



Strategies for Building Trust in News: What the Public Say They Want Across Four Countries

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**TRUST IN NEWS
PROJECT**



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Executive Summary and Key Findings

What does the public want and expect from news media when it comes to trustworthy journalism? For the last three years, the Reuters Institute's Trust in News Project has investigated this question through a mix of survey research, in-depth qualitative interviews and focus groups, and other techniques, examining audience attitudes across the Global South (Brazil and India) and Global North (the United Kingdom and the United States). One of our most consistent findings has been the degree to which the answer to this question varies not only across countries but within these diverse and pluralistic societies. While there are facets of news that people across these markets often share in common – most, for example, say they want and expect coverage to be fair, accurate, and impartial – what is likely to increase trust for some groups in practice may only undermine it for others, since perceptions around what is fair, accurate, and impartial are often subjective and shaped by broader preconceptions many hold about what it is that journalists do. That makes adopting effective solutions particularly complex.

In this report we focus our attention squarely on the question of what news organisations could do to respond to declining trust, a growing trend in many places around the world (Newman et al. 2023), and the varying ways in which different groups in these countries think about these strategies. Through a new round of survey data collected across these four countries, we focus on what the public says is likely to work (and not work) to rebuild their trust where it has broken down, or cultivate it where it has never taken root. Although we acknowledge there is a wide gap between saying one is open to various trust-building strategies in the abstract and whether such approaches will work in practice in the real world – especially given the variety of rival concerns and interests competing for the public's attention – empirical evidence about what people say they want is an essential piece of the puzzle when it comes to formulating effective solutions. As has been a guiding principle throughout this project, we believe it is critical to take what the public says they want seriously rather than, as is often the case, for journalists and publishers to rely solely on their own intuitions when it comes to how best to move forward – however much of that intuition may be in alignment with what their audiences tell them. After all, news organisations are far more likely to hear from those at the extremes, who already trust them or likely never will, than the far larger segment of the public who are often far less interested in what it is that journalists do than in how their work can make their lives better – or at least not worse.

What we find in these data is that there are no simple solutions, even as, more encouragingly, we also find that much of the public says they are open and receptive to a variety of approaches. While many favour efforts towards more transparency, a reduction in bias, and better alignment of editorial coverage to concerns that impact people's everyday lives, there are also some differences between groups in terms of what they would prefer to see news outlets prioritise. This is especially the case with respect to newsroom diversity and concerns over one-sidedness of coverage, where audiences often hold different points of view about the nature of these problems and what should be done to address them. Likewise, although many say they are interested in news organisations taking steps to better engage with audiences, soliciting feedback, and involving them more deeply in news reporting practices, those most interested and already trusting towards news tend to be most receptive to such initiatives – another consistent theme

throughout several parts of this report. Our findings put in sharp relief the larger challenge facing news organisations when it comes to these efforts: the most cynical and distrusting segments of the public tend to view all news outlets through a similarly negative lens, minimally differentiating between sources regardless of what steps to build trust they might take. To reach these more sceptical parts of the public may require not only adopting some combination of the strategies explored here but also concerted efforts to better communicate what strategies are being employed and why. While many say they are open to trusting news organisations that take steps outlined in this report, convincing audiences that these efforts are authentic, substantial, and likely to be sustained over time is far from automatic. Individual news outlets must make that case directly in both their actions and the ways they communicate with the broad public, including those who are generally part of their audience and those who are not.

Varying approaches to building trust

Our 2023 survey questionnaire covers four different kinds of trust-building strategies that some newsrooms have embraced, drawing on our previous interviews and roundtables with practitioners (Toff et al. 2020; Toff et al. 2021a). These strategies range from editorial practices including efforts towards more ‘solutions’-focused or ‘constructive’ coverage (see Lough and McIntyre (2023) for a review of these concepts), transparency efforts (see Karlsson 2020; Koliska 2022; Masullo et al. 2022), management and staffing issues, including those around diversity, equity, and inclusion that came up in our last report (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023), to efforts to engage and communicate directly with the public – the focus of a growing area of scholarship in academic circles as well as among a variety of reform-minded news outlets (see Robinson 2023; Schmidt et al. 2022; Wenzel 2020). These four thematic areas are summarised in the figure below.

Four Approaches to Building Trust with the Public



While it would make for a more straightforward set of findings had we found a clear consensus among audiences coalescing around a preferred approach, instead the portraits of the publics in these countries that we have captured through these surveys offer a much more mixed outlook. Each of these approaches, interconnected as they are, appeals to different segments of the public, offering both glimmers of hope as well as the stark realities around the challenge of connecting with the most disengaged and distrusting audiences, for whom the value and utility of news tends to be far from top of mind. Like the societies we are studying here, the public remains divided in its own preferences around what they would like to see news organisations prioritise doing to establish relationships built on trust.

As we show over the next five chapters of this report, in which we tease out the differences in each of these areas one by one, in many cases the public's attitudes about news are intertwined with deeper social cleavages in these countries. Often these revolve around politics, especially in the US, which is of course highly polarised along partisan lines. But just as salient for many are divides around social class, race, caste and religion, and other areas, only some of which we are able to focus on in this report. News media and journalism as an institution is often seen as not only mirroring these broader divisions in society but also, in some cases, accentuating them through reporting that often fixates on these conflicts rather than helps resolve them.

Background on this report

The Reuters Institute's Trust in News Project aims to understand the contours of trust in news across places in different media and political contexts, with a focus on ways to improve trust in independent journalism where it has fallen. Following our previous reports, we focus on two countries in the Global South (Brazil and India) and two in the Global North (the UK and the US). These countries, despite their geographic, social, political, and cultural differences, share many commonalities; most importantly, they are all demographically diverse and divided democracies, all facing unique challenges to their democratic political systems, and all places in which digital platforms are increasingly shaping the ways citizens access and engage with news.

This report builds directly on previous reports from the project based on earlier surveys fielded in each of these four countries (Mont'Alverne et al., 2022; Toff et al. 2021b) as well as qualitative focus groups conducted earlier this year with historically underrepresented and underserved audiences, which formed the basis of an additional report published in Spring 2023 (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023). These past instalments have explored a range of factors contributing to declines in trust in news, including those that can be traced to digital platform use, politics, and growing indifference towards news among disengaged audiences. In this final report from the Trust in News Project, we focus here on possible solutions that newsrooms might employ in response to these factors. By doing so, we hope to provide insight into how news media could stem the tide of declining trust where it has fallen and offer empirical evidence around how audiences think about various strategies aimed at winning over their trust.¹

Following last year's endeavour, we once again worked in tandem with the research firm Ipsos to survey approximately 2,000 respondents per country using nationally representative samples

¹ See Fisher et al. 2021 for a similar effort to examine audience perspectives on trust-building strategies in Australia.

that considered age, gender, region, and other demographic factors specific to each country. In Brazil and India, surveys were conducted face to face in all major regions of the country. We placed particular importance on conducting fieldwork in person in Brazil and India to account for the racial, ethnic and geographic diversity of the population, which is typically not fully captured by online survey samples (Scherpenzeel 2018). In the UK and the US, where internet penetration is more widespread and nearly ubiquitous, online surveys were fielded using quota-based samples from panels intended to mirror the national demographics of the online populations in those countries.

Survey questionnaires were crafted by the authors of this report to measure respondents' attitudes towards various newsroom strategies that could potentially influence public trust in news. The questions focus on four types of newsroom strategies, which we have outlined in the previous section. For many of these items we drew on prior research, which we cite throughout the report where relevant. We also asked questions on political affiliation and partisan intensity, and standard demographic questions such as age, income, education levels, working status, race, ethnic identity, and so forth. The questionnaire took on average approximately 20 minutes to complete online, and slightly longer to complete face to face. The surveys in Brazil and India were conducted across major geographic regions, with the interviews taking place in Portuguese in Brazil, and in Hindi and nine other major regional languages in India. We offer further information about the methods used for sampling and fieldwork for the surveys in the technical appendix.

While we see value in asking audiences directly about how they view these matters, we also stress that self-reported attitudes like these are no guarantee of future behaviour. That is, just because audiences say they welcome certain initiatives or strategies, there is no guarantee that newsrooms that implement them will see an impact on levels of trust, use, or engagement. People are not always aware of what shapes their perceptions, attitudes, or behaviours – especially when it comes to unconscious factors. For that matter, while we mainly focus on average responses to our questions in each of the four countries, we have also sought to highlight differences where relevant among subpopulations in each country. After all, as we have argued elsewhere, a one-size-fits-all approach to building trust is unlikely to be successful in all cases. In fact, as our findings indicate, there are in some instances important trade-offs around journalistic approaches that may be very welcome by some segments of the public but viewed more negatively by others.

Summary of key findings

Below we offer a brief synopsis of the major takeaways from this year's surveys. In the five chapters that follow, we first examine the broader context around levels of trust in news in these four countries, followed by next detailing attitudes about each of the four trust-building approaches that were the focus of our inquiry this year.

- **The least trusting towards news also tend to see 'no differences' between news outlets.** While levels of trust in news overall have declined in all four countries, it is often lowest among the subset of the public who use news the least frequently, reflecting the degree to which trust is often linked to habitual use of news. Those who access news

most frequently, regardless of mode, are also most likely to see at least minor differences between news organisations in their trustworthiness. In contrast, a small but significant subset of the public in all four countries do not differentiate between most news outlets in terms of their trustworthiness. These groups also tend to be the most sceptical of trust-building initiatives, underscoring the importance of communicating distinct brand identities.

- **Minimal consensus around what trust-building strategies news organisations ought to prioritise.** When asked to choose among the approaches news outlets might embrace to gain or regain their trust, different groups in each country say they would be most receptive to different initiatives. On the one hand, this suggests all four approaches we focus on in this report hold promise for building trust with at least some of the public. On the other hand, it is less obvious how news organisations ought to proceed. These findings point to the importance of tailoring strategies to specific audience preferences and needs, rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach.
- **The already trusting are generally most receptive to trust-building efforts.** While the public generally say they look favourably towards many initiatives designed to foster trusting relationships, these approaches typically appear most effective at deepening trust among those who already hold positive attitudes about journalism and tend to be most interested in news. Changing the minds of the broader public, including those who do not trust news, may require convincing people of the value and relevance of news altogether to establish a firmer foundation for trust to take root.
- **Editorial strategies for building trust appear to resonate most in the UK and the US, and somewhat less so in Brazil and India.** While audiences in all four countries say they would welcome changes in news coverage, including more attention paid to regular, everyday people, more solutions-focused coverage, and less sensationalism and inaccuracy, overall evaluations of performance in many specific coverage areas is generally fairly positive, which suggests that the link between editorial content and trust is not always straightforward. We also find meaningful variation in terms of how much emphasis certain audience subgroups place on specific concerns, such as making news more inclusive with respect to the range of diverse voices featured, or reducing emphasis on subjects that may cause social division.
- **Audiences rank transparency highly as a strategy for building trust, especially about ownership and funding but also editorial practices and ethical standards.** Despite widespread agreement about the importance of transparency, we also find somewhat divergent views about whether news organisations are committed to treating all sides fairly – and different expectations about such coverage – which suggests varying receptivity to transparency initiatives in practice. We also find some evidence of potential backfire effects, with some interpreting efforts to be transparent about, for example, correcting errors in reporting, as evidence mainly of sloppiness or carelessness.

- **Most place blame for problems in news coverage at the management and ownership level.** Individual journalists are often perceived as doing the bidding of owners and leaders who are guided by ulterior commercial or political agendas. Additionally, audiences express a preference for more inclusive funding models for news organisations that include the public as stakeholders through individual subscriptions (Brazil, the US, and the UK) or public funding through taxes (India). Some forms of funding (such as advertising or donations) tend to be viewed more suspiciously in ways that vary by media environment.
- **Diversifying newsrooms is widely viewed as important for increasing trust, but we find less consensus around what aspects of diversity ought to be prioritised.** Achieving more representative staffing amongst journalists in terms of their political views and economic class backgrounds often ranks highest, ahead of racial/ethnic or gender diversity. However, these aggregate results mask important differences within countries, with more marginalised groups typically prioritising diversity in areas seen as less critical to broader majorities. Despite these sometimes divergent perspectives, few say that news organisations focusing on diversity in any area is likely to reduce their trust.
- **Many see current efforts to engage the public as lacking and say they would be more likely to trust news outlets that do more to listen to and connect with audiences.** Engagement initiatives such as those that involve soliciting feedback and involving the public more in the production of news were viewed positively in all four countries; however, those most interested in participating in such efforts tend to be concentrated mainly among those who are already trusting of news and those with relatively more resources available in terms of time and money. Reaching the more indifferent public through these types of efforts may prove more challenging.

1. No One-Size-Fits-All Solution

We begin by presenting the larger landscape of trust in news across these countries to establish the context for the four areas we focus on in the remainder of this report. We first examine differences across the four countries in terms of how the public evaluates trust in news in general, and then more specifically what people say they want news organisations to prioritise when it comes to gaining or regaining their own trust.

What we find is evidence of continued erosion in trust in news in general in these countries, but there is also considerable variation within each country in terms of how much people differentiate between news organisations as individual brands. Those who are least trusting towards news in general tend also to be those who are least interested in news overall and consume it the least frequently regardless of mode (print, television, online, etc.). They are also the most likely to view all news outlets as largely synonymous with one another, whereas those who are most selectively trusting are significantly more likely to trust information in the news in general.

People in different countries also have somewhat different views about what they would like to see news organisations prioritise when it comes to their strategies around building trusting relationships with the public. While efforts around transparency tend to elicit the most support overall, those in Brazil are most cynical about any trust-building initiatives, and those in India are more likely to say they would prioritise engagement efforts and editorial strategies compared to the UK and the US.

Trust in news is lowest among those least interested in news

There are considerable debates about the best way to measure trust in news.² While many people, including journalists and those perhaps most likely to be reading this report, evaluate individual news outlets differently, offering up a range of considerations when they evaluate different aspects of the news media, for many others, how they feel about news is far less complicated. As we have emphasised in past reports focusing on in-depth interviews with audiences (Toff et al. 2021c) and audience surveys (Toff et al. 2021b), for large portions of the public news is rarely top of mind. Trust and distrust often comes down to an intuitive judgement rooted in a sense of familiarity and connection, or lack thereof. This variation among the public makes consistently quantifying levels of audience trust in news particularly challenging.

These caveats aside, as we have in previous reports for this project, we once again measure trust in news in general in all four countries by asking in a broad manner how respondents think about ‘information in the news media’, a form of the question advanced by a number of comparative news audience researchers (see Strömbäck et al. 2020).

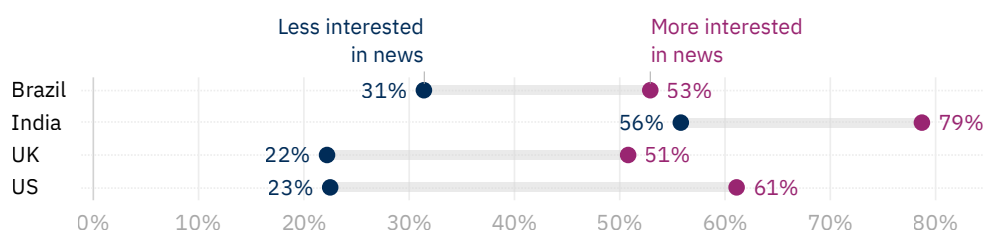
² For scholarly overviews see, for example, Schiffrin (2019) and Fawzi et al. (2021).

By this measure, compared to our previous results on this measure in 2021, we find declines in trust across all four countries, and by significant margins in Brazil and the UK, where the unique circumstances of the political environments in each of these countries may have contributed to further undermining of trust in institutions. In Brazil, just 39.8% say they trust news ‘somewhat’ or ‘completely’, a level on par with what we found in the UK this year (38.3%). By contrast, we found higher levels of trust in the US (47.1%) and India (65.6%), although both were also declines from our survey a year ago.³ India is particularly an outlier when it comes to the very limited proportion of the public (16.1%) who say they do not trust information in the news media ‘very much’ or ‘at all’. These relatively high levels of trust persist alongside an increasingly contentious environment for press freedom in India (see Ram 2023).

While declines in trust in particular countries differ to some extent from findings in the Reuters Institute *Digital News Report* (Newman et al. 2023),⁴ the overall pattern of declining trust is broadly consistent with general trends in many places around the globe. More revealing than these general results, we find large and consistent gaps in trust within countries – gaps that tend to correspond to overall levels of interest in news (Fig. 1.1). A majority of respondents who say they are more interested in news also say they ‘somewhat’ or ‘completely’ trust information, levels that far outpace the degree of trust among those less interested (22% in the UK, 23% in the US, and 31% in Brazil). The Indian public is, again, more trusting by a significant margin – even a majority of those less interested in news still say they tend to trust it.

Figure 1.1: Interest in news is highly associated with having more trust in news in general

Percentage who trust information in the news media ‘somewhat’ or ‘completely’ among those more versus less interested in news



TRUST_GEN. Generally speaking, to what extent do you trust, or not trust information from the news media in [Brazil/India/the UK/the US]. **Q4.** How interested, if at all, would you say you are in news? *Less/more interested in news: Brazil = 837/486, India = 732/671, UK = 432/1,145, US = 432/1,024.* Note: ‘More interested in news’ includes those who say they are ‘extremely’ and ‘very interested’, whereas ‘less interested in news’ includes those who say they are ‘slightly’ or ‘not at all interested’.

There are additional country-specific differences around trust in news involving key demographic subgroups, which we also find tend to mirror and reflect social cleavages specific to each of these environments. In India, for example, while there are higher levels of trust in general, Upper Castes are the most trusting of information from the news media, with relatively lower levels as we go down the social ladder, with Other Backward Classes about three percentage points lower and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes each also more than

³ For comparison, using the same survey provider in 2022 with their same approach to sampling and fieldwork, we found much higher levels of trust in news in general in Brazil (46%), India (77%), the UK (53%), and the US (49%).

⁴ There are several reasons for these discrepancies. The Trust in News Project uses a different survey provider that makes different determinations around how they achieve a representative sample. What’s more, by using face-to-face interviewing in Brazil and India, the survey population examined in this report includes respondents who may not have internet access, which is a considerable portion of the samples in both of these countries (14% in Brazil and 26% in India in our surveys). Additionally, the specific questions around trust in news employed in these surveys are different from one another, with the *Digital News Report 2023* asking to what extent audiences can trust ‘most news most of the time’.

ten percentage points less trusting. Across all countries, we also find that the wealthy have higher levels of trust in news media than those who are economically less well off.⁵

Those who access news more frequently tend to be more trusting

As we and others have previously demonstrated, there is a clear association between using news more frequently (regardless of what mode or what platform) and trust in news in general, although the correlation is not perfect (see Tsfati and Cappella 2003). Daily habitual consumers of news are more trusting of information from the news media than infrequent news users and those whose contact with news is rare or non-existent. This pattern is consistent across most forms of news in all four countries, although it is most apparent in the UK and the US and somewhat less pronounced in Brazil and India. For both of these countries, the relatively weaker levels of trust among users of print news is related to differences in the cultures around news consumption in each country. In India, for example, literacy levels have a significant impact on local newspaper readership and in Brazil newspapers tend to be clustered mainly in big cities (see Reis 2023).

⁵ The differences are 26% in the UK between those earning less than £15,000 per year compared to those earning more than £45,000 per year. In the US, the gap is 25% between those earning less than \$15,000 per year and those earning more than \$70,000 per year; and in India 15% between those earning less than 10,000 rupees per year and those whose earnings are more than 50,000 rupees annually. Although the gap is smaller and not statistically significant in Brazil, at 2.5% between the highest and lowest earners, there, too, wealthier respondents were more likely to say they trust information in the news media in general.

Figure 1.2: Trust in news tends to be higher among those who use news more often

Percentage who trust information in the news media ‘somewhat’ or ‘completely’ among those who use each type of news daily, less than daily, or never



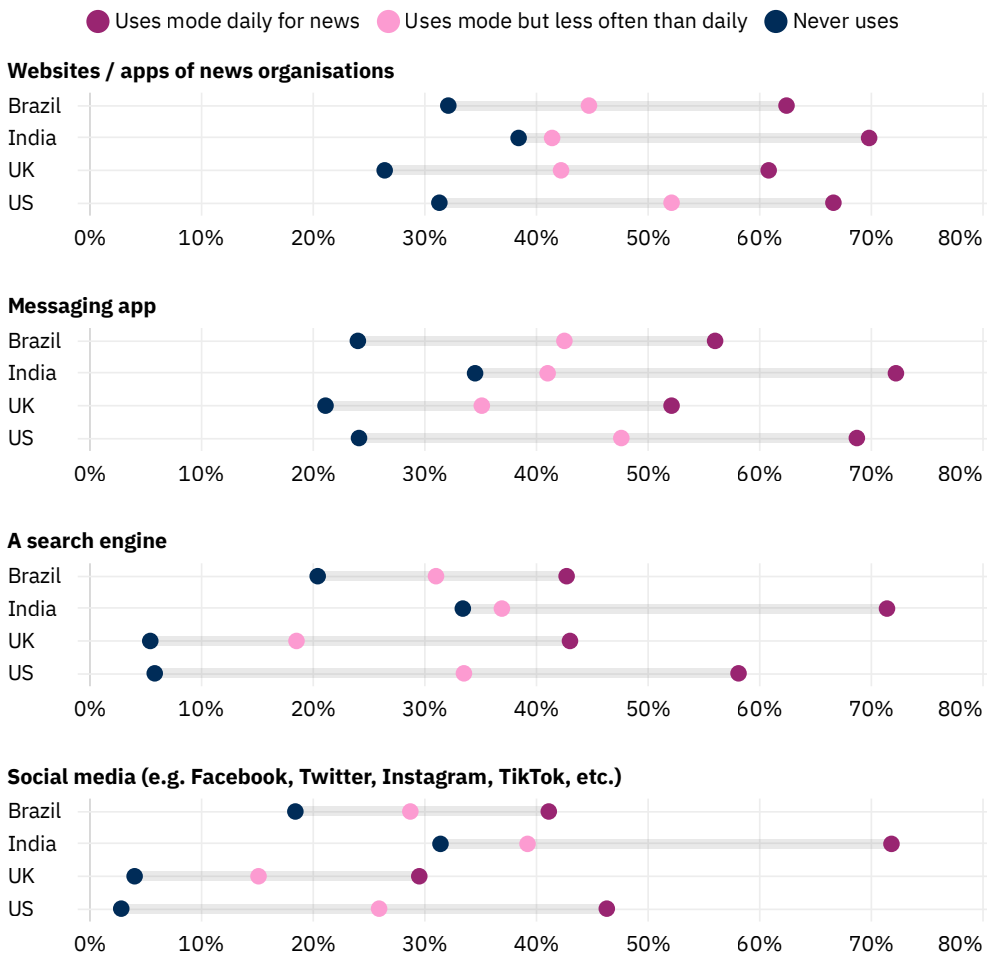
TRUST_GEN. Generally speaking, to what extent do you trust, or not trust information from the news media in [Brazil/India/the UK/the US]. **Q3a.** Many people access news in different ways. Thinking about your own news habits, how often, if at all, do you ...
 Base: Varies by country as a proportion of the full sample: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000.

