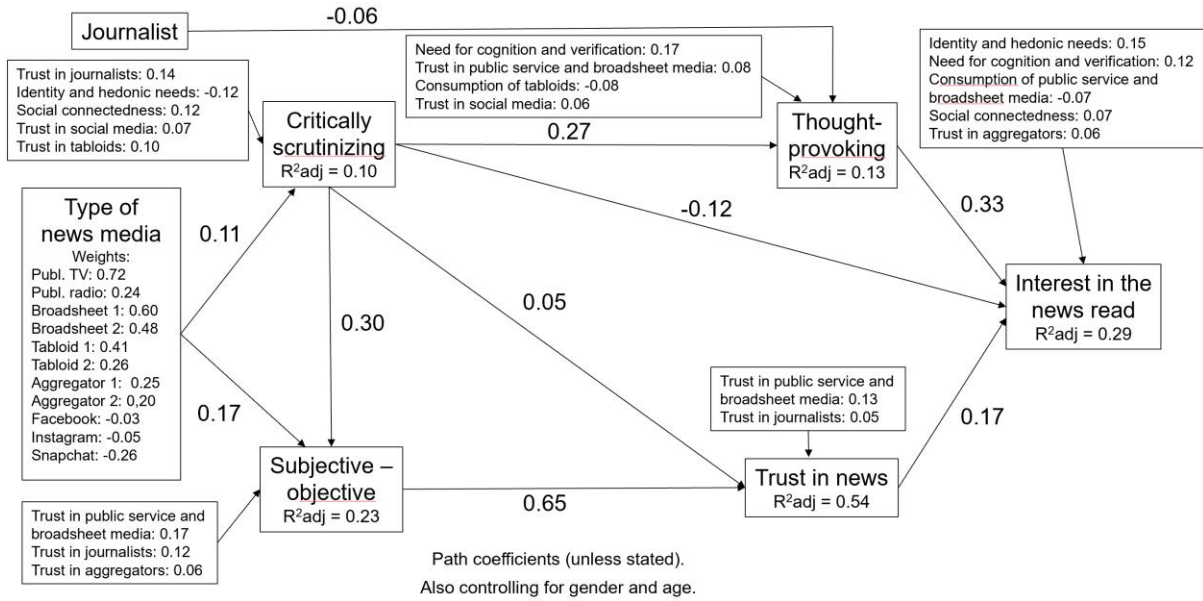


Figure 18: A structural causal model of perceived journalism qualities of journalistic news.

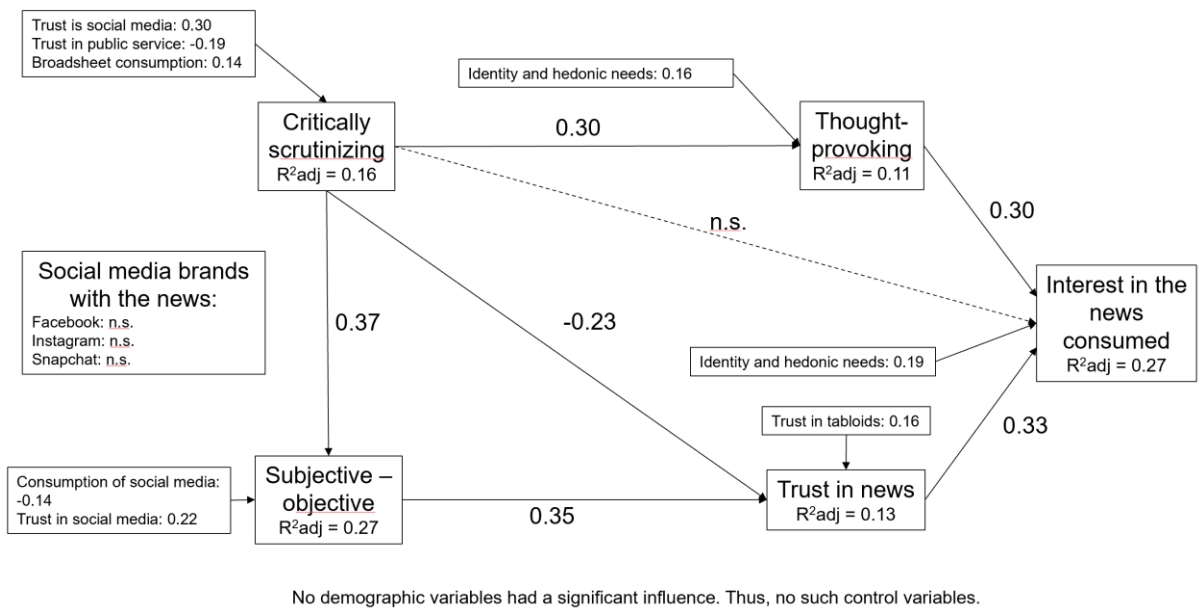


Figure 19: A structural causal model of perceived journalism qualities of private news.

**Specific research question 4: To what extent are the influences in research question 3 similar or different for journalistic and private news?**

In Figure 20, the results from the testing of the causal models are compared. There are great similarities, although some differences.

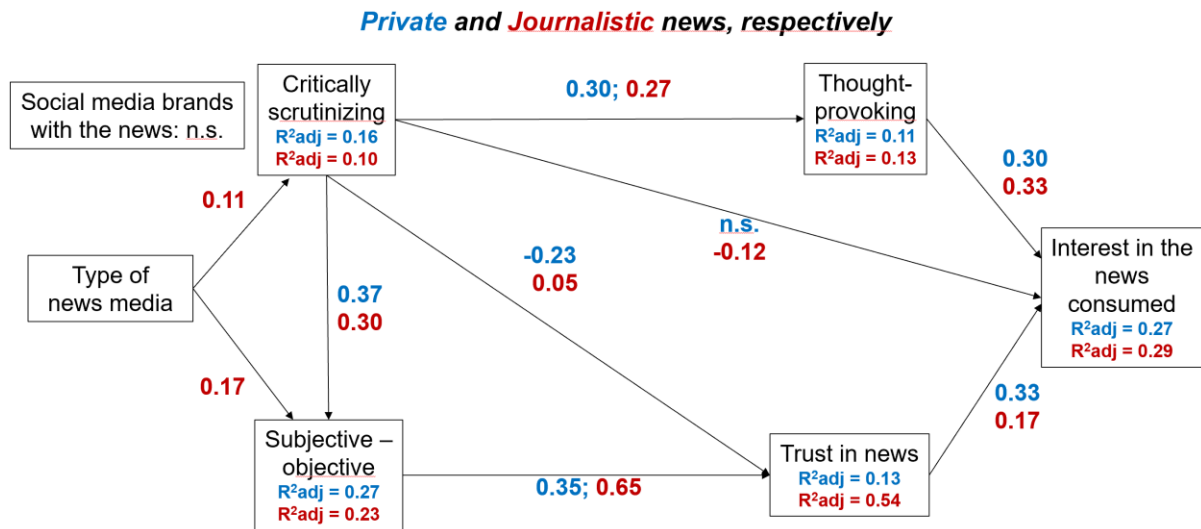


Figure 20: A comparison of the two structural causal model of perceived journalism qualities of private and journalistic news, respectively.

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