In addition to asking about trust in news in general, we also asked specifically about trust in news on distinct online platforms, and here we see even larger gaps in trust related to how frequently individuals use these sources of information to get news (Fig 1.3). Wide differences are especially apparent for the most engaged news consumers when it comes to trusting news from search engines and social media platforms. In both cases India is an outlier, where 72% of daily news users trust the news they receive from both of these mediums – even higher than news websites and messaging apps. A wide gulf exists for this metric between India and the

other three countries. A plurality of daily news consumers in Brazil and the US trust news from social media platforms. Exceptionally, only 30% of daily news patrons in the UK trust the news they get from social media platforms, while only 15% of more casual news consumers share the same perception.

Figure 1.3: Large gaps in trust between frequent and non-users of online news modes

Percentage who trust information from each type of online news source ‘somewhat’ or ‘completely’ among those who use that mode daily, less than daily, or never



TRUST_ONLINE. Now thinking about information online, to what extent do you trust or not trust information from the news media when it appears on ...?. **Q3a.** Many people access news in different ways. Thinking about your own news habits, how often, if at all, do you ... Base: Varies by country as a proportion of the full sample: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000.

People prioritise different strategies around building trust

We highlight the above differences to set the stage for what follows in this report because we want to emphasise the degree to which audiences are far from uniform in what they expect of news and what they believe will help in garnering their trust. This variation is often closely related to how disconnected or disengaged audiences may already be from news altogether. As we have written previously (Toff et al. 2021b), this indifference towards journalism and its value to their lives is often a larger obstacle to trust-building efforts in general, and we also find that to be the case in this year’s survey when we drill down on specific initiatives more closely.

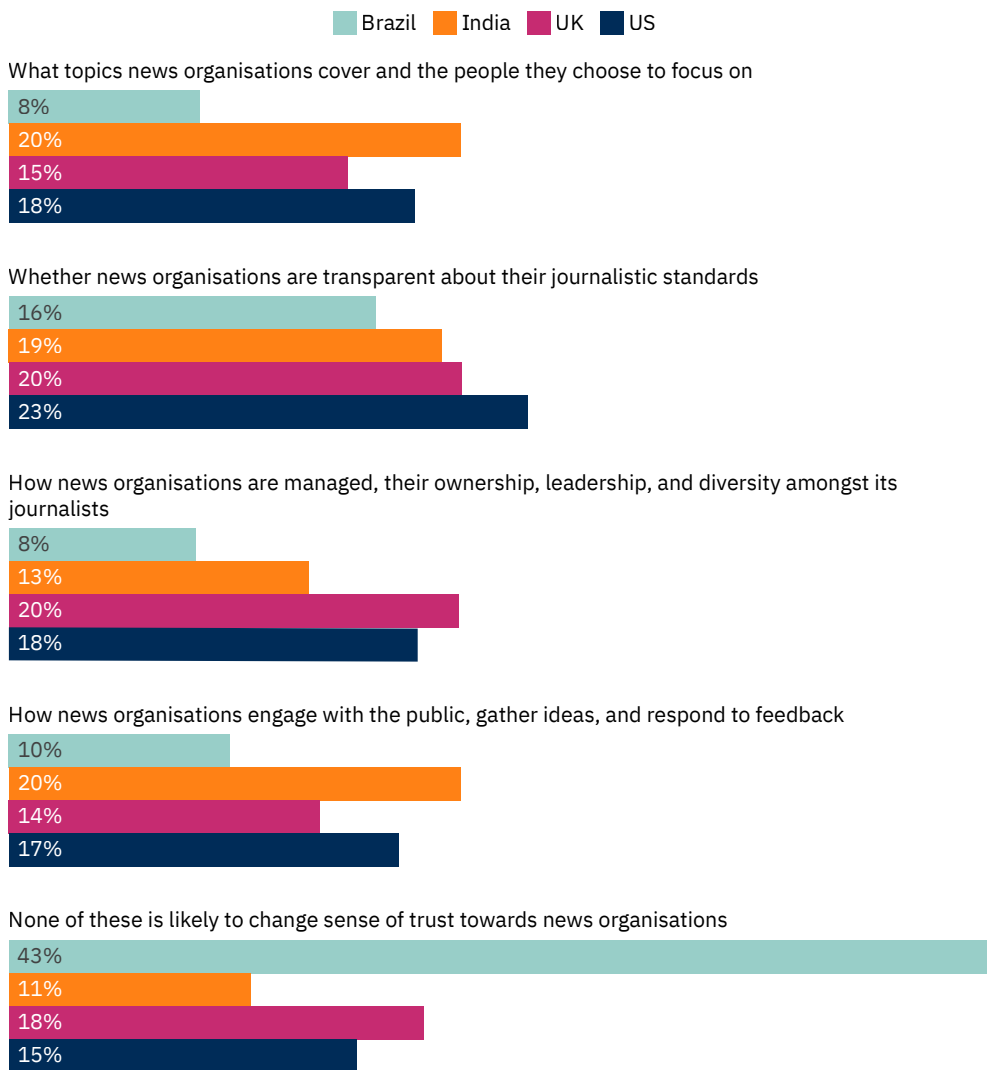
The bulk of this report focuses on four approaches identified in our previous research as initiatives that some news organisations have adopted as strategies to build and sustain trust with the public. These include: (a) editorial practices including efforts towards more solutions-focused or constructive coverage (see Lough and McIntyre (2023) for a review of these concepts); (b) transparency efforts (see Karlsson 2020; Koliska 2022; Masullo et al. 2022); (c) management and staffing issues, including those around diversity, equity, and inclusion that came up in our last report (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023); and (d) efforts to engage and communicate directly with the public – the focus of a growing area of scholarship in academic circles as well as among a variety of reform-minded news outlets (see Robinson 2023; Schmidt et al. 2022; Wenzel 2020).

While most of our questionnaire focuses on fleshing out how people think about each of these approaches, including how well news organisations are currently doing when it comes to these efforts and whether people believe each will impact their own sense of trust, we also included a question in the survey that asked respondents to state which of the four trust-building strategies they would most like to see news organisations prioritise personally. We asked the question, artificial as it may be, to force people to weigh trade-offs around each of these approaches, much as news organisations might need to do, given that newsroom resources are finite and no organisation can pursue every strategy they might like to adopt.

When asked to consider these trade-offs, however, we found no clear consensus among the publics in these four countries around which they themselves would prioritise. In other words, different people weigh these trade-offs differently. Audiences were relatively evenly divided (Fig. 1.6). While some say they think news organisations ought to attend most to editorial strategies – namely, what topics news outlets cover and the people they focus on – as well as transparency initiatives involving their standards and policies, others said they preferred initiatives related to their management, ownership, leadership, and hiring practices. Still others said they preferred engagement initiatives pertaining to how news organisations involve the public in their reporting and respond to feedback.

Figure 1.4: Audiences split on which kinds of efforts are most likely to impact their sense of trust

Percentage who say each of the following areas is most likely to impact their sense of trust in news organisations



TRUST_PRIORITY. Thinking about the four areas we have asked about, which is most likely to impact your sense of trust towards news organisations? Base. Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who say they ‘don’t know’.

TRANSPARENCY EFFORTS ATTRACT HIGHEST SUPPORT, BUT BRAZILIANS MOST PESSIMISTIC

One of the more striking differences across countries we found was with respect to the percentage of people who said that ‘none of these’ efforts was likely to impact their sense of trust towards news organisations. In Brazil, 43% selected this response. By comparison, and more encouragingly, the percentage who responded similarly was much lower in India (11%), the UK (18%), and the US (15%).

This high degree of pessimism in Brazil notwithstanding, efforts around transparency tended to elicit higher support relative to the other types of initiatives. This was especially the case in the US, where a quarter said they would prioritise it (23%), and in Brazil (16%), where it was the second most selected response after ‘none of these’. In the UK, these efforts were even with initiatives related to management, ownership, leadership, and diversity (at 20%), although none of the differences across response categories were large. In India, audiences were relatively

more likely to say they thought the topics and people that news organisations focused on would be most likely to impact their sense of trust (20%).

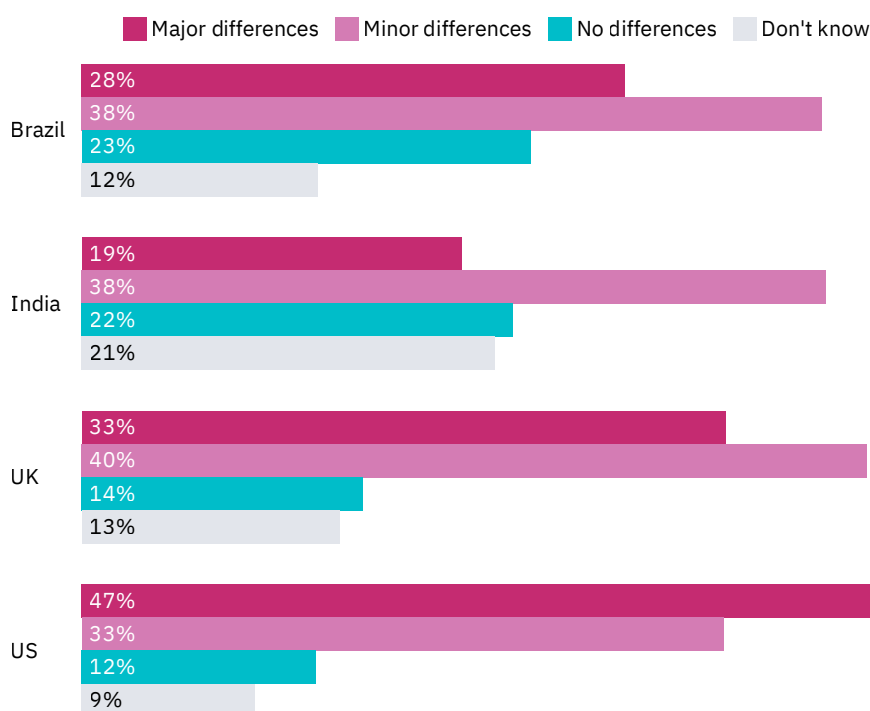
SCEPTICISM AMONG THOSE WHO SEE FEW DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NEWS OUTLETS

In an echo of our findings with respect to trust in news in general, those who have already strong, trusting relationships with the news media also tend to be most receptive towards all four of these types of efforts – a kind of ‘virtuous circle’ dynamic. More worryingly, the reverse also appears true. For audiences to be open to trust-building initiatives, these results suggest that the foundation of people’s relationship to news be sufficiently intact for those efforts to have much chance of taking hold.

We see some evidence of this virtuous/vicious circle dynamic when we consider levels of what we have previously called ‘selective trust’ (Toff et al. 2021b).⁶ When we asked a question in the survey designed to measure the degree to which audiences differentiate between sources they trust or do not trust, we find a small but meaningful portion of the public says they see ‘no differences’ at all between news sources (Fig. 1.5).

Figure 1.5: Many in the US but fewer elsewhere see major differences between news outlets in their trustworthiness

Percentage in each country who see major, minor, or no differences between news organisations in how trustworthy they are



TRUST_SELECT. Thinking about organisations that report the news (e.g. via radio, TV, Newspaper, online) in [Brazil/India/the UK/the US], which of the following comes closest to your view? There are [major/minor/no] differences between news organisations in how trustworthy or untrustworthy they are. *Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000.*

Those individuals who do not differentiate when it comes to selective trust in news also tend to be the least trusting towards news in general. This lack of differentiation between news outlets was highest in India, where a combined 43% of the public responded that they either didn’t

⁶ For scholarship on generalised distrust towards news, see Fletcher and Nielsen (2019) and Ternullo (2022).

know or saw ‘no differences’ between news outlets.⁷ The percentages were smaller elsewhere, but roughly 1-in-4 or 1-in-5 in Brazil, the UK, and the US said they either did not know or saw no differences between sources. Only in the US did more people see ‘major differences’ between news organisations compared to other response categories.⁸

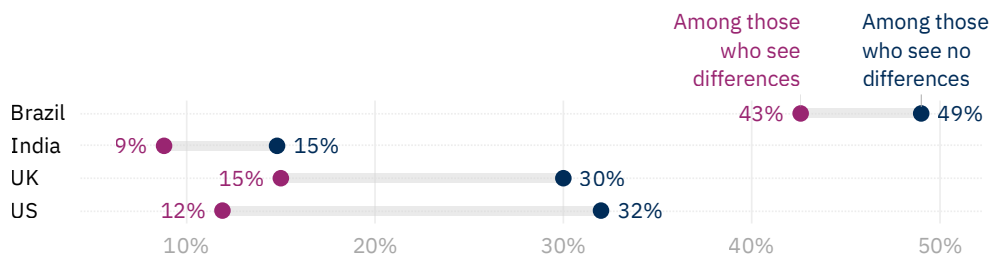
IMPLICATIONS FOR TRUST-BUILDING INITIATIVES: STARK CHALLENGES BUT GLIMMERS OF HOPE

On the one hand, these results suggest that a large majority of respondents find there are at least some differences in trustworthiness between news organisations in their country, which indicates that most people do differentiate at least to some degree between news outlets and may therefore be receptive to some efforts by news outlets to engage with them. In Brazil, the UK, and the US, the overall percentage who selected one of the four types of strategies was relatively high.

At the same time, when we examine the relationship between selective trust and which approaches to trust-building audiences say they would prioritise, the clearest pattern that emerges is also the most challenging. Those who see ‘no differences’ between news outlets were also the most likely to say they felt that none of the approaches to trust-building were likely to work with them (Fig. 1.6).

Figure 1.6: Those who see no differences between news outlets are most sceptical of trust-building strategies

Percentage who say none of the strategies provided is likely to change their sense of trust among those who do versus don't see differences between news organisations



TRUST_PRIORITY. Thinking about the four areas we have asked about, which is most likely to impact your sense of trust towards news organisations? **TRUST_SELECT.** Thinking about organisations that report the news (e.g. via radio, TV, Newspaper, online) in [Brazil/India/the UK/the US], which of the following comes closest to your view? There are [major/minor/no] differences between news organisations in how trustworthy or untrustworthy they are. *Base: Those who see differences/no differences: Brazil = 1,297/460, India = 1,201/455, UK = 1,648/292, US = 1,603/238. Note: ‘Those who see differences’ includes both those who say ‘there are major differences’ and ‘there are minor differences’.*

These results underscore the degree to which a one-size-fits-all approach to trust-building is unlikely to be successful. Building trust with the least engaged segments of the public, many of

⁷ Results on this measure correspond to some degree with trust in news in general. Those who do not trust news are significantly more likely to say they see ‘no differences’ between news outlets. This view is particularly pronounced in India, where 35% of those who do not trust news say there are no differences in trustworthiness among news outlets. Likewise, in the UK and the US, only 26% and 32%, respectively, of those who see no differences between news organisations say they trust information in the news media ‘somewhat’ or ‘completely’, compared to 43% and 51% of those who see minor or major differences.

⁸ Levels of selective trust tend to be related to a degree with how much news audiences are routinely consuming. Those who use news more frequently are more likely to see major differences between news outlets, but this pattern is more pronounced in the US and the UK and not that clear in Brazil and India, except among those who use messaging apps to get their news. For example, 34% of Brazilians who use messaging apps daily to access news think there are major differences in trustworthiness between news outlets, while only 29% and 24% of Brazilians think likewise among those who use messaging apps less than daily or not at all, respectively. In India, similarly, 25% of those who use messaging apps to access news daily see major differences, compared to 17% of those who never use messaging apps. In the UK and the US, 46% and 64% of daily online news users, respectively, see major differences compared to 36% (UK) and 45% (US) of less than daily online news consumers.

whom do not see any difference at all between news outlets in terms of their trustworthiness, may require establishing, at the foundational level, that there is value to news and journalism even before they may begin to forge a relationship built on trust. For others, especially those who consume news daily and may already have finely tuned curated media habits, as we show in the remainder of this report, many have quite specific views about how best to serve their needs and establish a trusting relationship. Both dynamics are true, even though it means there is no single silver bullet to regain the public's trust.

2. Building Trust Through Aligning Editorial Content to What the Public Cares Most About

Having established the overall landscape around trust in news in each of these countries, in this chapter we consider the public's attitudes to the first of four approaches to increasing trust in news. This first set of approaches falls under the umbrella of what we call editorial strategies – efforts to focus on particular topics and content that best aligns with what audiences say they are looking for from trustworthy news sources.

We begin by first examining how people think about the current mix of news coverage in their countries. We find that audiences tend to see only limited efforts by most news organisations to focus on everyday, regular people, which some (although not all) say they would like to see more of compared to their current levels. This may strike some journalists as counter to their own perceptions or editorial values, but a tendency to focus on powerful elites in coverage may contribute to perceptions of news media as disconnected or even irrelevant to everyday, regular life. In fact, while large portions of the public in these countries do say they value the independent watchdog role of the press – scrutinising the actions of those in positions of power – this is mainly the case for those most interested in politics but is often relatively less of a priority compared to other functions of the news media that people value.

We also show that one kind of news that audiences generally say they want to see more of is focused around solutions to problems – as has been argued by proponents of 'solutions' or 'constructive' journalism (Lough and McIntyre 2023) – rather than simply highlighting negative events in the world. Finally, we devote the last part of this chapter to considering what audiences would prioritise changing about news content, with many expressing frustration about what they perceive as sensationalism, bias, and inaccuracy. These issues more than others, including lack of diverse voices or too many stories that cause social division, tend to elicit the most concern; however, as we also show, different segments of the public in these countries harbour different priorities when it comes to these matters, complicating efforts to win over all audiences using the same editorial strategies.

The public has mixed views about the current focus of most coverage

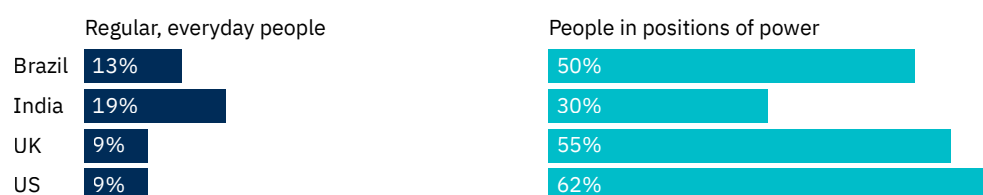
We find a nuanced portrait across these four countries in terms of how the public thinks about the current editorial focus of most news content. Many perceive that news coverage in these countries tends to be especially focused on elites in positions of power, rather than regular, everyday people. On balance, more express a preference for increasing coverage of the latter, saying they would be more likely to trust news that does so. At the same time, we also find generally positive sentiments across the board in terms of the performance of the press in their coverage of specific editorial subjects. This suggests that the link between editorial strategies for building trust is far from straightforward.

MANY SEE NEWS AS ESPECIALLY FOCUSED ON ELITES, WITH LESS CONSENSUS ON HOW IT SHOULD CHANGE

Generally, people in all four countries say they believe news outlets tend to focus more on people in positions of power compared to everyday, regular people (Fig. 2.1). Majorities say they think news media do so ‘much more’ or ‘somewhat more’ in Brazil (50%), the UK (55%), and the US (62%). In India, such perceptions are somewhat more mixed: just 30% say the news media focuses more on people in positions of power and 41% say they believe news media devote equal attention to both groups.

Figure 2.1: Larger percentages in all countries think news focuses more on people in positions of power

Percentage who think news focuses more on people in positions of power versus regular, everyday people



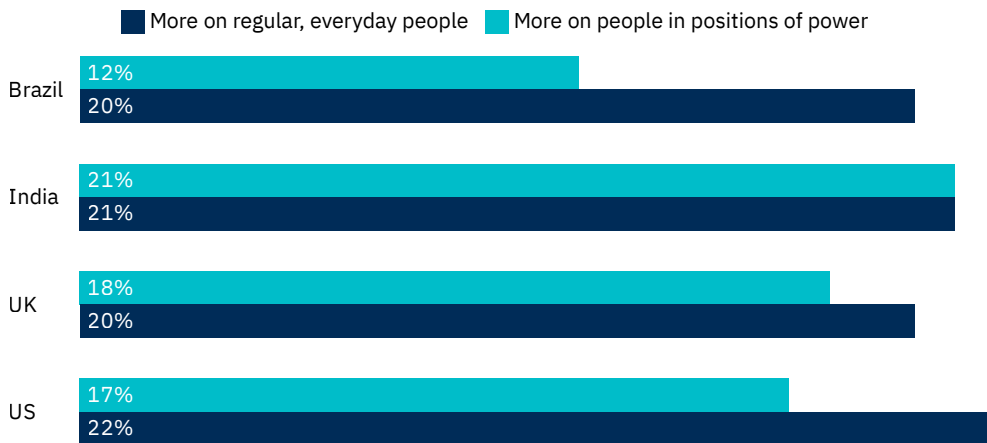
EDIT_ATTN_CUR. Thinking generally about most news today, do you think it focuses more on people in positions of power or regular, everyday people, or both equally? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who say ‘both equally’ or ‘don’t know’.

At the same time, when asked whether news media *should* focus more on everyday, regular people, the picture becomes somewhat more mixed. Slightly higher percentages do say news organisations should focus more on regular, everyday people compared to the percentage who say they want more attention paid to people in positions of power (Fig. 2.2). This pattern is consistent across all four countries, although in Brazil respondents were less likely to express a preference for more coverage paid to elites. In all four countries, however, most say they want a balance of both kinds of coverage, with roughly half of respondents stating that they thought news media should focus on *both* everyday, regular people *and* people in positions of power equally.⁹

⁹ This percentage was highest in Brazil (62%), followed by the US (55%), the UK (51%), and India (49%).

Figure 2.2: Support is slightly higher for focusing more on regular, everyday people rather than people in power

Percentage who think news should focus more on regular, everyday people versus people in positions of power

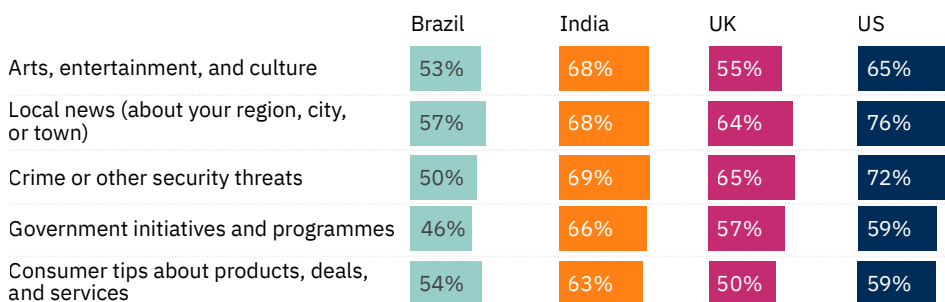


EDIT_ATTN_PREF. In your view, should the news focus more on people in positions of power or regular, everyday people, or both equally? *Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: ‘More on people in positions of power’ includes those who say ‘much’ or ‘somewhat more on people in positions of power’, whereas ‘more on regular, everyday people’ includes those who say ‘much’ or ‘somewhat more on regular, everyday people’. Excludes those who say ‘don’t know’, ‘neither’, or ‘both equally’.*

When we asked audiences how well they thought news organisations in their countries covered various common topics, audiences also tended to be more uniformly positive about the current performance of news media when it comes to these specific areas of coverage – even as there are still significant minorities that do not think these topics are covered well (Fig. 2.3). We asked about five topic areas including (a) arts, entertainment, and culture, (b) local news (‘local’ broadly defined), (c) crime and other security threats, (d) government initiatives and programmes,¹⁰ and (e) consumer tips about commercial products and services. We selected these topics based largely on the kinds of topics that came up most often as areas of either concern or personal importance to members of the public we have previously interviewed or included in focus groups (Ross Arguedas et al. 2022; Ross Arguedas et al. 2023).

Figure 2.3: Majorities evaluate news coverage of specific topics favourably

Percentage in each country who think news organisations do ‘very’ or ‘fairly well’ at covering each topic



EDIT_TOPICS. Now thinking about the following topics covered in the news overall, how well, if at all, do news organisations in your country cover each of the following? *Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000.*

¹⁰ In focus groups we previously convened (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023), this topic was one that Indian participants were particularly vocal about.

Roughly two-thirds of respondents in India said they felt that the news media covered each of these topics ‘fairly’ or ‘very well.’ Percentages were similarly high, or even higher, for categories like local news and ‘crime and other security threats’ in the US, a country with considerably lower trust in news overall compared to India.¹¹ Although slightly smaller proportions of the public in the UK and Brazil said the same, these generally positive results suggest that audiences can perceive news media as doing fairly well on some aspects of their coverage, even as they ultimately judge the overall product more negatively.

EDITORIAL STRATEGIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO TRUST

Having established how audiences think about the current editorial focus of news media and their performance in covering various topics, we now more specifically examine to what extent such attitudes are linked to trust.

On the first of these questions – the tendency for news to focus more on people in positions of power and less on everyday, regular people – we find that audiences are somewhat more likely to say they would be more trusting towards news organisations that do more to focus on the latter than they currently are (Fig. 2.4). When asked one by one whether focusing more on either of these groups would likely lead respondents to be more or less trusting towards news organisations, we find in general more uniformly positive responses associated with paying greater attention to regular people, and somewhat larger percentages who say they would likely trust news organisations less that focus more on elites than they currently are. In Brazil, the UK, and the US, focusing more on people in positions of power was associated with higher percentages saying they likely would be less rather than more trusting (35% to 31% in Brazil, 24% to 17% in the UK, and 32% to 21% in the US), although this dynamic was reversed in India, where 45% said they would be more likely to trust news organisations that focus more on elites. It is worth noting, however, that the most common response in India was to say that neither editorial approach would likely affect levels of trust either way.

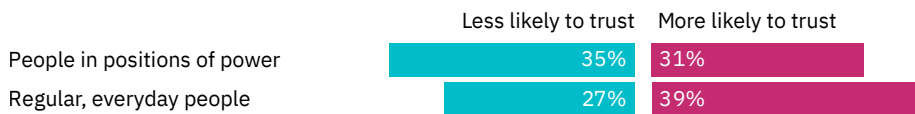
Likewise, and in contrast to this, focusing more on everyday, regular people was associated with more people saying they are likely to trust the news more. This finding is consistent across all countries. US respondents were especially likely to say they would be more trusting of news outlets that focus more on regular people (49%), with only 9% saying such an editorial focus would likely reduce their sense of trust. This divide was smallest in Brazil, with 39% saying likely to be more trusting and 27% saying the reverse.

¹¹ When we examined attitudes about crime coverage among respondents from different racial backgrounds, we found only minor differences in responses on this question. These results may be surprising in light of our previous qualitative research (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023) as well as other studies showing news coverage tends to overrepresent African Americans as perpetrators of crime (e.g. Dixon and Linz 2000a, 2000b) and underrepresent them as victims of crime (e.g. Dixon and Williams 2015). We suspect the phrasing of our survey question, which combined crime and other security threats, may be partly the reason. We also suspect the broad survey questions may not capture the nuances of people’s attitudes on this topic, including differing expectations about how the news media ought to perform.

Figure 2.4: Larger percentages say they are more likely to trust organisations that focus more on regular people

Percentage who say they are more versus less likely to trust news organisations that focus more on people in positions of power versus regular, everyday people

Brazil



India



UK



US



EDIT_ATTN_TRUST. Thinking now about your trust in news organisations, to what extent are you more or less likely to trust news organisations that focus on the following? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: 'More likely to trust' includes those who say they are 'much' or 'somewhat more likely to trust', whereas 'less likely to trust' includes those who say they are 'much' or 'somewhat less likely to trust'. Excludes those who say 'neither more nor less likely to trust' or 'don't know'.

To some extent, these patterns are reflective of some of the differences among publics we examined in Chapter 1 of this report. Those who exhibit the most 'selective trust' are also those most receptive to efforts by news organisations to focus more on regular, everyday people, perhaps because they also tend to be the most interested in different forms of news and open to trust-building initiatives in general. In the US, for example, 53% of those who see 'major differences' between news outlets in their country say they are more likely to trust news outlets that focus more on the public, compared to 34% of those who see 'no differences' between news outlets. Similar differences are apparent in the other four countries.¹² Likewise, those who say news outlets cover each of the five topic areas well are much more likely to also say they trust information in the news media in general and vice versa. These gaps were often largest in the US and smallest in Brazil, but there was little to no variation across topics.¹³ These results suggest that many people may have a broadly positive or negative view about news across all topics that applies in a general way to their sense of trust. We cannot say on the basis of these results whether better aligning news coverage to meet the needs and preferences of these

¹² In India, 52% of those who see 'major differences' say they are more likely to trust news outlets that focus more on everyday, regular people, compared to 45% of those who say 'no differences.' In the UK, the divide between these groups is 41% to 32% and in Brazil it is 43% to 36%.

¹³ For example, in the US, 63% of those who say they thought news organisations covered 'government initiatives and programmes' very or fairly well said they could somewhat or completely trust information in the news media in general. This compared to just 25% who said the same among those who said news organisations did not cover this topic well. The gap was smaller in the UK (48% versus 26%), India (71% versus 58%), and Brazil (47% versus 35%).

audiences will cause them to increase their trust, but it is clear there is a connection between their evaluations of current coverage and overall trust.

Audiences generally see value in the importance of watchdog journalism

One reason often provided for why news organisations focus heavily on people in positions of power has to do with the role of news as an independent watchdog for democracy. In this next section we focus on better understanding how people think about this function of the news media, its relationship to trust, and how it compares to other roles that news media play in people's lives.

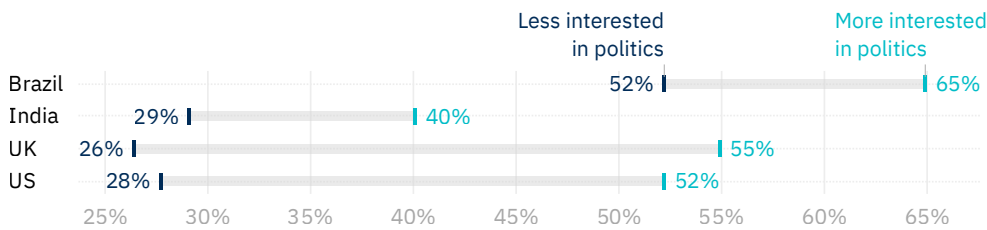
IMPORTANCE OF WATCHDOG JOURNALISM HIGHEST AMONG THOSE MOST INTERESTED IN POLITICS
Even as our survey finds some wariness about the degree to which respondents feel that news in general focuses on people in positions of power, when asked a series of questions about different functions that journalists perform, most of the public in all four of these countries also say they see the importance of news organisations taking steps to 'monitor and scrutinise people in positions of power'. This 'watchdog' function of the press has often been held up as one of the most important core roles of the institution of journalism, embraced to varying degrees in different media and political environments (Norris 2014; Waisbord 2000), but the public's attitudes about it have been somewhat less studied (for an exception, see Palmer et al. 2020).

We find that three-quarters of the public in Brazil (74%), the UK (75%), and the US (73%) view this function as 'somewhat' or 'very important', as do two-thirds of audiences in India (68%). Although the percentage who specifically see it as 'very important' is much lower (39% in the UK and the US, 32% in India, but 55% in Brazil), such views are also particularly concentrated among the parts of the public who are most politically interested (Fig. 2.5). This pattern is consistent in all four countries, although even politically interested Indian respondents were somewhat less likely to say they thought this function of the press was 'very important'.

On the one hand, these results may seem contradictory to the findings in the first part of this chapter. Many say they want more attention paid to regular, everyday people but they also value the role of the news media in monitoring people in positions of power. On the other hand, it may be that audiences want the balance of coverage that does focus on elites to be more focused on substantively important issues rather than more trivial forms of scrutiny. More research is needed to examine these nuances.

Figure 2.5: Those who most value the watchdog function tend to be most interested in politics

Percentage who say monitoring and scrutinising people in positions of power is 'very important' to them personally among those more versus less interested in politics



EDIT_FXNS_IMPT. Thinking generally about the different areas news organisations cover, how important, or not important, is it to you personally that news organisations do each of the following? Monitor and scrutinise people in positions of power. **D9.** How interested, if at all, would you say you are in politics? Base: More/less interested in politics: Brazil = 291/1,237, India = 554/907, UK = 744/686, US = 768/608. Note: 'More interested in politics' includes those who say they are 'very' and 'extremely interested', whereas 'less interested in politics' includes those who say they are 'slightly' and 'not at all interested'.

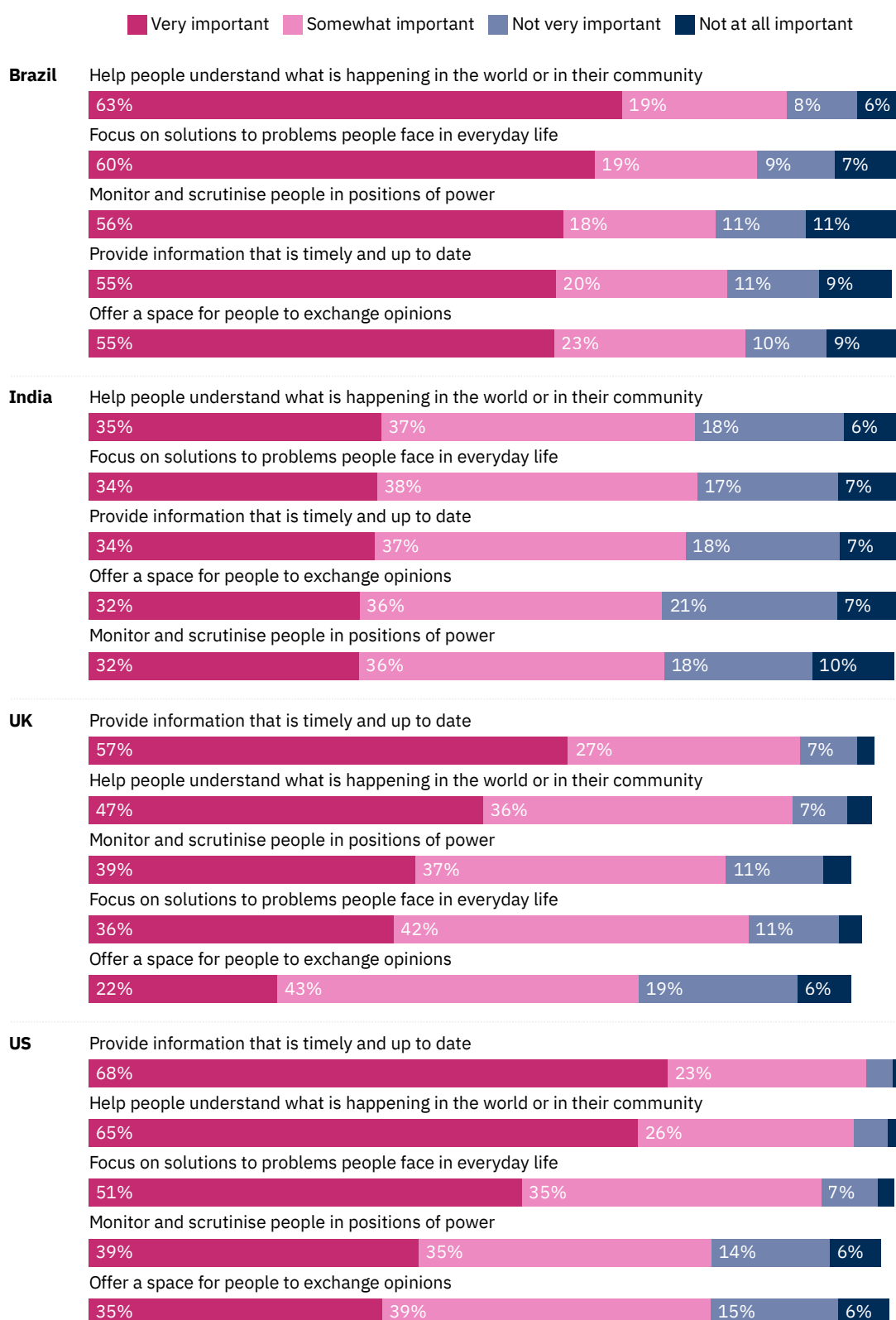
OTHER FUNCTIONS OF NEWS AT LEAST AS IF NOT MORE IMPORTANT THAN WATCHDOG JOURNALISM

We asked about the watchdog function alongside several other roles played by the news media in order to best understand not only how much people value this role specifically but how it compares in perceived importance relative to other functions the news may play in people's lives. In addition to the watchdog role, we asked about four other functions of the news media, including providing information about the world and the communities in which people live, doing so in a timely manner, creating spaces for people to exchange opinions and perspectives, and offering 'solutions to everyday problems' (an important theme among some journalism reformers).

While each of these areas is viewed as 'very' or 'somewhat important' to most respondents, we see variation across these media environments in terms of what is most valued. In the US and the UK, for example, providing up-to-date information tends to be the most widely valued role of the news media, with the watchdog role falling roughly in the middle. In India, monitoring and scrutinising people in positions of power ranked at the bottom in importance. In Brazil and India, helping people understand what is happening globally and locally edged ahead of other functions in terms of perceived importance. More consistently, in all four countries respondents were least enthusiastic about the importance of the news media offering a space for people to exchange opinions.

Figure 2.6: The most valued journalistic role varies from one country to another

Percentage who say each of the following functions of news is important versus not important



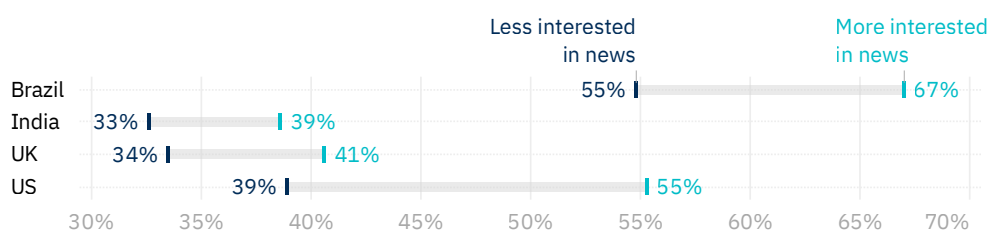
EDIT_FXNS_IMPT. Thinking generally about the different areas news organisations cover, how important, or not important, is it to you personally that news organisations do each of the following? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who say 'don't know'.

Attitudes about solutions-focused journalism also deserve some attention here as it has been the subject of a considerable degree of scholarship. Previous research has shown that orienting news towards solutions, rather than simply highlighting problems in the world, can prompt news users to feel less negative and report more favourable attitudes towards the news itself (McIntyre 2019). It has been argued that this kind of constructive approach to reporting news also strengthens engagement and social connections between news organisations and communities, especially among marginalised publics (Wenzel et al. 2016).

In line with these studies, we also find that audiences in all four countries say they value journalism that focuses on solutions. While majorities in Brazil (60%) and the US (51%) say they view it as ‘very important’, roughly a third of the public in India (34%) and the UK (36%) say the same. One note of caution here, however, is that enthusiasm for such efforts tends to be concentrated among those who also say they are most interested in news (Fig. 2.7). Those who say they are least interested in news are significantly less likely to value the solutions-focused coverage in all four markets.

Figure 2.7: Those most interested in news value solutions journalism more

Percentage who say news that focuses on solutions is ‘very important’ to them personally broken down by news interest



EDIT_FXNS_IMPT. Thinking generally about the different areas news organisations cover, how important, or not important, is it to you personally that news organisations do each of the following? 2. Focus on solutions to problems people face in everyday life. **Q4.** How interested, if at all, would you say you are in news? *Base: Less/more interested in news: Brazil = 837/486, India = 732/671, UK = 432/1,145, US = 432/1,024. Note: ‘Less interested in news’ includes those who say they are ‘slightly’ or ‘not at all interested’, whereas ‘more interested in news’ includes those who say they are ‘very’ or ‘extremely interested’.*

MIXED VIEWS ABOUT PERFORMANCE OF THE PRESS

For each of these functions, we also asked audiences in each country how well they thought news in general performed (Fig. 2.8). The watchdog role tended to rank somewhat lower consistently compared to these other four areas, although focusing on ‘solutions to problems people face in everyday life’ fell at the bottom in the UK and the US. A larger percentage of the public in India said they thought news organisations performed well in both roles, although in general Indian respondents were more positive across all of these areas. Comparatively, Brazilians are at the opposite end of the spectrum, with some of the most negative views about the current performance of the news media.

Figure 2.8: Lower percentages in Brazil say news organisations are doing well across all news functions

Percentage who think news organisations in their country fulfil each of the following functions 'very' or 'fairly well'

	Brazil	India	UK	US
Provide information that is timely and up-to-date	53%	67%	73%	74%
Help people understand what is happening in the world or in their community	51%	67%	62%	64%
Focus on solutions to problems people face in everyday life	46%	68%	46%	48%
Offer a space for people to exchange opinions	45%	64%	49%	49%
Monitor and scrutinise people in positions of power	44%	65%	55%	57%

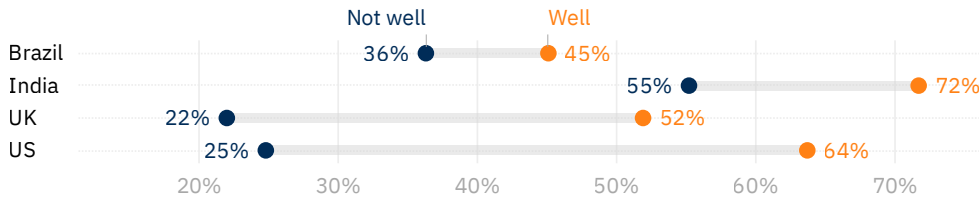
EDIT_FXNS_JOB. Regardless of how important you think each of the areas are, how well, if at all, do news organisations in your country do overall when it comes to each of the following? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000.

We also find, as above with respect to editorial topics, these journalistic functions are linked to the public's overall trust in news. People who say they feel the news media in general are doing well at each of these functions also tend to be much more likely to say they trust information in the news media in their countries in general. We see this relationship clearly across all five functions (Fig. 2.9). Indians, again, are the most positive across all categories; more than two-thirds of those who say news organisations are doing a well in these roles also have a trusting relationship with news. We see the largest gaps in levels of trust in the UK and the US, however, which suggests that more so than the two Global South countries, perceptions about the editorial performance of the news media are linked to attitudes about whether news is trustworthy or not.

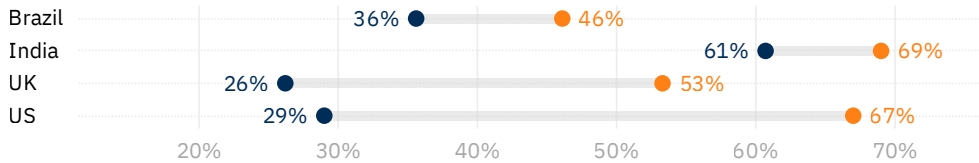
Figure 2.9: Those who trust news more often say news organisations do well across all functions

Percentage of those who ‘somewhat’ or ‘completely’ trust information from the news media who say news organisations do well or not well when it comes to each of the following things

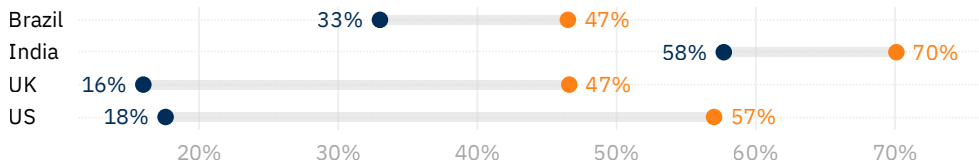
Monitor and scrutinise people in positions of power



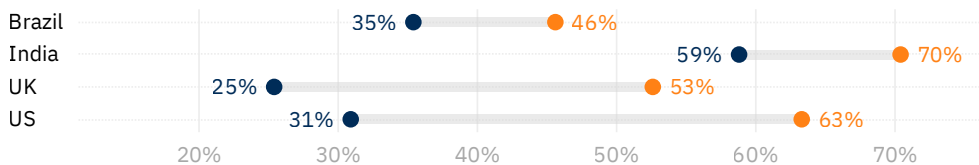
Focus on solutions to problems people face in everyday life



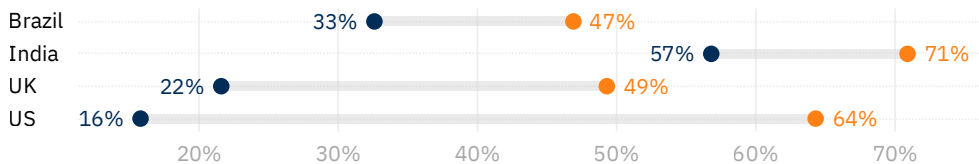
Provide information that is timely and up to date



Offer a space for people to exchange opinions



Help people understand what is happening in the world or in their community



TRUST_GEN. Generally speaking, to what extent do you trust, or not trust information from the news media in [Brazil/India/the UK/the US]. **EDIT_FXNS_JOB.** Regardless of how important you think each of the areas are, how well, if at all, do news organisations in your country do overall when it comes to each of the following? *Base: Varies by country as a proportion of the full sample: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: ‘Well’ includes those who responded ‘very’ and ‘fairly well’, whereas ‘not well’ includes those who responded ‘not very’ and ‘not at all well’.*

Many voice frustrations about inaccuracy, bias, and sensationalism

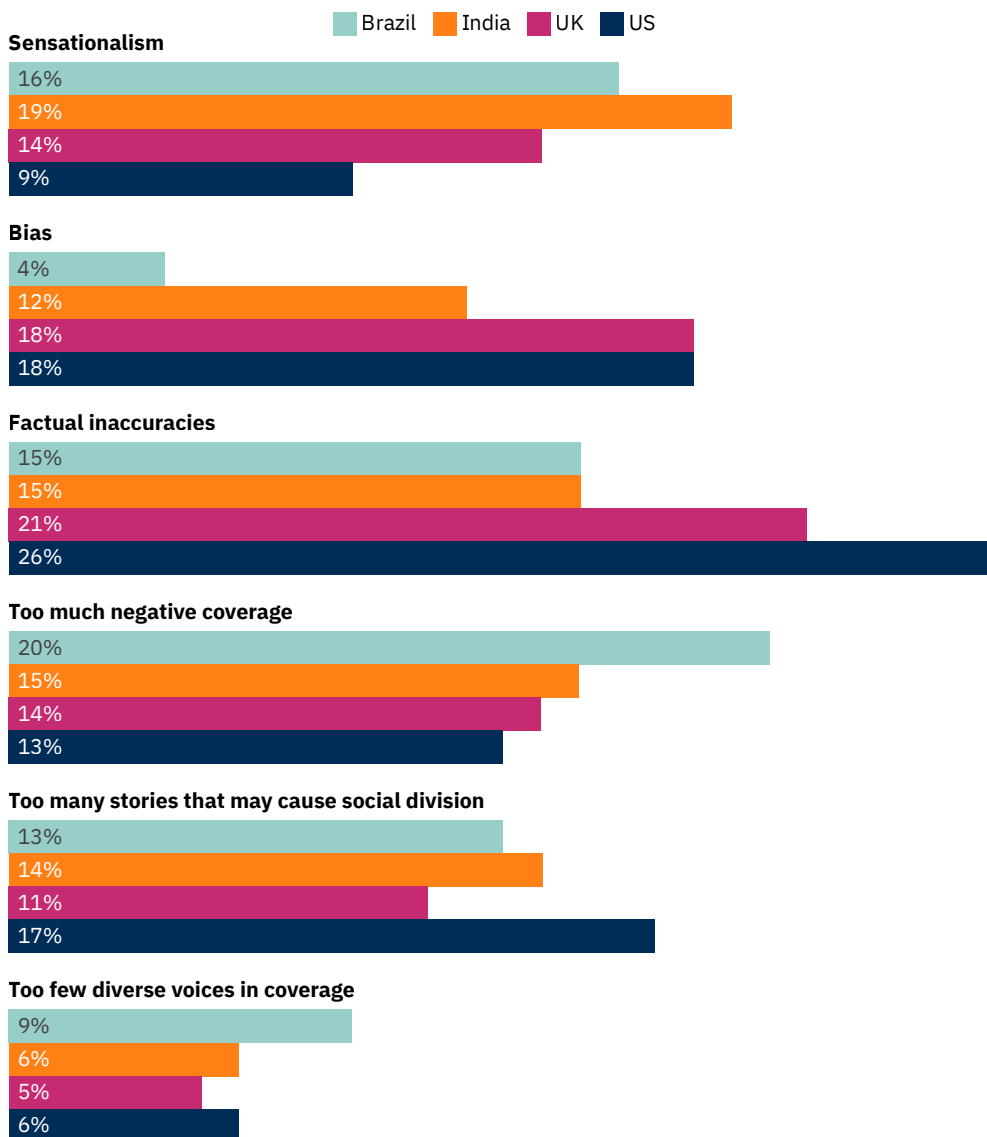
In this last part of this chapter, we turn to a different set of concerns audiences express about the editorial focus of news coverage in these countries. We asked about several broad matters involving reporting in each country. Once again we generated these categories in part based on what we heard in our most recent focus groups with historically marginalised and underserved audiences (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023) as well as our previous interviews with audiences more generally (Ross Arguedas et al. 2022). We focus on six different problems many often describe about the current editorial focus of most news coverage. These include both problems around

factual inaccuracies, bias, and sensationalism and matters explicitly linked to social problems and divisions in each country. These latter problems ranged from too much negativity in coverage to too many stories that may contribute to social division, as well as a lack of diverse voices represented in the news.

When we asked respondents which among these six problems was the most important for news organisations to prioritise improving, we found little consensus and also considerable variation across countries (Fig. 2.10). Brazilians were most concerned about negativity in coverage: 20% of the public there selected that area as most important. Similarly, one in five Indians said they most wanted news organisations to prioritise reducing the amount of sensationalism in the news – a phenomenon that is unlikely to go unnoticed for even a casual observer of Indian news media. Meanwhile, a plurality of Britons (21%) and Americans (26%) selected factual inaccuracies as the most important editorial problem they believed news organisations should prioritise above all else.

Figure 2.10: Little agreement within and across countries about what news organisations should prioritise fixing

Percentage who say each of the following is most important for news organisations to prioritise fixing

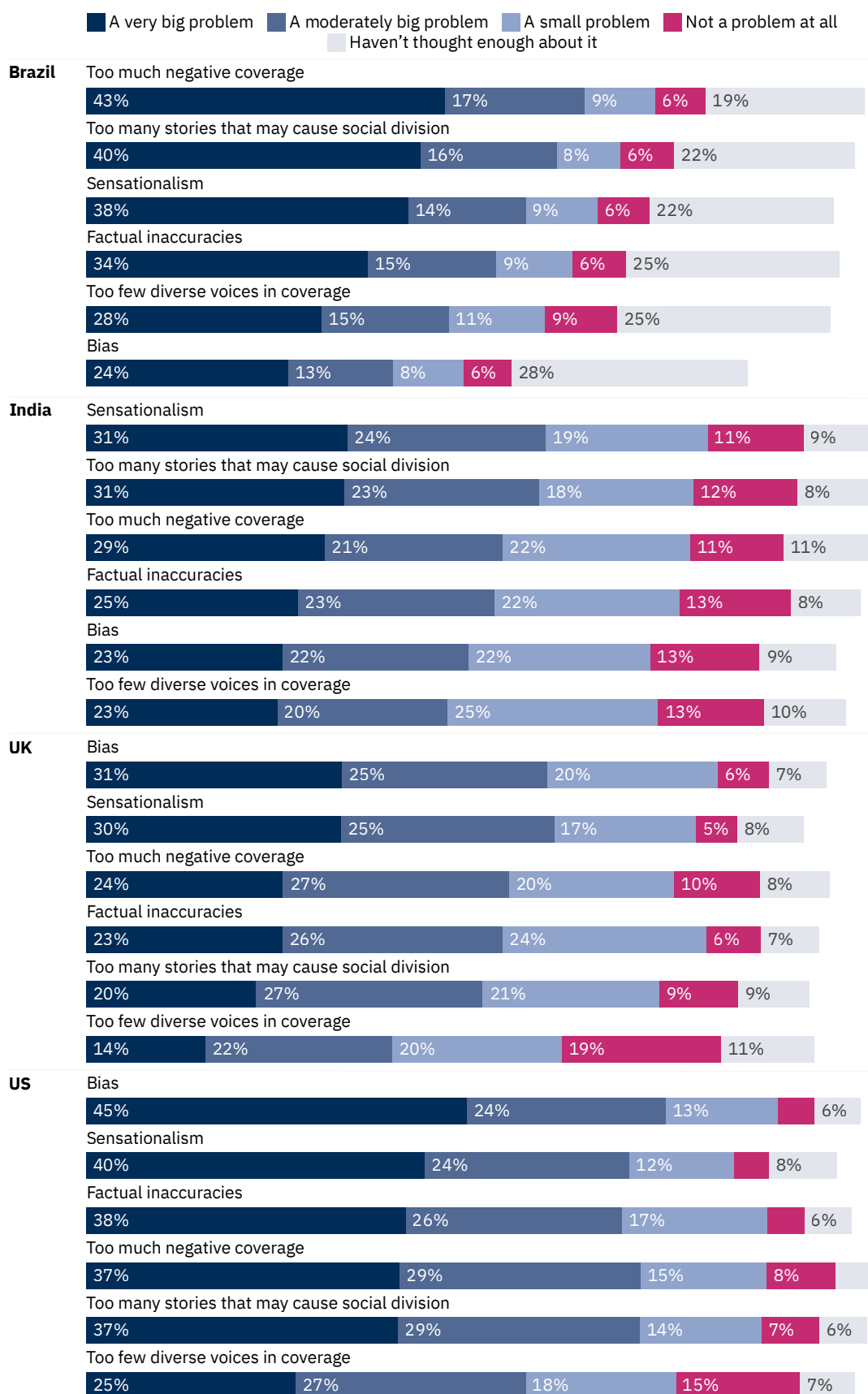


EDIT_PROB_PREF. Thinking about what news organisations should prioritise trying to fix or improve, which of these is the most important to you personally? Base: Brazil = 1,630, India = 1,844, UK = 1,976, US = 1,889. Note: Question was only asked of those who previously identified one of the following as being a problem.

This variation in responses around what to prioritise should not detract from the fact that the public also tended to see many of these issues as ‘very big’ or at least ‘moderately big’ problems in all four media environments. When we asked follow-up questions about to what degree respondents felt each of these concerns was a problem in their country, we found some notable differences across countries as well as some consistent results. Bias, for example, rose to the top of the list of concerns in both the UK and the US, where 55% and 69%, respectively, saw it as a big problem in these countries. In contrast, just one-third saw it that way in Brazil (37%), falling at the bottom of the list compared to the other areas. In India, 47% viewed bias as a big problem, where it ranked second to last behind only ‘too few diverse voices in coverage’, which consistently attracted somewhat smaller percentages who viewed it as a big problem.

Figure 2.11: Large percentages in all countries see many big problems with how news is reported

Percentage who find each of the following to be a big versus a small problem in their country



EDIT_PROB. In general, how much of a problem, if at all, do you think each of the following are when it comes to the reporting of news in your country? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who say they 'don't know'.

DIFFERENT VIEWS ABOUT WHAT IS MOST PROBLEMATIC IN EDITORIAL CONTENT

Aside from these country-level differences, we also see some important differences among subpopulations in terms of their degree of concern about some of these issues. For example, the percentage who say there are too few diverse voices in coverage is a ‘very big problem’ is considerably higher among Black respondents in the US (32%) compared to white respondents (23%), although differences on this question along racial lines were not significant in Brazil. On the other hand, concern over bias was particularly pronounced along political lines in the US, with Republicans much more likely to view this as a ‘very big problem’ (63%) compared to Democrats (35%).

News coverage that is seen as contributing to social divides is another area where we see important variation within countries. In India, concern over such coverage was most pronounced among Muslims (55%) and those who are economically and socially marginalised in society, although we found similar levels of concern across all caste levels.¹⁴ Such subgroup differences underscore the degree to which what is perceived as a problem in news content tends to be subjective, in the eye of the beholder. These differing perspectives on what is most problematic about news content often mirror broader socio-political cleavages, as well as the nature of the public discourse around these subjects.

CONCERN OVER ISSUES IN EDITORIAL CONTENT IS OFTEN LINKED TO TRUST

While audiences tend to perceive all six of these areas as problems in news coverage, such perceptions can be rooted not only in direct experiences encountering such news – it can also be based on preconceptions or broader social discourses about news. Therefore, it is not altogether clear that simply focusing on making news less divisive or less negative, for example, will necessarily increase the public’s trust. That said, when we look at the relationship between concern over each of these matters and trust in news in general in each country, we find some distinct and revealing patterns. Some of these areas of concern tend to be much more aligned with existing levels of trust in news in general compared to others.

In Brazil, we find practically no relationship at all between levels of concern about any of these issues and the percentage who say they trust information in the news media in general. In other words, even though audiences tend to view all of these matters as significant problems, those who are less concerned trust news overall in largely the same proportion as those who are more concerned. It is also worth noting that the percentage who said they had not thought enough about any of these issues was two or three times larger in Brazil than it was elsewhere.

At the other end of the spectrum, in the UK and the US those who view sensationalism, bias, and the other matters as a big problem were significantly less likely to say they trust news in general, ranging from a gap of 10 percentage points to as much as a 30 percentage point difference. For example, 40% of Americans who say they view factual inaccuracies as a big problem said they trust information in the news in general, compared to 70% of Americans who do not see factual inaccuracies as a big problem. The one exception to this pattern was with

¹⁴ More generally, concern over news coverage causing division in society is concentrated especially among those who are more interested in politics, particularly in Brazil and the US, where 55% and 44%, respectively, of the most politically interested respondents say they view this issue as a ‘very big problem’ compared to 34% and 32%, respectively, of those who are less interested in politics. Similar gaps are also apparent in India and the UK, although the overall level of concern is somewhat lower. In India, 35% of the most politically interested respondents say they view news stories causing social division as a ‘very big problem’ (versus 27% of the least politically interested). In the UK, the difference is 29% versus 15%.

respect to ‘too few diverse voices in coverage’, where levels of trust in news appear unrelated to levels of concern about this matter.¹⁵

In summary, in this chapter we have explored how the public thinks about various editorial strategies around building trust. Overall we find that many see news coverage as tilted heavily towards coverage of powerful elites with sometimes too little emphasis on problems – and solutions – in everyday life. At the same time, many do say they value the watchdog role of the press as it scrutinises the actions of those in positions of power and authority; they just do not always prioritise it as heavily as those most interested in politics and journalists themselves may sometimes assume. The public in these four countries also tend to evaluate the performance of the news media quite unevenly. While many view coverage of specific topics positively, they also see aspects of that coverage as highly problematic, particularly when it comes to critiques like bias and sensationalism. Overall, we find the public expressing somewhat different priorities in different countries around what kinds of editorial strategies are most likely to be effective in garnering the public’s trust: whereas some are particularly concerned about a lack of diverse voices in coverage of stories that cause social division, others are more focused on questions of accuracy and sensationalism. Effectively addressing these concerns about editorial content may also be intrinsically linked with transparency and disclosure, the focus of Chapter 3.

¹⁵ In India, we find smaller differences in trust in news according to whether audiences perceive each of these areas as a problem. Curiously, those who see each as a big problem are somewhat *more* likely to say they trust news, the inverse of the pattern we observe in the UK and US. We think this reflects a similar dynamic as the one we observe in Brazil where trust in news there tends to be somewhat less linked to specific editorial concerns than it is in the two Global North countries we examine.

3. Building Trust Through Transparency Initiatives

In this chapter, we consider how practices broadly under the banner of transparency relate to the public's views about what constitutes trustworthy journalism. As we noted in Chapter 1 of this report, transparency initiatives are among the most frequently prioritised when respondents are forced to choose among the four strategies we asked about. However, while a commitment to transparency is important to many people in the abstract, whether such efforts engender trust in practice depends on whether audiences pay attention to them and perceive information about reporting practices and policies positively.

We begin by focusing on how people evaluate the current performance of news organisations in their countries when it comes to how open and transparent they are on several dimensions. We also examine how much each is likely to build trust – at least in the abstract. Next, we assess what kinds of information audiences say they want more of (or less of) when it comes to the way news organisations operate and are structured. We conclude the chapter by focusing on perceived bias and whether people view news media as sufficiently fair in the way they treat different segments of the public. Although these responses inevitably overlap to some degree with questions of editorial practice (Chapter 2), our focus here is on what and how much information people say they want news organisations to disclose about the way they operate and conduct themselves.

What we find overall is a portrait of often divided and sometimes even jaded publics in all four countries, who often make evaluations of news media in ways that mirror and reflect existing social and political cleavages. While many are in agreement that they want more transparent news organisations, they do not necessarily interpret efforts around transparency in the same way.

Concern over a lack of transparency highest in Brazil, the UK, and the US

We focus on five separate dimensions of transparency. We have defined transparency broadly as encompassing both openness about specific editorial decisions and also the process itself – disclosure practices around both the production and dissemination of news content as well as the structures around ownership and funding that many audiences may or may not be aware of. These five dimensions include how well news organisations: (a) explain their decision-making process around how they report the news; (b) communicate their ethical standards; (c) are upfront about their mission statements; (d) separate news from advertising in their editorial content; and (e) distinguish fact from opinion in what they publish or broadcast.

In general, we find strikingly similar evaluations across all five dimensions of transparency in three of the four countries (Fig. 3.1). Indians rate news outlets in their country highest compared to the other three countries, whereas the UK comes in at the lowest levels, specifically around the three areas of transparency related to how well news organisations communicate their mission and standards or explain their decision-making. In the US

and the UK, the percentage who say news organisations do well at separating news from advertising is relatively higher (46% in the UK and 53% in the US) compared to the other areas of transparency – a dynamic we do not see in the two Global South countries.

Figure 3.1: Less than half in Brazil, the UK, and the US say news organisations are doing well when it comes to transparency

Percentage in each country who think news organisations are doing ‘very’ or ‘fairly well’ at each of the following

	Brazil	India	UK	US
Separate facts from opinion	40%	62%	39%	41%
Separate news from advertising	42%	62%	46%	53%
Explain decisions about how they report the news	43%	64%	34%	41%
Communicate their mission statements	44%	61%	32%	41%
Communicate the ethical standards they follow	42%	63%	34%	41%

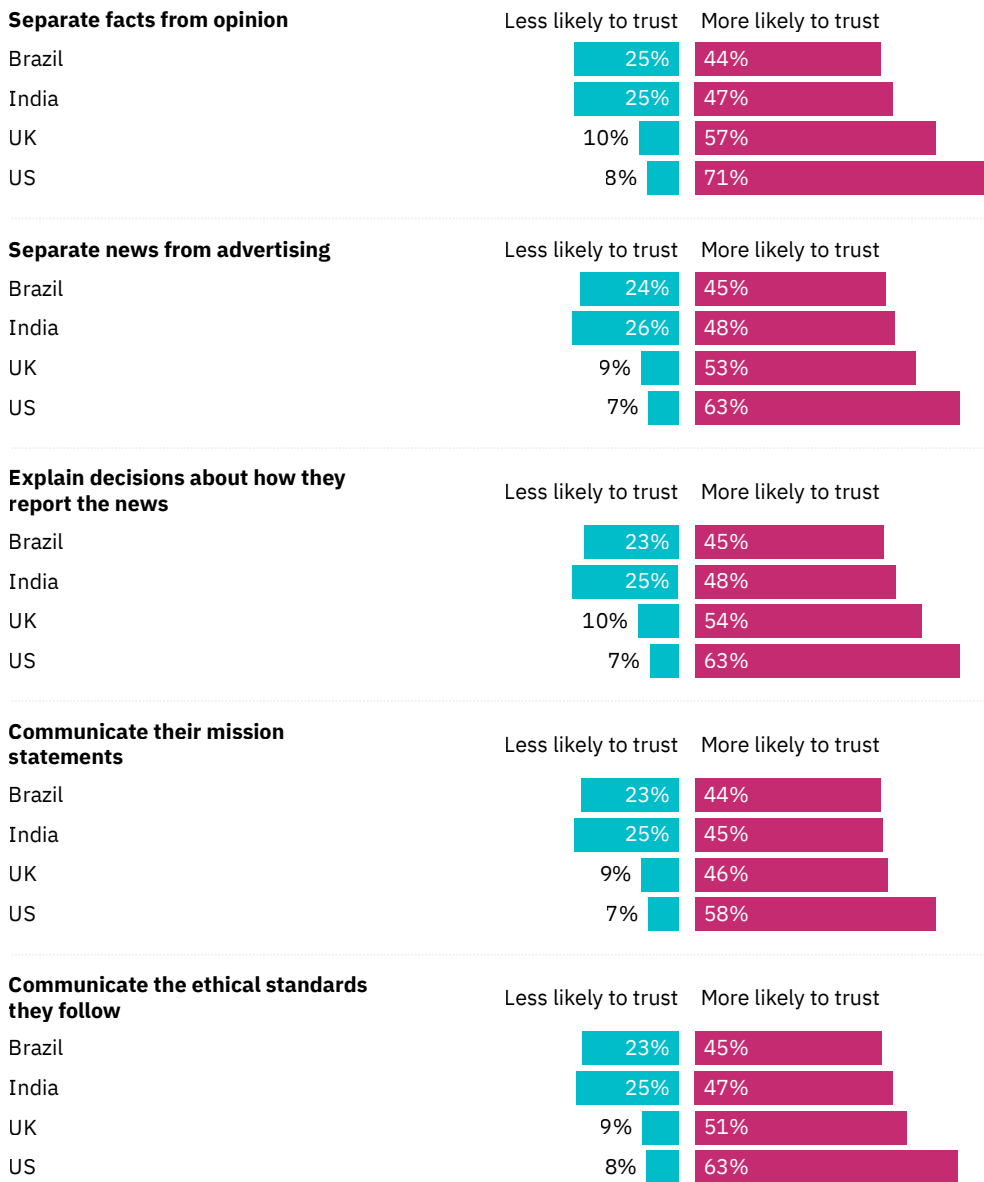
TRANS_JOB. In your opinion, how well, if at all, do you think news organisations in your country in general are doing when it comes to how they ... Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000.

MOST SAY EFFORTS TO BE MORE TRANSPARENT ARE LIKELY TO INCREASE THEIR TRUST

When asked whether these five areas of transparency are likely to lead to higher or lower trust towards news outlets that engage in these efforts, most perceive them positively by an overwhelming margin (Fig. 3.2), even as there are also some significant country-specific differences. In the US, approximately six in ten say they are ‘somewhat’ or ‘much more likely’ to trust news organisations that engage in any of these transparency practices, with 71% saying as much with respect to efforts to separate fact from opinion. In contrast, in Brazil and India, a country with far more trust in news in general, fewer than half said efforts to be more transparent in these ways was likely to increase their trust. Even so, this was twice as high as the percentage who said each was likely to decrease their trust, which suggests that, at least in the abstract, most people respond favourably to such efforts.

Figure 3.2: Many say transparency efforts make them more likely to trust news organisations

Percentage who say they are more or less likely to trust news organisations who do each of the following



TRANS_TRUST. Are you more or less likely to trust news organisations that do each of the following? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: 'Less likely to trust' includes those who say they are 'much' or 'somewhat less likely to trust', whereas 'more likely to trust' includes those who say they are 'much' or 'somewhat more likely to trust'. Excludes those who say 'neither more nor less likely to trust' or 'don't know'.

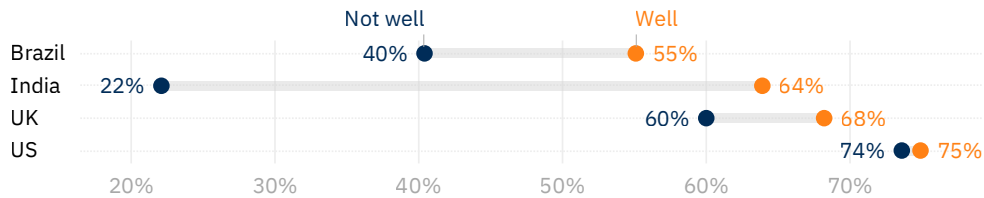
These findings, although encouraging, can be potentially misleading if the respondents who say they are most likely to increase their trust in news organisations that engage in these practices tend to be found among the already trusting – the ‘virtuous circle’ dynamic we have described elsewhere in this report. Therefore, we sought to break down the percentage who say they are more likely to trust news outlets that take steps to be more transparent among those who say they generally trust information in the news media in their country versus those who do not. Doing so reveals consistent gaps in responses to this question, with those who view news organisations as performing the worst on current transparency efforts also the most resistant to increasing their trust. This gap was widest in India, by more than 40 percentage points, but

smallest in the US, which suggests that efforts towards transparency may be more closely linked in audiences' minds in the latter but less so in the Indian context.

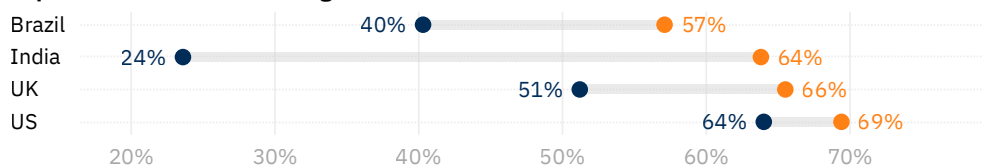
Figure 3.3: Those who say news organisations are not doing well at transparency efforts are also less likely to say these efforts would likely increase their trust

Percentage who say they are 'much' or 'somewhat more likely to trust' news organisations that do each of the following things among those who say they are doing well versus not well

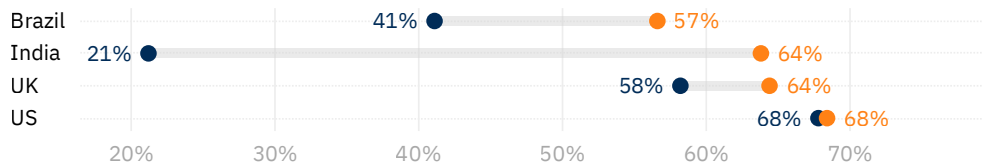
Separate facts from opinion



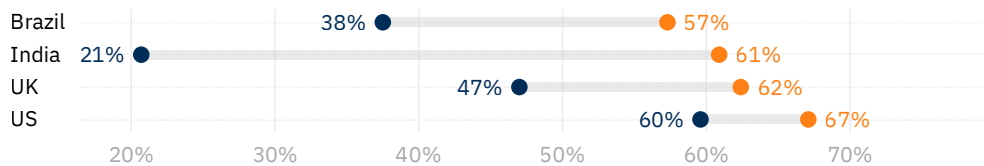
Separate news from advertising



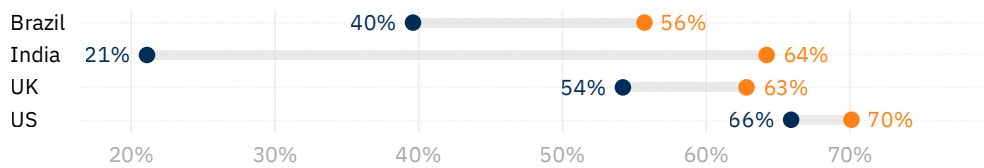
Explain decisions about how they report the news



Communicate their mission statements



Communicate the ethical standards they follow



TRANS_TRUST. Are you more or less likely to trust news organisations that do each of the following? **TRANS_JOB.** In your opinion, how well, if at all, do you think news organisations in your country in general are doing when it comes to how they ... Base: Varies by country as a proportion of the full sample: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: 'Well' includes those who say news organisations are doing 'very' or 'fairly well' at each and 'not well' includes those who say news organisation are doing 'not very' or 'not at all well'.

TRANSPARENCY AROUND FUNDING, OWNERSHIP, AND LEADERSHIP GENERATE MOST INTEREST

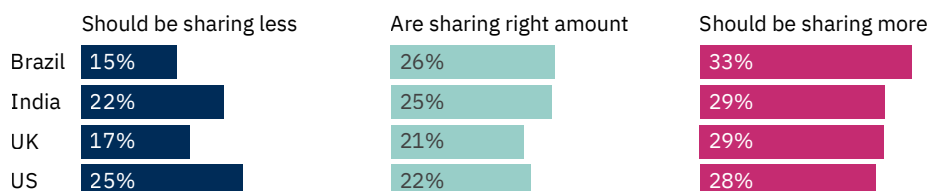
We asked a separate set of questions intended to assess what kinds of information audiences in each country say they want news organisations to be more transparent about. Specifically, we asked about whether news media should disclose more or less information about their journalists' political views or previous professional experiences, or other information

about their organisations’ funding and ownership, or about their leadership and decision-makers. These latter two areas of information tended to elicit the most interest from the public, especially in the UK and the US, with larger percentages saying they would like news organisations to share more (Fig. 3.4). A minority of about 20–25% of the public in all four countries thought news organisations were sharing the right amount on any of these four areas.

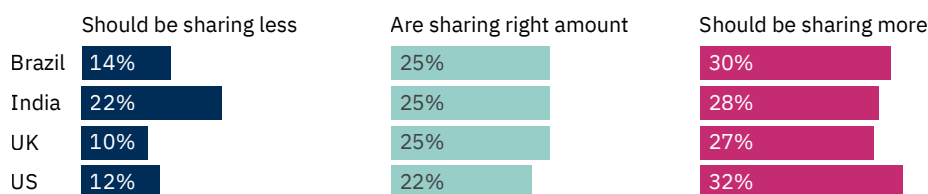
Figure 3.4: Larger percentages expressed interest in disclosure about funding and leadership

Percentage who think news organisations should be disclosing more, less, or are disclosing the right amount of information about each of the following

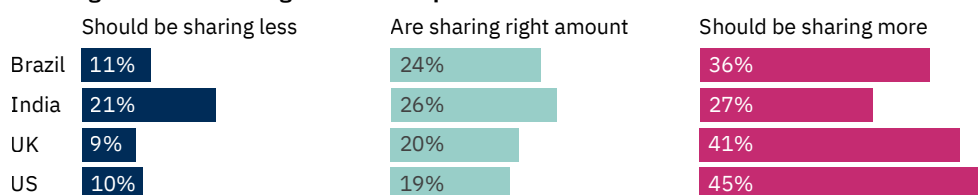
Their journalists’ political views



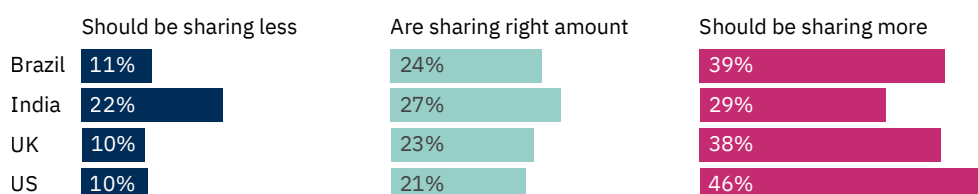
What their journalists have done previously in their careers



Their organisation’s funding and ownership



Their leaders and decision-makers



TRANS_DISCL_PREF. Do you think news organisations should share more, share less, or are they generally sharing the right amount of background information with the public about the following? *Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who say they ‘haven’t thought enough about it’ or ‘don’t know’.*

Across the board, as in the previous set of results, Indians appear somewhat more ambivalent about whether increasing disclosure is a net positive or negative, whereas in the US we also see relatively higher levels saying they believe news organisations ought to share less about their journalists’ political views (25%). No doubt this seemingly small but not insignificant subset of Americans are reacting to the highly polarised nature of the American electorate

around political party lines.¹⁶ In Brazil, on the other hand, where politics has also become highly charged in recent years, and where traditionally news organisations and journalists have not openly shared much about their political views, audiences say they are somewhat more interested in disclosure around such matters.

Concern over one-sidedness in newsroom decision-making

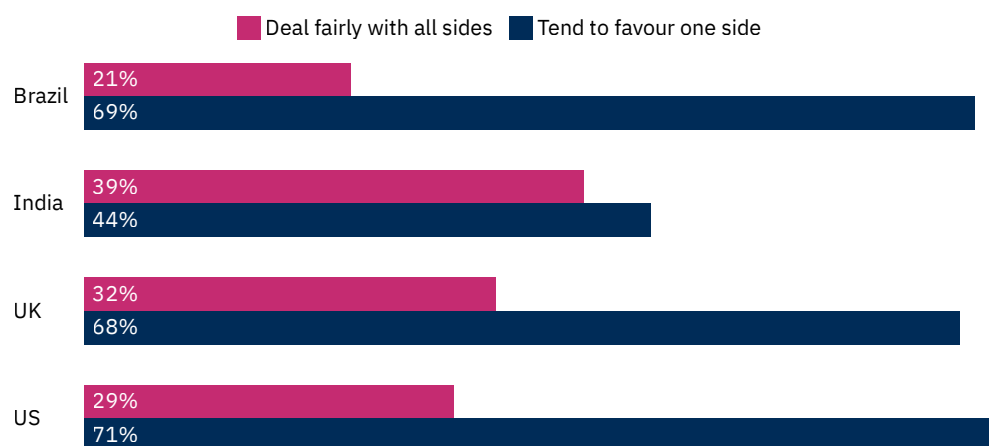
As these results suggest, one major reason for concern over transparency is that many audiences hold frustrations around what they see as news coverage that tends to favour one side. While past research has shown that audiences often say they prefer impartial news (see Vos et al. 2019; Mont’Alverne et al. 2023), they sometimes hold different views about what that means in practice (Swart and Broersma 2022). For this reason we asked a series of questions designed to better understand *how* audiences saw news as inappropriately slanted to one side in order to make sense of how they could interpret transparency efforts through different lenses.

THOSE LEAST TRUSTING TOWARDS NEWS ALSO SAY IT DOES NOT DEAL FAIRLY WITH ALL SIDES

We first asked respondents in a general way whether they thought news organisations ‘deal fairly with all sides’ or ‘tend to favour one side’, adapting a question previously asked by the Pew Research Center solely in the US context (Gottfried et al. 2018). The results are striking. While the levels saying the news favours one side are highest in the US (71%), comparable to the percentage Pew found (68%), the numbers are nearly as high in Brazil (69%) and the UK (68%). Only in India did less than half say the same (44%), but there, too, more saw bias in news than believed the media deals fairly with all sides (39%).

Figure 3.5: Majorities in Brazil, the UK, and the US think news organisations favour one side

Percentage who thinks news organisations deal fairly with all sides or tend to favour one side



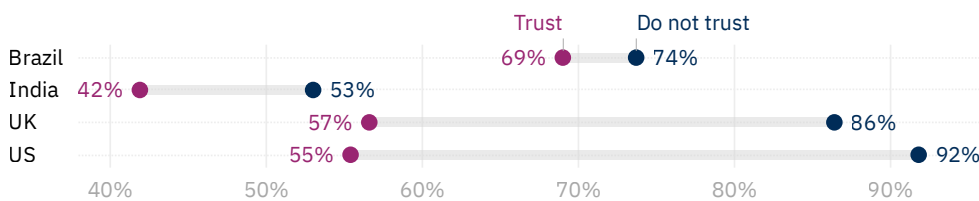
TRANS_IMPAR_CUR. In presenting the news, do you think that news organisations in your country mostly ... *Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: ‘Don’t know’ responses were recorded in Brazil and India but are excluded here.*

¹⁶ One might expect the percentage who believe news organisations ought to be sharing more about their journalists’ political views to be far higher given concerns about bias captured elsewhere in our survey. One explanation may be that by asking about news organisations in general, we are missing some of the nuance in the way some audiences may think about these issues. Among those who see major differences between news organisations, many may want some outlets to disclose more but for others to disclose less.

Views about unfairness in coverage are particularly correlated with levels of trust in news, although more so in the Global North countries than the Global South (Fig. 3.6). Consistently across all four countries, people who did not trust news felt news organisations are biased towards one side. Even in India, a majority of those who say they do not trust information from the news media said they felt news organisations tended to favour one side (53%). At the same time, nearly three-quarters of respondents who say they do not generally trust the news media thought so in Brazil (74%), the UK (86%) and the US (92%). In these latter places, even a majority of those who generally trust news in their countries also said they thought news favoured one side (57% in the UK and 55% in the US).

Figure 3.6: Association between low trust and perceptions that news favours one side are highest in the UK and the US

Percentage who say news organisations in their country tend to favour one side among those who trust versus do not trust news in general



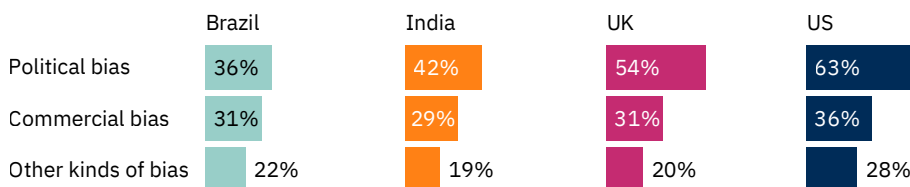
TRANS_IMPACT_CUR. In presenting the news, do you think that news organisations in your country mostly ... TRUST_GEN. Generally speaking, to what extent do you trust, or not trust information from the news media in [Brazil/India/the UK/the US]. Base: Trust/do not trust: Brazil = 796/753, India = 1,365/319, UK = 885/680, US = 975/579. 'Trust' includes those who say they 'trust completely' or 'trust somewhat' whereas 'do not trust' includes those who say they 'do not trust very much' or 'do not trust at all'.

POLITICAL BIAS PARTICULARLY A CONCERN IN THE UK AND THE US

Having established that the public thinks news organisations tend to be one-sided, we centre our attention on what kinds of bias the public perceives them to have. While audiences in the UK and the US were particularly attuned to what they perceive as the political agendas that shape newsroom decision-making and editorial policies, somewhat smaller percentages said the same in Brazil and India, even as large minorities saw one-sidedness in terms of politics there as well. As political and commercial agendas can often be perceived as intertwined, responses on this question were not mutually exclusive; that is, people could say they thought news outlets were biased in all of these ways.

Figure 3.7: Majorities in the UK and the US think news media favour a particular political agenda

Percentage in each country who think news organisations are biased in favour of particular political agendas



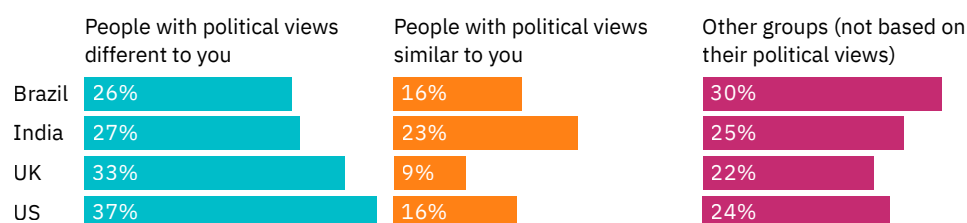
TRANS_IMPACT_HOW. Which, if any, of the following statements best describe how you personally feel about news organisations? They are biased in favour of particular political agendas, they are biased in favour of particular commercial interests (including advertisers), or they are biased in other ways. Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Respondents could select all that apply, 'none of the above', or 'don't know'.

Those who view news organisations as favouring a particular political agenda tend to be most concentrated among those who are themselves most interested in politics. In the UK, for example, 66% of those who say they are ‘extremely’ or ‘very interested’ in politics say they view news as politically biased, whereas 47% say the same among those who are only ‘slightly’ or ‘not at all interested’ in politics. In the US, this gap is slightly larger (70% versus 58%), while similar but smaller divides are seen in Brazil (49% versus 31%) and India (45% versus 39%).¹⁷

Not all concerns about bias, however, are driven by partisans who view the news media as biased against their side. As noted above, a significant minority in all four countries – between one in five or even one-third – also see news as favouring commercial interests or biased in other ways. In fact, when we asked as a follow-up question whether respondents think news favours people with political views different than yours, similar to yours, or favours other groups not based on their political views, audiences were split. While the percentage who see news favouring people with political views different from one’s own was highest in the UK (33%) and the US (37%), in Brazil, more said other groups were the recipients of unduly favourable coverage (30%) rather than bias based on political views, whereas in India responses were roughly similar across the board (Fig. 3.8).

Figure 3.8: People split on who they think bias in news typically favours

Percentage who say news organisations tend to favour people with different political views, similar political views, or other kinds of people



TRANS_IMPACT_POL. Who, if anyone, do you personally feel news organisations tend to favour? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: The two response options about political views (different versus similar) were mutually exclusive, but participants could select either of those responses in addition to the ‘other groups’ category. Excludes those who said ‘none of the above’, ‘don’t know’, and ‘prefer not to say’.

CONCERNS OVER OTHER KINDS OF BIASES OFTEN VARY WITHIN COUNTRIES

To better understand the nature of some of these other concerns about one-sidedness in coverage and how audiences may perceive efforts around transparency differently depending on their distinct points of view, we asked one last follow-up question intended to assess what other kinds of groups in society respondents viewed as being treated unfairly. Doing so helped reveal the extent to which concerns over news media treating groups fairly or unfairly often mirror and reflect existing social cleavages in these countries.

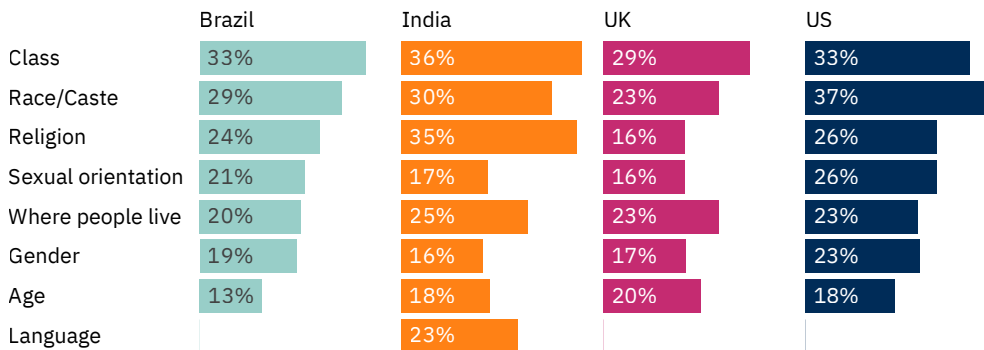
In the aggregate, we found significant minorities expressing concern about other kinds of one-sidedness in coverage (Fig. 3.9). Class was the most frequently cited characteristic in Brazil (33%), India (36%), and the UK (29%), and the second most cited in the US (33%) after race and

¹⁷ Partisan and other political divides are also apparent on this question. In the US, for example, Republican identifiers are more likely to see political bias in news coverage (72%) compared to Democrats (55%), whereas in the UK, Labour voters (57%) are only slightly more likely to say the same compared to Conservatives (54%). In Brazil, those who hold unfavourable views towards Lula are also more likely to see political bias in news (43% versus 32% for those who view Lula favourably). In India, we see the opposite dynamic with respect to those holding favourable views towards Modi; 47% see news as politically biased there versus 38% of those who hold an unfavourable view of Modi.

ethnicity (37%). In India, many also cited religion (35%) and caste (30%) as areas of concern with respect to the way news organisations did not deal fairly with groups.

Figure 3.9: Class and race at the top of concerns about other forms of bias in news coverage

Percentage in each country who think news organisations do not deal fairly with each of the following



TRANS_IMPACT_OTH. Which, if any, of the following characteristics/demographics do you personally think news organisations do not deal fairly with when covering the news? *Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: We only asked about language in India.*

Echoing findings from previous focus groups (see Ross Arguedas et al. 2023), such concerns were often expressed at higher levels among those who see themselves as most affected by biases in how news organisations cover certain communities. For example, Muslims in India were significantly more likely to see news as one-sided when it comes to its coverage of religion (44%) compared to Hindus (35%). Similar concerns were raised by Evangelical Protestants in the US (40%) compared to non-Evangelicals (26%). Concern over race-related biases were also higher among Black respondents in the US (41%) and Brazil (35%) compared to whites (35% and 26%, respectively).

Transparency can be a double-edged sword

Informed by these findings, we conclude this part of the report by considering how audiences may view transparency efforts in different ways depending on their particular perspectives on how news media operate. Whether transparency about reporting practices, journalistic standards, and/or ownership and leadership is a successful strategy for building trust depends on whether the information news organisations are providing audiences offers them reason to be more trusting, or simply reinforces existing scepticism they may hold about the quality of their journalism. Even as most say they welcome efforts towards transparency across these areas, there is also some indication that these efforts can be viewed in divergent ways.

MANY HOLD SUSPICIOUS VIEWS ABOUT NEWS ORGANISATIONS’ WILLINGNESS TO BE TRANSPARENT
 We asked two questions regarding perceptions around how willing people think news organisations are to be transparent. Specifically, these questions pertained to newsroom corrections policies. Such policies are often cited as a prime example of how news organisations show their commitment to transparency as a means of building trust.¹⁸ We asked first about perceptions around whether most news organisations were willing to admit their mistakes,

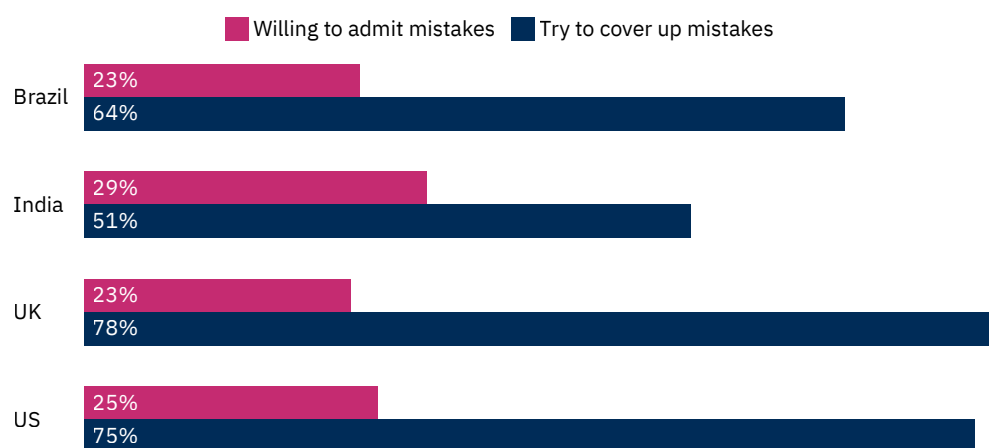
¹⁸ For more scholarship on this, see Toff et al. (2021b), Henke et al. (2022), and Silverman (2013).

versus whether most tried to cover up inaccuracies in their reporting. Second, we asked whether seeing such corrections was generally perceived as evidence of a commitment to journalistic integrity or instead an example of news outlets being ‘sloppy or careless’.

Overall, we find the public holds quite negative views about whether news organisations are willing to admit their mistakes (Fig. 3.10). Even in India, where levels of trust tend to be significantly more positive elsewhere in our survey, a majority (51%) said they thought news outlets tried to cover up their mistakes. Only a quarter of the public in any of the four countries say they think news organisations are committed to being transparent about their errors.¹⁹

Figure 3.10: Less than a third of respondents think news organisations are willing to admit their mistakes

Percentage who believe news organisations are willing to admit versus try to cover up their mistakes



TRANS_CXNS. Thinking about most news today, which statement comes closest to your view? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses, which were recorded in Brazil and India.

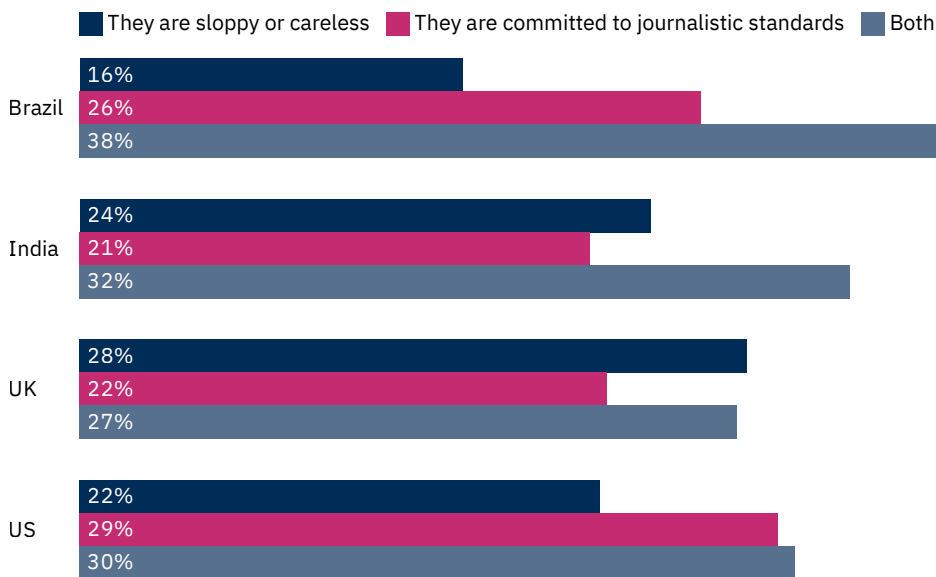
MANY DIVIDED AROUND HOW TO INTERPRET NEWSROOM CORRECTIONS

Perceptions around what it means to see a news outlet correct the record often varied, however. While most saw such corrections as both evidence of sloppy and careless journalism and evidence of a commitment to journalistic standards, only one in three saw it generally as the latter in the US (29%) and even fewer said the same in Brazil (26%), the UK (22%), and India (21%) (Fig. 3.11). The British public was the most likely to view it exclusively as a sign of sloppiness (28%).

¹⁹ When we asked this same question in 2021 (Toff et al. 2021b), slightly fewer said they thought news organisations try to cover up their mistakes in the UK (64%) and the US (59%), although levels were relatively higher in Brazil (78%) and India (55%). Those results are not directly comparable, however, as the surveys were fielded by a different set of survey providers using an online sample in India and a telephone-based method in Brazil.

Figure 3.11: Many express ambivalence when it comes to corrections

Percentages who see corrections as evidence that news organisations are sloppy, committed to journalistic standards, or both



TRANS_CXNS_VIEW. Thinking about news organisations generally, which of the following best describes your view when news organisations admit their mistakes? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who say 'neither' or 'don't know'.

Such cynical views about the news media were particularly correlated with trust in news in some countries (Fig. 3.12). In the UK and the US, audiences who say they do not trust information in the news media in general were more than twice as likely to say they thought news organisations try to cover up their mistakes (40% versus 19% in the UK; 38% versus 14% in the US). In Brazil and India we saw little evidence of this divide at all, which suggests that transparency efforts along these lines may not be as relevant in these countries as elsewhere.

Taken together, these results offer a nuanced picture of how the publics in these countries think about news organisations' efforts around transparency and disclosure. Such initiatives are overwhelmingly perceived positively by the public – at least in the abstract – although they can also be interpreted in more negative ways in cases where the public is highly sceptical of the underlying agendas that may be motivating these efforts. At the country level, respondents in India appear most receptive to transparency as a trust-building strategy, whereas Brazilians tend to express the most pessimistic or even cynical views about whether such efforts will improve their sense of trust. We also find important differences within these countries around their perceptions of the political, commercial, and other agendas that may underlie why news organisations operate in the ways that they do. These perceptions were often specific to broader social cleavages in these societies. In general, widespread concerns about newsroom biases underscore both the need for more transparency around the processes used in reporting the news but also areas where the public often holds deep-seated preconceptions about the tendencies of journalists to favour certain groups, which threatens to limit the effectiveness of any transparency intervention. One area where we do see more consensus is around the public's desire for more disclosure about the ownership, management, leadership, and funding of news media. We focus on these kinds of structural factors in greater detail in the next chapter.

4. Building Trust Through Focusing on Management, Ownership, and Staffing

In this chapter, we summarise results for a third set of questions we asked pertaining to the way news organisations are managed, their ownership, leadership, and diversity among the journalists they employ. Our focus on these concerns, and the wording of many of these questions, stems directly from sentiments we heard expressed in a report we published earlier this year based on focus groups we convened with historically marginalised and underserved communities in each of these countries (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023), who often expressed a desire that news organisations be led by and hire journalists who share backgrounds similar to theirs.²⁰

We begin this chapter by summarising how the public thinks about newsroom hierarchies and the degree to which audiences perceive journalists as being able to work independently versus being forced to carry out their managers' or owners' agendas. Such ideas about how news organisations work may be rooted in larger ideas people hold about journalism and the media, since few have extensive opportunities to understand the way news organisations operate. Nonetheless, in an echo of our findings in the previous chapter, many view those agendas warily as beholden to commercial or political interests. Here we find that audiences tend to presume that individual journalists have little leeway to operate on their own, placing the blame for deficiencies in news coverage especially on those higher up the management chain and raising particular concern about how news outlets are funded and operated. Next, we turn our focus to questions around how well audiences believe newsroom staffing represents the communities they seek to serve, parsing how different segments of the public prioritise different aspects of diversity. While we find variation both across and within countries in this regard, encouragingly, we find few examples of efforts to diversify newsrooms that are viewed negatively. While political and economic diversity are often ranked highest, across most areas of diversity audiences say news organisations that prioritise achieving more representative staffing levels are likely to gain their trust, not lose it.

Audiences tend to see ulterior motives behind how news outlets operate

In this third part of the survey questionnaire, we asked respondents about the way they believe most news organisations are managed. Specifically, we asked about the subject of journalistic independence: whether most journalists are free to choose what topics to cover, what to report on, and how to frame stories. This issue goes hand-in-hand with much more negative attitudes many held about the owners and leaders, who many perceived as harbouring ulterior motives when it came to the way they steered coverage.

FEW BELIEVE NEWS ORGANISATIONS PUT THE PUBLIC'S INTERESTS FIRST

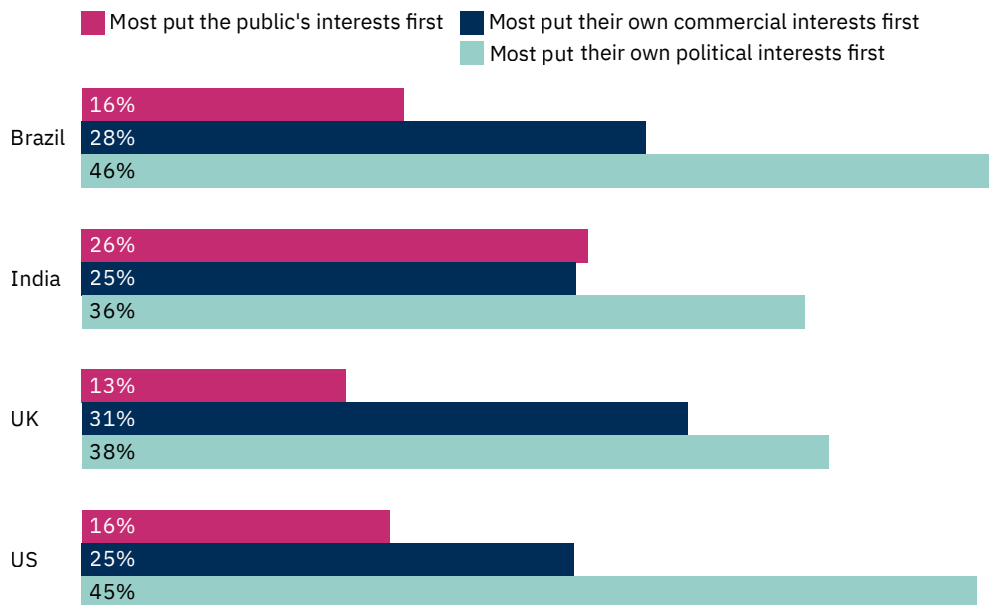
When we asked people whether they thought most news organisations in their country put the

²⁰ The specific concerns raised during these sessions varied to some degree by country in ways that aligned with distinct social identities we focused on in each place. British participants, for example, focused more heavily on disparities in economic class; lower caste and Muslim Indians regretted having no contact with journalists coming from similar ethnic and religious backgrounds.

public's interests first – or instead put political or commercial interests ahead – we found quite negative attitudes in all four countries (Fig. 4.1). Very few in Brazil (16%), the UK (13%), or the US (16%) saw most news outlets as committed to serving the public's interests. Even in India, where the news industry tends to be held in higher esteem by the public, rightly or wrongly, only a quarter shared similarly positive views (26%). Political agendas ranked highest, with the largest percentages in all four countries saying this came closest to their view, ranging from 36% in India to 46% in Brazil.

Figure 4.1: Most think news organisations put their interests ahead of the public's

Percentages who think news organisations put the public's interest first versus their own commercial or political interests



MGMT_INDYORG. And which of the following comes closest to your view of most news organisations in your country? *Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who say 'don't know'.*

To be sure, within countries, there is also some variation in the degree to which audiences ascribe political motives to the way news organisations operate and whose interests they tend to serve. In Brazil, for example, those who held a unfavourable view towards President Lula were somewhat more likely to say they thought news outlets put their political agendas first (51% compared to 44% among those who held a favourable view towards the current president). In India and the UK these kinds of political divides on this question were smaller; however, in the US, where partisan polarisation is far more apparent, more than six in ten self-identified Republicans (63%) said the same compared to just one-third of Democrats (34%).

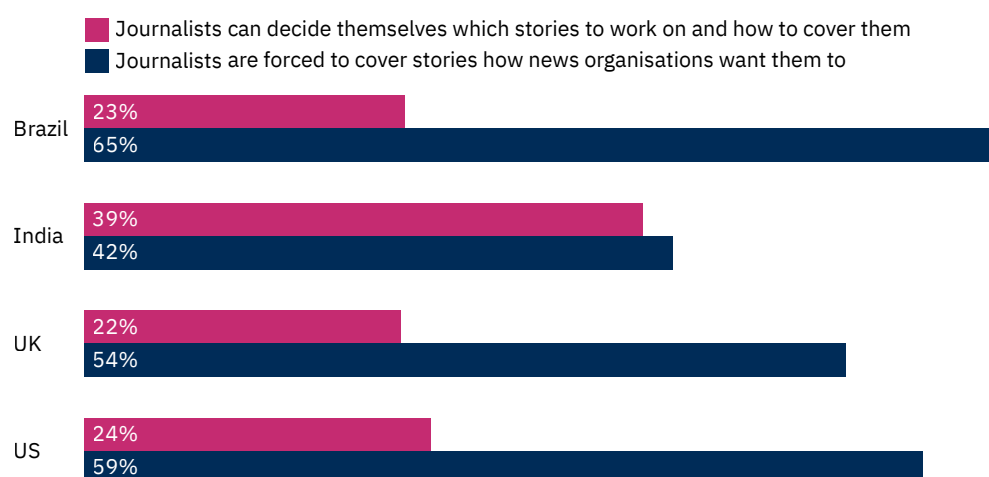
MAJORITIES SAY INDIVIDUAL JOURNALISTS HAVE LITTLE PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY, EXCEPT IN INDIA

Having established public perceptions of the news media as an institution generally not operating in the interests of the public, we now turn our attention to attitudes towards individual journalists. One of the explanations we often heard expressed among our previous focus group participants (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023) was that a lack of editorial independence often prevented individual journalists from covering underserved communities more fairly, more thoughtfully, and more extensively. For this reason, we asked specifically about

perceptions around journalistic independence more generally and found that, overwhelmingly, most people tend to perceive journalists in this way (Fig. 4.2). Indeed, nearly two-thirds of Brazilians (65%) said they feel journalists are forced to cover news stories in the way news organisations want them to. In the UK and the US, 54% and 59% of respondents, respectively, said the same.

Figure 4.2: Majorities think news organisations force journalists to cover stories in a particular way

Percentage who think journalists can make up their own minds about what to cover versus are forced to cover stories as news organisations want them to



MGMT_INDYJOUR. Which of the following comes closest to your view of most journalists in your country? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who say 'don't know'.

One positive interpretation of these findings is they suggest that most differentiate at least to some degree between individual journalists and the organisations they work for, blaming the latter for more deficiencies in news coverage than the former. Those who said they thought journalists were 'forced to cover stories in whatever way news organisations want them to' tended to be heavily concentrated among those who also perceive news outlets as motivated by political or commercial agendas. This was seen most acutely in the UK and the US, where more than six in ten of those who thought news organisations were driven by either of these motives saw a lack of journalistic independence more generally. A much smaller percentage said the same among those who believed news organisations put the public's interests first (38% in the UK and 46% in the US). Similar dynamics were apparent in Brazil and India, but by smaller margins.

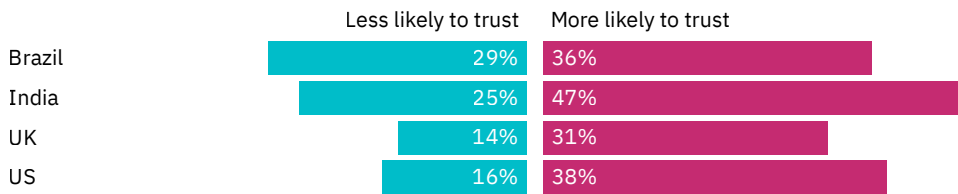
PERSISTENT CONCERNS OVER FUNDING AND OWNERSHIP

A perceived lack of autonomy in newsrooms among the journalistic rank and file combined with strong preconceptions about ulterior motives suggests that many distrusting audiences may be particularly concerned about the ownership and funding of news organisations – and by extension how they are led at the top. Indeed, we find evidence of just that. When asked about different ways in which news organisations might be financially supported and whether such funding structures are more or less likely to engender trust, we find that audiences tend to be somewhat wary of many of these common sources of monetary support (Fig. 4.3).

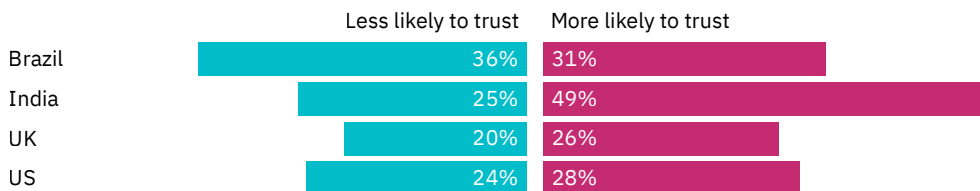
Figure 4.3: Subscriptions are the funding method most say would make them more likely to trust

Percentage who say they are more or less likely to trust news organisations funded in different ways

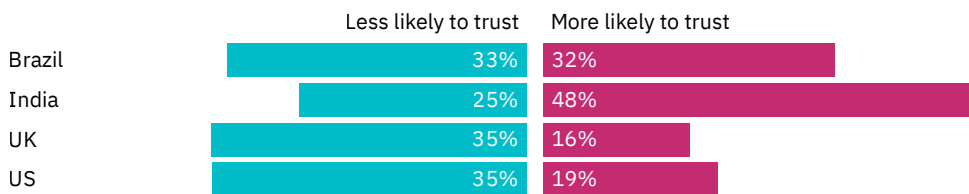
Subscriptions paid for by readers, listeners, or viewers



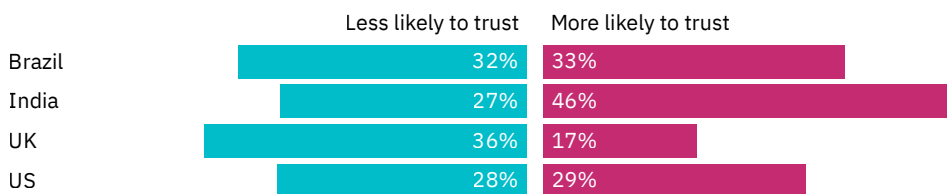
Taxes or fees the public pays the government



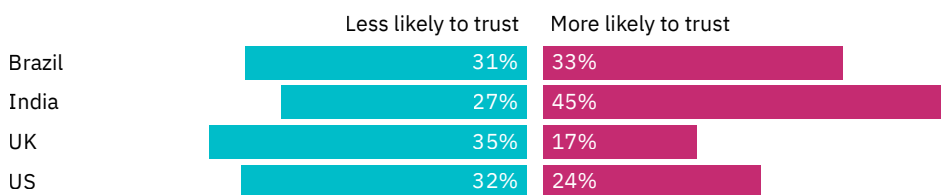
Advertising from private companies



Donations from individual supporters



Individual entrepreneurs or other business people



MGMT_OWNERSHIP_TRUST. News organisations are often funded in different ways. For each of the following, are you more or less likely to trust news organisations that get funding from ...? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: 'Less likely to trust' includes those who say they are 'much' or 'somewhat less likely to trust', whereas 'more likely to trust' includes those who say they are 'much' or 'somewhat more likely to trust'. Excludes those who say 'neither more nor less likely to trust' or 'don't know'.

We find some important variation between countries that may reflect differences in these media environments. In India, for example, taxes or fees paid by the government is viewed most favourably as most likely to increase trust (49%), although the public was almost equally willing to trust news organisations funded by advertising (48%), individual subscriptions (47%), donations (46%), or support from individual entrepreneurs or businesspeople (45%). Only a quarter of the public in India says any of these sources of funding is likely to reduce how much they trust any individual news outlet. In the UK, on the other hand, advertising, donations,

and support from individual entrepreneurs are all net negatives when it comes to trust, with approximately 35% saying each is likely to decrease their trust, compared to 17% saying the opposite. In Brazil, audiences were generally more pessimistic about any of these sources of financial support, with subscriptions achieving a slight edge over other forms of funding (36% said it would be likely to increase their trust). Americans held more varied views, with advertising from private companies generating the most negative attitudes (35% said it would decrease their trust, compared to 19% who said it was likely to increase it) and subscriptions the most positive (38% said it would increase it, compared to 16% who said it would decrease it).

To some extent, these patterns are conditional on the degree to which audiences differentiate between news sources within their countries. After all, as we showed in Chapter 1 of this report, a non-trivial proportion of the public does not see major or minor differences between news organisations in their countries. Those who do not tend to be much less likely to say any of these funding models would be likely to increase their sense of trust. For example, among those who see major or minor differences between news organisations in their countries, they were considerably more likely to say that funding news outlets through subscriptions would be likely to increase their trust (39% in Brazil, 48% in India, 37% in the UK, and 41% in the US) compared to those who see no differences between outlets (35% in Brazil, 42% in India, 22% in the UK, and 27% in the US). In other words, increasing trust by highlighting funding models that are viewed more favourably by the public may depend at least in part on audiences recognising differences between news outlets in this regard.

DIVERSITY IN NEWSROOMS HIGHLY RELEVANT TO SOME, LESS SO TO OTHERS

In addition to the issues we have already highlighted in this chapter around management and funding of news organisations, we also asked a series of questions designed to delve into the way the public thinks about efforts to improve diversity in the composition of newsroom staff across these four countries. Specifically, we examined five main areas of diversity – areas that tended to come up most often in our earlier research (see, for example, Ross Arguedas et al. 2023). These include: (a) diversity around wealth, economic, and social class; (b) political diversity; (c) racial and ethnic diversity, including caste diversity in India; (d) diversity along gender lines; and (e) geographic or regional diversity.²¹

We asked both about how important each of these areas of diversity in hiring is to respondents personally, as well as how well they perceive news organisations to be doing currently in terms of their existing staffing levels. These public perceptions may or may not accurately reflect the actual composition of newsrooms; they are perceptions which are likely rooted as much in impressions and ideas people hold about journalists as in any direct experiences individuals may have had encountering journalists in their countries. We also ask more specifically about diversity in relation to trust: whether news organisations that focus on increasing diversity in each of these areas is likely to increase trust among respondents – or decrease it. Although we suspected, based on some previous qualitative findings, that some segments of the public, perhaps even those who are least trusting towards news, might have a negative reaction to efforts to improve diversity in some of these areas, we find that, in general, most audiences welcome efforts across all of these areas, albeit with some differences within and across countries.

²¹ At various points we also asked about other areas of diversity, including sexual orientation and diversity in the languages people speak, but we focus less on these here.

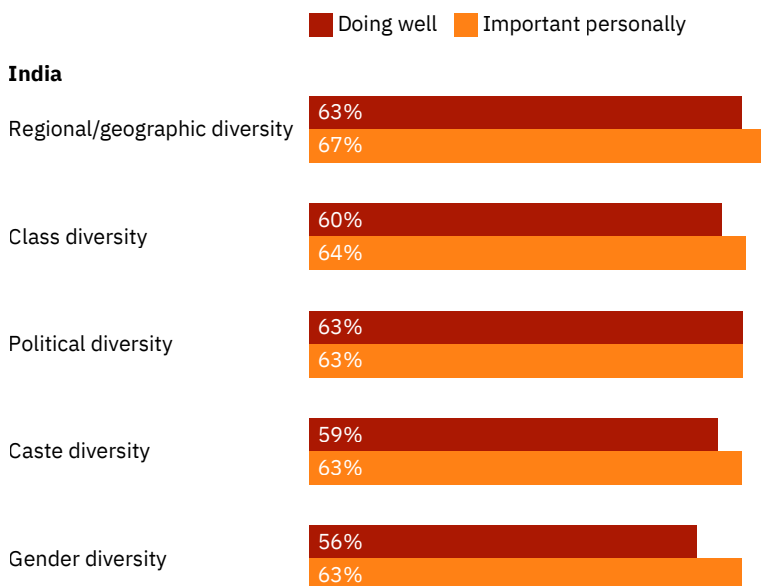
A TEPID ENDORSEMENT OF PERFORMANCE AROUND DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Overall, while Indian respondents are more positive about the current performance of news organisations when it comes to hiring diverse staff, elsewhere we find relatively poor evaluations of these efforts, even as specifics vary from country to country. These differing patterns have led us to focus in this section on presenting results country by country in order to better capture variation in the way the public answered these questions in each of these media environments. We should note, too, that in summarising survey results at the country level, we have necessarily aggregated across the entire populations in each of these countries, which flattens out and reduces often wide differences within countries among minority communities who do not always share the outlook of wider majorities.

Results on these questions are most distinct from the other three countries in India, where majorities say they are largely satisfied with all five forms of newsroom diversity we asked about. Regional and/or geographic diversity, which edged out other areas of diversity in terms of personal importance, ranked highest in terms of evaluations of current performance, with 63% saying they thought news organisations were doing ‘very’ or ‘fairly well’. Gender diversity elicited the lowest relative evaluations, with 56% saying they thought the same and one-third saying ‘not very’ or ‘not at all well’ (32%). Perceptions of representation in newsrooms along both lines of caste and class – phrased as diversity among those from less wealthy or privileged backgrounds – were also relatively lower compared to the other categories.

Figure 4.4: Almost as many say news organisations are doing well on diversity in India as say it is important to them personally

Percentages who think news organisations are doing ‘very’ or ‘fairly well’ when it comes to different kinds of representation among journalists and how important each is personally to respondents

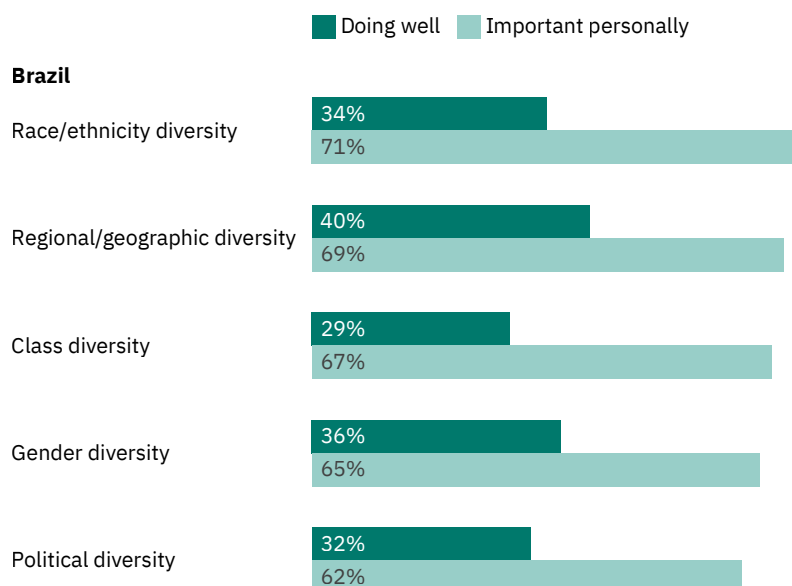


MGMT_DEI_JOB. In your opinion, how well, if at all, do you think news organisations in your country are doing when it comes to representation amongst journalists in each of the following? **MGMT_DEI_IMPT.** Thinking about diversity in news organisations and the extent to which different groups may be represented amongst journalists. How important, or not important, is it to you personally that news organisations in your country focus on each of the following? *Base: India = 2,050. Note: ‘Doing well’ includes those who say ‘very’ and ‘fairly well’. ‘Important personally’ includes those who say each kind of representation is ‘very’ or ‘somewhat important’ to them.*

In Brazil, on the other hand, we find a relatively wide gulf between the level of personal importance ascribed to each of these areas of diversity in newsrooms and public perceptions of current levels of representation among most journalists. Particular concern is reserved for working-class representation, where just 29% say they believe news organisations are doing well on this front. Evaluations of current representation at the regional or geographic level ranks best, but only marginally, with 40% saying they think news outlets are generally doing well compared to 48% who say not well – itself an unenthusiastic endorsement. In terms of personal importance to Brazilian audiences across these five areas of diversity, regional and geographic representation ranked second highest, with 69% saying it is ‘somewhat’ or ‘very important’ to respondents personally, outpaced only by the percentage who said the same about racial and ethnic diversity in newsrooms (71%).

Figure 4.5: Racial diversity most important in Brazil, but representation along class lines seen as weakest

Percentages who think news organisations are doing well when it comes to different kinds of representation among journalists and how important each is personally to respondents

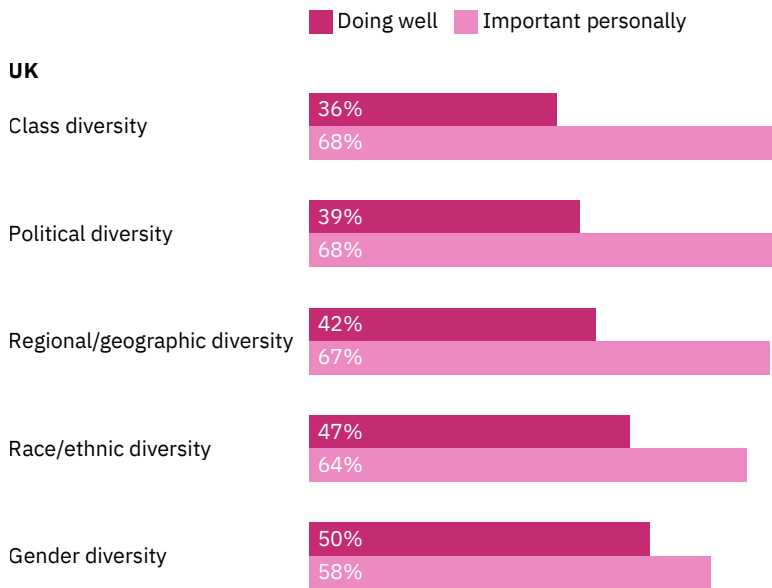


MGMT_DEI_JOB. In your opinion, how well, if at all, do you think news organisations in your country are doing when it comes to representation amongst journalists in each of the following? **MGMT_DEI_IMPT.** Thinking about diversity in news organisations and the extent to which different groups may be represented amongst journalists. How important, or not important, is it to you personally that news organisations in your country focus on each of the following? Base: Brazil = 2,000. Note: ‘Doing well’ includes those who say ‘very’ and ‘fairly well’. ‘Important personally’ includes those who say each kind of representation is ‘very’ or ‘somewhat important’ to them.

In the UK, we find a consistent inverse relationship between how much importance audiences assign to each area of newsroom diversity and their evaluations of current performance. British respondents were least positive about diversity in terms of economic class, with only slightly higher than one-third (36%) saying they thought news organisations were doing well in terms of representation of journalists from less wealthy backgrounds. The largest share of the public in the UK also said this area of diversity was important to them personally (68%), albeit followed closely by political diversity and regional diversity.

Figure 4.6: Class and political diversity most important in the UK, but fewest say news organisations doing well

Percentages who think news organisations are doing well when it comes to different kinds of representation among journalists and how important each is personally to respondents

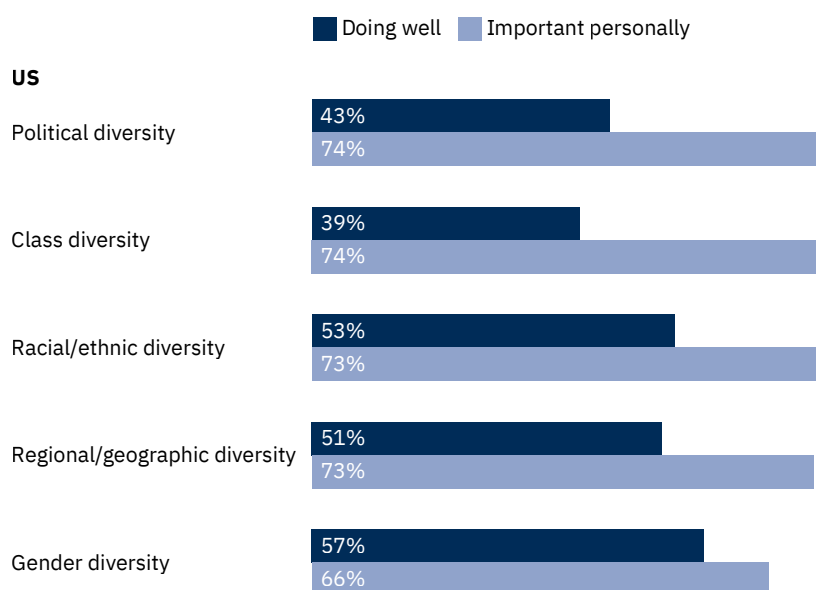


MGMT_DEI_JOB. In your opinion, how well, if at all, do you think news organisations in your country are doing when it comes to representation amongst journalists in each of the following? **MGMT_DEI_IMPT.** Thinking about diversity in news organisations and the extent to which different groups may be represented amongst journalists. How important, or not important, is it to you personally that news organisations in your country focus on each of the following? Base: UK = 2,179. Note: 'Doing well' includes those who say 'very' and 'fairly well'. 'Important personally' includes those who say each kind of representation is 'very' or 'somewhat important' to them.

Finally, results in the US look most similar to the UK, with the exception of political diversity, which ranked slightly higher relative to other areas; three-quarters of the American public deemed it personally important (74%). This is also an area where US audiences judge news organisations to be doing the least well in terms of current representation in newsrooms, with 43% saying they think news outlets are doing so, second only to concern about class representation (39%).

Figure 4.7: Political and class diversity also rank lowest in the US but most important to people personally

Percentages who think news organisations are doing well when it comes to different kinds of representation among journalists and how important each is personally to respondents



MGMT_DEI_JOB. In your opinion, how well, if at all, do you think news organisations in your country are doing when it comes to representation amongst journalists in each of the following? **MGMT_DEI_IMPT.** Thinking about diversity in news organisations and the extent to which different groups may be represented amongst journalists. How important, or not important, is it to you personally that news organisations in your country focus on each of the following? *Base: US = 2,000. Note: 'Doing well' includes those who say 'very' and 'fairly well'. 'Important personally' includes those who say each kind of representation is 'very' or 'somewhat important' to them.*

Overall, at least in three of the four countries, we see clear patterns of the public negatively judging the performance of newsrooms in their efforts to achieve diverse representation. Concerns over working-class representation are particularly high in the Global North countries, whereas geographic diversity tends to be viewed as important by a wider range of publics in the Global South.

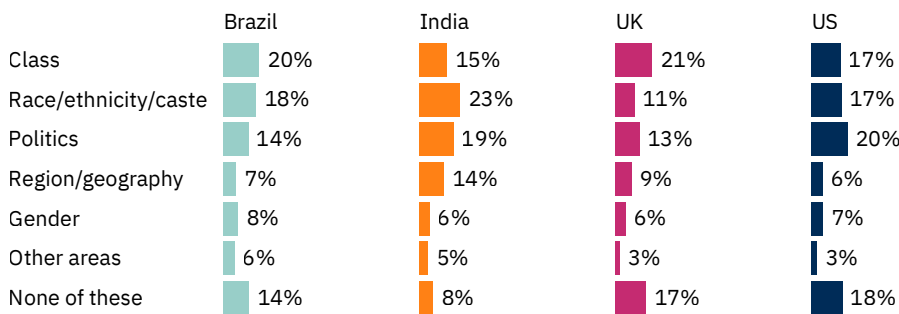
How news organisations choose to use this information is not altogether straightforward – a topic we return to in our concluding chapter. After all, focusing on improving diversity in some of these areas – for example political diversity – can also backfire with audiences who perceive it as pandering, as some did in our previous focus groups (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023), or as an abandonment of core values around impartiality, which audiences also think is important (see Mont'Alverne et al. 2023).

Indeed, when we asked respondents to state which among these different areas they would like to see news organisations prioritise, forcing people to select a single area, what we found was not only little consensus but also revealing differences across the four countries. Brazilians and Britons say they are most concerned about improvement along lines of economic class (20% and 21%, respectively). Almost a quarter of Indians, on the other hand, would like to see a more diverse newsroom along caste lines. Meanwhile, one in five Americans, on the other hand,

say they prefer newsrooms to prioritise being more politically diverse, more than any other representation category in that country. At the same time, only a small percentage in each country said they felt news organisations did not need to prioritise improving representation amongst journalists in any area.

Figure 4.8: Class, race/caste, and politics are main areas where audiences would prioritise diversity efforts

Percentage who say news organisations should prioritise fixing or improving representation among journalists along each of the following lines



MGMT_DEI_CHG. Thinking about what news organisations should prioritise trying to fix or improve when it comes to representation of different groups among journalists, which of the following, if any, is the single most important area news organisations should address? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Those who selected 'news organisations do not need to prioritise improving representation among journalists' have been categorised as 'none of these', and those who say 'don't know' have been excluded from the figure.

THOSE WITH MOST AT STAKE WITH REGARD TO DIVERSITY OFTEN EVALUATE CURRENT EFFORTS MOST POORLY

These overall differences, however, mask some important areas of concern among specific subgroups. After all, not all people are equally concerned about each of these areas of diversity; they do not experience harmful inaccuracies in coverage the same ways, and they do not all have the same things at stake – both points that focus groups participants previously underscored to us (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023).

For this reason, we sought to break down responses on these questions and examine differences within the subpopulations of each of these countries. In so doing, we often found that certain groups – especially those potentially most affected by efforts to diversify newsrooms – tended to view current efforts most negatively. For example, in all four countries women were less likely to say they thought news organisations currently did well in hiring diverse staff along gender lines. The largest gender gap was found in the US, where men were significantly more likely to evaluate news media as doing well (63% compared to 52% of women). Similar gaps were seen elsewhere but by smaller margins of 6 percentage points in Brazil (39% of men versus 33% of women), 5 percentage points in the UK (52% of men versus 47% of women), and just 3 percentage points in India (58% of men versus 55% of women). Larger divisions were seen around evaluations of caste diversity in newsrooms in India; 63% of those who identified as General/Upper Caste said they thought news organisations did well in this area, compared to

58% of those identifying as Other Backward Classes and 53% of those from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.²²

Evaluations of the current performance of news organisations on political diversity also garnered differing views within each of these four countries. In the US, Democrats were more likely to say they thought news outlets were doing well in this regard (58% compared to 36% of Republicans).²³ Likewise, a similar, albeit smaller, split was seen in the UK, where 45% of Labour voters said they thought news organisations were doing well compared to 52% of Conservatives. In Brazil, this divide was smaller (35% of those with unfavourable attitudes towards Bolsonaro evaluated news media as doing well with respect to political diversity versus 30% of those with favourable views towards the former president). In India, evaluations on this question did not significantly differ according to respondents' political orientations.

THE LINK BETWEEN NEWSROOM DIVERSITY AND TRUST

Lastly, our final question in this area involved asking respondents directly about whether news organisations taking steps to focus on improving diversity in their newsrooms in each of these areas might increase or decrease their own personal sense of trust. As elsewhere in our survey, this question was phrased to allow for the possibility of backfire effects among some audiences, who may perceive such initiatives negatively. In general, we found overwhelmingly that audiences welcomed such efforts and saw them as likely to increase their trust (Fig. 4.9).

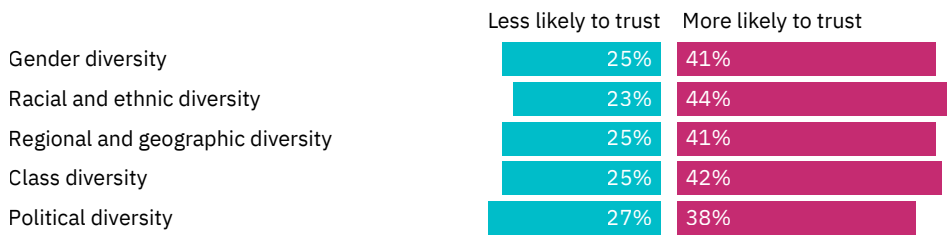
²² One exception to this pattern involved race. Black respondents in the US and Brazil, for example, did not evaluate current performance of the news media on newsroom racial or ethnic diversity significantly differently than white respondents, which may reflect the complexities around measuring such attitudes through survey responses. For example, when asked a follow-up question about whether respondents wanted to see more journalists from racial or ethnic backgrounds different or similar to their own, 37% of white respondents in Brazil who said news organisations were not doing well at racial or ethnic diversity said they wanted to see more journalists similar to them. In the US, a quarter of white respondents (26%) who rated racial diversity in newsrooms poorly said they wanted to see more journalists with backgrounds similar to their own, not fewer.

²³ When those who rated news media poorly on political diversity were asked whether they wanted to see more journalists with political views similar or different than their own, pluralities of both groups said they wanted to see more journalists with views similar to their own: 46% of Democrats and 64% of Republicans.

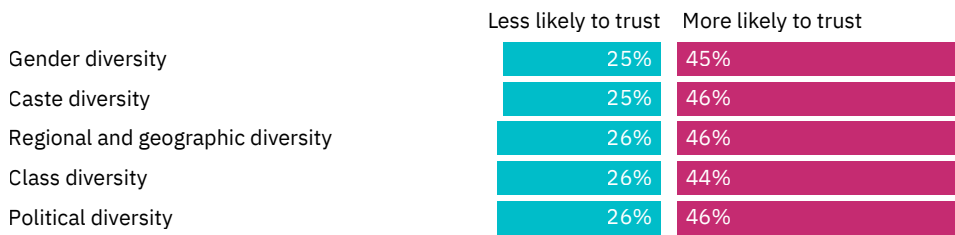
Figure 4.9: Many say they are more likely to trust news organisations focusing on diverse representation across multiple lines

Percentage who say they are more or less likely to trust news organisations that focus on having a diverse representation of journalists in the following ways

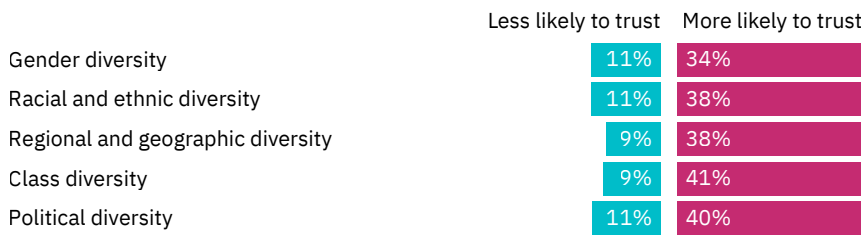
Brazil



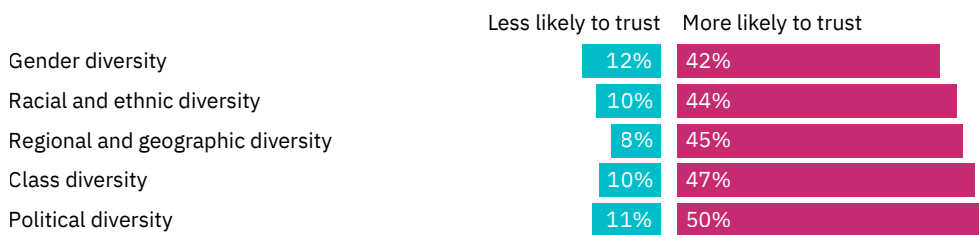
India



UK



US



MGMT_DEI_TRUST. Are you more or less likely to trust news organisations that focus on having a diverse representation of journalists in any of the following ways? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: ‘Less likely to trust’ includes those who say they are ‘much less’ or ‘somewhat less likely to trust’, whereas ‘more likely to trust’ includes those who say they are ‘much more’ or ‘somewhat more likely to trust’. Excludes those who say ‘neither more nor less likely to trust’ or ‘don’t know’.

While it is certainly possible that in practice such efforts could have backfire effects when involving specific organisations conducting specific initiatives, at least in the abstract audiences said they generally welcomed such efforts. Brazilian and Indian respondents were relatively more sceptical compared to elsewhere, with a quarter of the populations in each of these countries expressing a negative view about diversity initiatives in all of these areas and indicating that they might be less trusting in response to such efforts by news outlets. But by a wide margin people were more likely to view such efforts favourably.

Political diversity in the US followed by diversity along economic class lines garnered some of the highest percentages saying efforts to focus on having a diverse representation of journalists along these lines would be likely to increase trust. In Brazil, racial and ethnic diversity edged out other categories, but only slightly. More generally, the differences in assessments about the impact of these efforts across these areas tended to be small. While individually many may vary in how much personal importance they ascribe to each of these areas, aggregated together the likely impact on audience trust overall is similarly positive across the board.²⁴

In summary, we have shown in this chapter that matters involving management, leadership, and staffing at news organisations do appear linked to the public's views about whether they feel they can trust news organisations. Audiences are particularly concerned about managers and owners constraining journalistic independence and the integrity with which reporters conduct themselves. The public also expresses some concern over the ways in which news outlets are funded, generally showing a small proclivity towards subscription-based funding models over alternatives. Audiences also have somewhat different concerns and priorities when it comes to diversity in newsrooms both within and across countries, often prioritising diversity in terms of political and economic class, with others placing greater emphasis on matters of race, caste, or regional diversity. Despite these differences, initiatives around improving newsroom diversity are generally viewed positively by the public overall, with few saying they are likely to be less trusting of news organisations that make efforts to achieve more representative newsrooms across all of these areas.

²⁴ Aggregation can also smooth out some of the key differences within these countries' populations. For example, while most said news organisations focusing on racial or ethnic diversity in the US was likely to increase their trust, a third of Black Americans (34%) said they were 'much more likely' to trust news outlets that did this, compared to just 13% of white Americans.

5. Building Trust Through Deeper Engagement with the Public

A growing number of news organisations have turned to approaches often lumped together under the umbrella of so-called ‘engaged journalism’ practices as a strategy for building trust. Such efforts have featured prominently in recent journalism scholarship (see, for example, Belair-Gagnon et al. 2019; Robinson 2023; Wenzel 2020; Zahay et al. 2021). While these types of initiatives sometimes overlap with social media engagement, many news organisations also target communities through offline strategies, including events and other initiatives designed to maintain a community presence and connection.

In this chapter we examine audience attitudes about newsroom initiatives designed to more deeply and meaningfully engage with the public, including efforts to gather ideas and respond to feedback. While we acknowledge that engagement initiatives by news organisations vary within and across countries, in our previous research (Ross Arguedas et al. 2023; Toff et al. 2021b), we found that few people say that they have had many prior experiences or contact with journalists at all, so in our survey we asked broadly about interest in and attitudes to such efforts, and to what extent these initiatives are generally viewed as being likely to engender trust.

We begin by looking at perceptions of current levels of engagement activities and preferences around and interest in participating in such initiatives. Then, in the second half of this chapter, we focus on examining whether audiences say they are more or less likely to trust news organisations that seek to engage more extensively with audiences in this manner.

We find that overall the public has a somewhat mixed view of current engagement efforts – India being an exception where audiences once again are generally more positive. Still, a plurality of people in all four countries have a positive evaluation of current engagement efforts. Although many say they are interested in reciprocating in such initiatives, audiences who are least interested in news are, predictably, less interested in participating in engagement initiatives. This is especially true in the UK and Brazil, where audiences are somewhat less interested in engagement efforts in general. That said, we do find reasons for optimism around these kinds of initiatives, as the public in all four countries say they are likely to increase their trust in response to news organisations initiating engagement efforts. This is especially the case among those who already have a trusting and engaged relationship with the press, which suggests if using these approaches it may be far easier to deepen trust among the already trusting than cultivate trust where it is most lacking. That said, many say they appreciate the idea of news outlets taking these steps regardless of whether they themselves personally have the time or inclination to engage back.

Engagement welcomed but many personally uninterested in reciprocating

We specifically asked about three kinds of current engagement efforts that some news organisations have adopted as strategies to cultivate greater trust with the public: those that

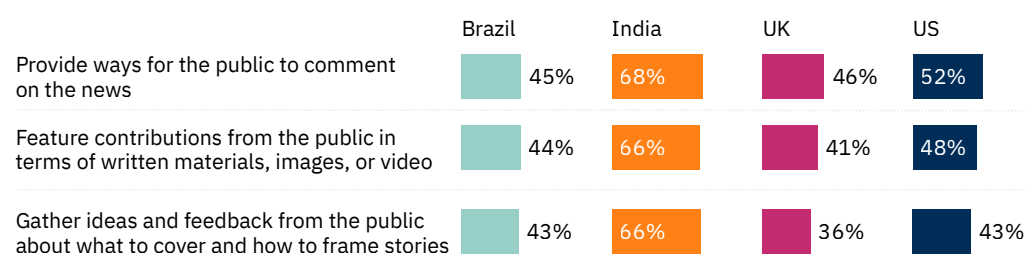
involve actively soliciting ideas and feedback from audiences about what to cover and how to frame stories; those that involve featuring contributions from the public in writing or other user-generated content, sometimes but not exclusively under the banner of ‘citizen journalism’ (Robinson and DeShano 2011); and third, providing other ways for the public to make their voices heard in the public square through comments on the news, whether online (Coe et al. 2014; Tandoc and Ferucci 2017; Wolfgang 2016) or through other offline mechanisms (Lawrence et al. 2018; Lewis et al. 2014). We also asked people about their own interest in participating in engagement activities and found many personally hesitant, even as the idea that news organisations were taking such steps was relatively appealing.

EVALUATIONS OF CURRENT ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS ARE MIXED, BUT HIGHEST IN INDIA

In general, we find the public divided in their responses across these three areas (Fig. 5.1). In Brazil, a plurality held more negative than positive views about current engagement efforts across the board, whereas in India the public was relatively more uniformly positive, with approximately two-thirds saying they felt news organisations performed ‘fairly well’ or ‘very well’ on these three types of efforts. British audiences held the news media in particularly low esteem when it comes to gathering ideas and feedback from the public; however, as in the other three countries, they were more enthusiastic on average about how well news organisations provided ways to comment on the news compared to gathering ideas and feedback or featuring contributions from the public.

Figure 5.1: Less favourable perceptions of news engagement efforts in Brazil and the UK

Percentage in each country who think news organisations are doing ‘very’ or ‘fairly well’ at each of the following engagement efforts



ENGMT_CUR. For each of the following, how well, if at all, do you think most news organisations in your country do when it comes to how they ... Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000.

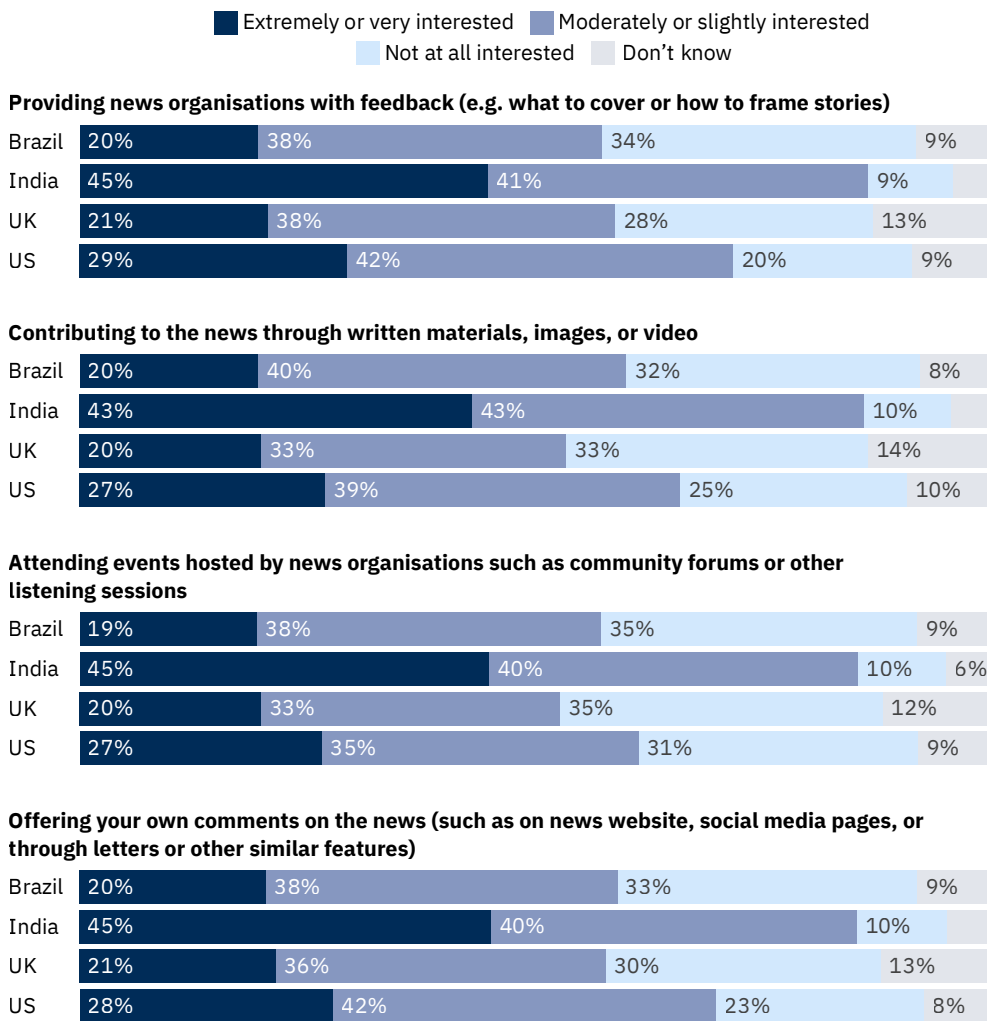
PERSONAL INTEREST IN ENGAGEMENT IS MODEST, ESPECIALLY AMONG THOSE LEAST INTERESTED IN NEWS

In addition to asking about how well audiences perceive that news organisations are engaging with the public, we also asked how interested respondents were personally in engaging back with them (Fig. 5.2). Arguably, interacting with journalists and news outlets might not be the first thing that comes to mind for those whose relationship to news may be more perfunctory or distant. Indeed, we find evidence of precisely this dynamic.

When asked about providing their own feedback to news organisations about, for example, what to cover or how to frame stories, we found just one in five in Brazil and the UK were ‘extremely’ or ‘very interested’ personally compared to roughly half in these countries who said they were only ‘slightly’ or ‘not at all interested’. Levels of enthusiasm were higher in the US and considerably more so in India across the board.

Figure 5.2: Those from Brazil and the UK were the least personally interested in engagement strategies

Percentage who would be personally interested versus not interested in each engagement strategy



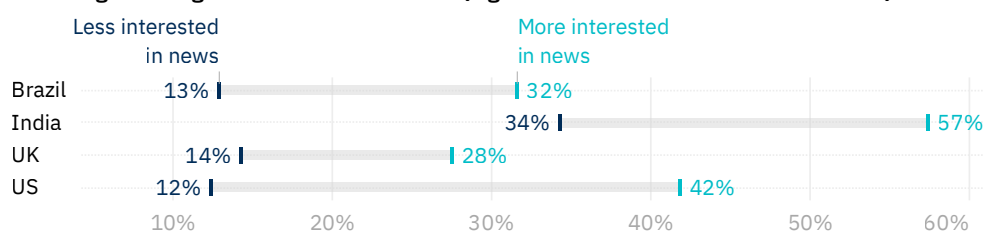
ENGMT_PREF. How interested, if at all, are you personally in each of the following when it comes to engaging with news organisations? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: Excludes those who responded 'don't know'.

In addition to these difference across countries, notable variation also occurred within countries particularly along lines of interest in news. Those already most engaged with news were also most personally interested in engagement efforts (Fig 5.3). Gaps between audiences in all four countries were substantial, with rarely more than 10–15% of those relatively uninterested in news saying that they were ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ personally interested in providing feedback, attending events, or offering comments. Those already interested in news in general were twice or sometimes three times as likely to say they were interested in participating with engagement efforts.

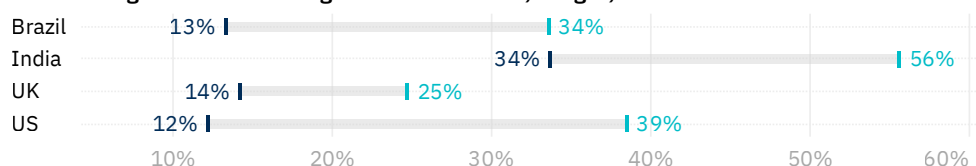
Figure 5.3: Those with higher levels of news interest are also more interested in engagement strategies

Percentage who would personally be 'extremely' or 'very interested' in each engagement strategy among those who are more versus less interested in news

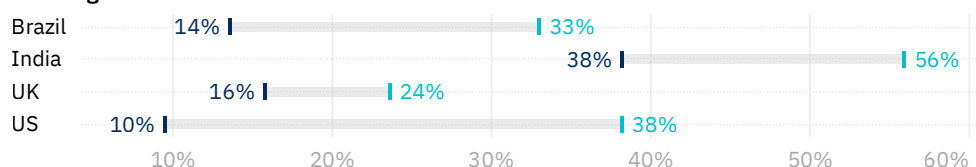
Providing news organisations with feedback (e.g. what to cover or how to frame stories)



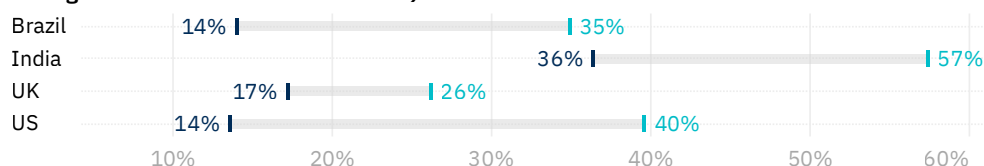
Contributing to the news through written materials, images, or video



Attending events hosted by news organisations such as community forums or other listening sessions



Offering your own comments on the news (such as on news website, social media pages, or through letters or other similar features)



ENGMT_PREF. How interested, if at all, are you personally in each of the following when it comes to engaging with news organisations? Base: Less/more interested in news: Brazil = 837/486, India = 732/671, UK = 432/1,145, US = 432/1,024. Note: 'Less interested in news' includes those who say they are 'slightly' or 'not at all interested', whereas 'more interested in news' includes those who say they are 'very' or 'extremely interested'.

RECEPTIVENESS DEPENDS ON THE PUBLIC HAVING TIME AND MONEY TO SPARE

As we have written previously (e.g. Toff et al. 2021b; Mont'Alverne et al. 2022), interest in news tends to be correlated with use of news, and a major determinant of news use is time and other resources. In general, in all countries those who are more educated and have higher incomes are also more interested in participating in news organisation initiatives around engagement. Reaching those lower down the socioeconomic ladder can be more challenging. In India, for example, those who identify as members of Scheduled Castes,²⁵ who tend to be less educated and poorer, are also significantly less inclined towards engagement efforts. Moreover, women across the board also say they are less interested in engagement initiatives compared to men. For instance, in India, 41% women say they are more interested in offering comments on the

²⁵ 38% of those from Scheduled Castes say they are interested in providing news organisations with feedback compared to roughly 46% of the audience from General Castes and Other Backward Classes higher in India's social structure.

news versus 48% of men; in the US, the gender gap between women and men is 22% versus 34%. Together, the results provide evidence that engaging with news is at least in part dependent on time and other resources, such as income, education, and other social identities.

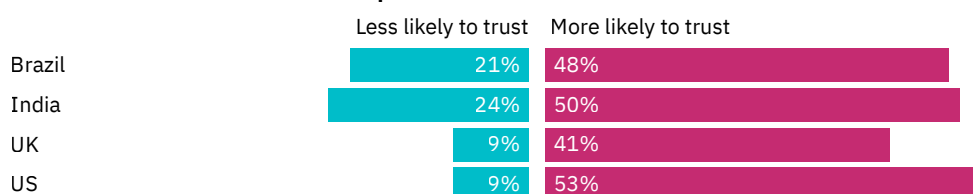
Audiences are generally optimistic about impact of engagement on trust

Even as we find personal interest in engagement efforts to be fairly tepid, except in India where audiences say they are more receptive, we also find that many hold more uniformly positive views around whether such efforts are likely to increase their trust. This is an important distinction as it suggests it may well be possible for news outlets to engender trust among parts of the public who may never themselves have the time nor inclination to attend community events or provide their own feedback. Instead, news organisations that take steps to engage with the public may get credit from audiences for showing that they genuinely care to listen.

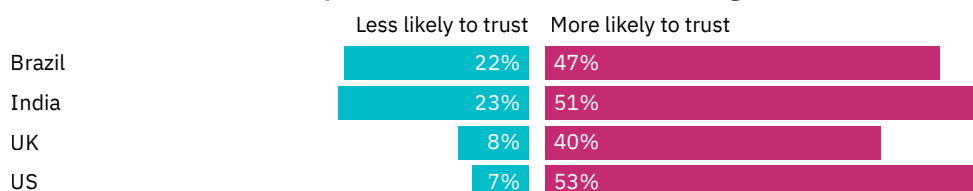
Figure 5.4: Almost half say they would be more likely to trust news organisations adopting engagement efforts

Percentage who say they are more or less likely to trust news organisations that do each of the following

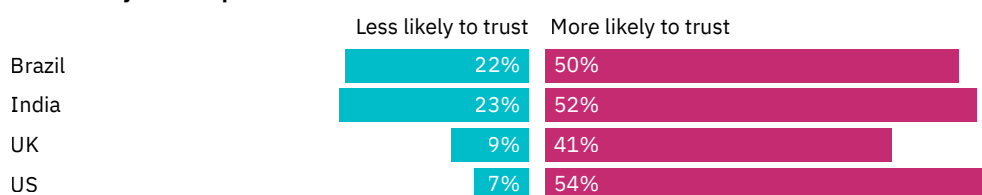
Gather ideas and feedback from the public about what to cover and how to frame stories



Feature contributions from the public in terms of written materials, images, or video



Provide ways for the public to comment on the news



ENGMT_TRUST. Are you more or less likely to trust news organisations that do each of the following? Base: Brazil = 2,000, India = 2,050, UK = 2,179, US = 2,000. Note: ‘Less likely to trust’ includes those who say they are ‘much less’ or ‘somewhat less likely to trust’, whereas ‘more likely to trust’ includes those who say they are ‘much more’ or ‘somewhat more likely to trust’. Excludes those who say ‘neither more nor less likely to trust’ or ‘don’t know’.

Nearly half or more of the public in each of these countries say they would be more likely to trust news organisations that take these steps. Equally important, our results show that very few say such efforts are likely to *reduce* how much they trust news outlets that take these steps.

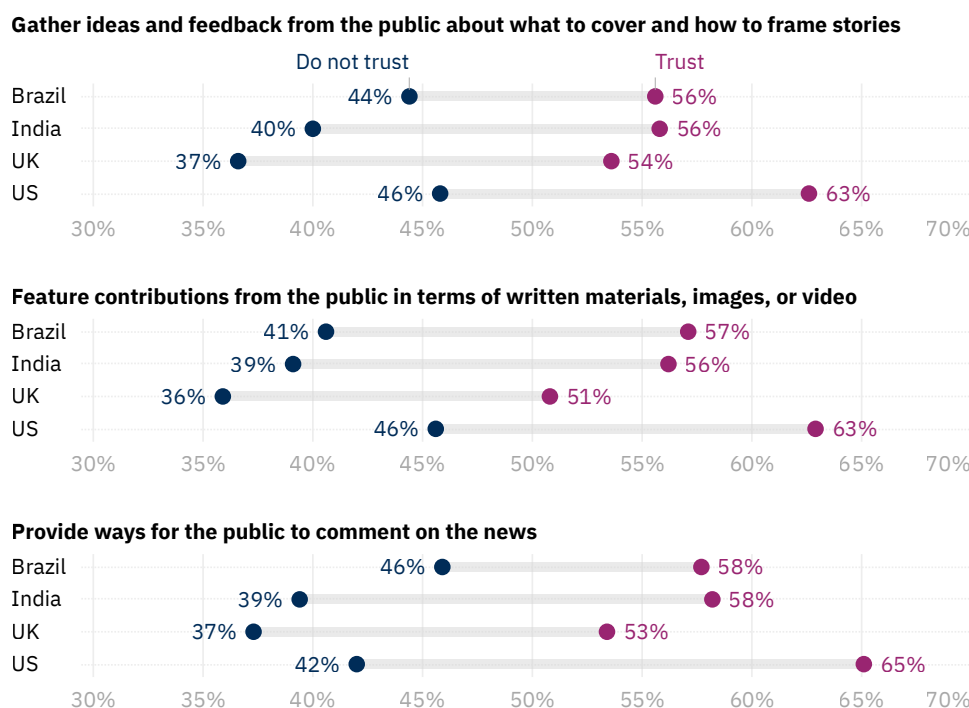
The differences are significant in all four countries but especially wide in the US, where a majority of respondents across all three categories say they would be more likely to trust news organisations that gather ideas and feedback from the public, feature contributions in the form of content from the public, or provide ways for the public to comment on news.

ALREADY TRUSTING AUDIENCES ARE MOST OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE IMPACT OF ENGAGED JOURNALISM

One note of caution here; just as we highlighted in the previous part of this chapter where we assessed interest in engagement efforts, we also find that those who are least trusting towards news in general are also the most resistant to the notion that engagement efforts would be likely to impact their sense of trust. Once again, we find a virtuous circle: those who say they are more likely to trust news organisations that employ engagement initiatives tend to be heavily concentrated among the already trusting (Fig. 5.5).

Figure 5.5: Already trusting audiences are more likely to say engagement strategies would help with trust

Percentage who says they are ‘much’ or ‘somewhat more likely’ to trust news organisations that do each of the following among those who do versus do not trust news in general



ENGMT_TRUST. Are you more or less likely to trust news organisations that do each of the following? **TRUST_GEN.** Generally speaking, to what extent do you trust, or not trust information from the news media in [Brazil/India/the UK/the US]? Base: Trust/do not trust: Brazil = 796/753, India = 1,365/319, UK = 885/680, US = 975/579. ‘Trust’ includes those who say they ‘trust completely’ or ‘trust somewhat’ whereas ‘do not trust’ includes those who say they ‘do not trust very much’ or ‘do not trust at all’.

These results highlight the degree to which news organisations that focus on engagement as a strategy for building trust must be careful to reach beyond already trusting audiences. These portions of the public tend to be most interested in news and most likely to view current

engagement efforts most positively, whereas the least trusting tend to perceive themselves as much less likely to change their minds.²⁶

In summary, in this chapter we looked at how the public evaluates the current performance of news organisations when it comes to three different kinds of engagement initiatives, followed by levels of personal interest in such efforts, and, finally, whether news organisations that take such steps are more or less likely to garner increases in the public's trust. What we found is mixed. Most audiences express a tepid, if on balance positive, view of news organisations' current engagement efforts, with the Indian audience generally more positive. At the same time, as we have seen with respect to other strategies, audiences who are least interested in news are also least interested in reciprocating. Brazilians express particularly high levels of scepticism about engagement efforts and their likely impact on trust. That is not to say that engagement efforts do not matter. Indeed, most say they welcome engagement initiatives, but they are particularly of interest to those with an already trusting relationship with the press.

²⁶ For example, when it comes to gathering ideas and feedback from the public about what to cover and how to frame stories, those who are very or extremely interested in news are far more likely to say they would be more trusting towards news organisations that take such steps (61% in Brazil, 58% in India, 50% in the UK, and 60% in the US). Among those who say they are only slightly or not at all interested in news, just one-third in the UK (31%) and the US (33%), and four in ten in Brazil (40%) and India (43%) say they are likely to be more trusting towards news organisations that do more to gather ideas and feedback from the public. Likewise, those who evaluate news outlets as doing well at gathering ideas and feedback are also far more likely to say they trust news in general.

Conclusion

This report explores the shifting terrain around declining trust in news in Brazil, India, the UK, and the US, especially around attitudes about specific efforts to gain or regain the public's trust. We consider four broad categories of overlapping strategies that news organisations and scholars have at times embraced as approaches to establishing a stronger, more trusting relationship with the public. These range from editorial- and transparency-focused initiatives to efforts concerned with ownership and management of news organisations, as well as more generally how news outlets engage with, listen to, and involve the public in their coverage. We consider not only perceptions about the current performance of the press in these four areas, but also how important each are to people personally, and how the public thinks about prioritising across them.

Overall, this report paints a complex set of findings that do not easily lend themselves to straightforward answers. This is in large part a consequence of the complexity of our undertaking here. By looking at attitudes about a variety of trust-building approaches in a mix of places while considering a range of perspectives within each of these countries, we have sought to highlight areas where we find consensus among the public, other areas where publics are divided, and still other areas where we see potential for backlash.

We find that many hold ambivalent, even seemingly contradictory attitudes. While evaluations of the news media are on balance largely positive, especially in India where the public looks much more favourably towards the news media, many also express specific, sharply critical frustrations about news media that they see as focusing too heavily on people in positions of power, and often shot through with sensationalism, inaccuracies, and bias (even if the public is often divided about what groups in society it tends to favour). Many see ethical standards and editorial policies as opaque rather than transparent and say news outlets do a poor job of listening to the public, soliciting their feedback, or involving them in coverage decisions.

At the same time, even though different segments of the public in all four countries say they would prioritise each of the four strategies for building trust we asked about, there are also some patterns in our data that suggest just how challenging changing some of these entrenched perceptions may be. Time and again we have highlighted areas where trust-building strategies are subject to 'virtuous circle' dynamics. While many say they would welcome efforts by news organisations to better engage with the public and listen to their concerns, those who are least interested in news and least trusting are also the least personally interested in participating in such efforts. Likewise, those most receptive to editorial strategies like those advocated by proponents of 'solutions journalism' also tend to be similarly concentrated among those who are already the most interested in news to begin with. Those who are the least trusting of news tend to hold the most cynical views and are most likely to say there are no strategies at all that are likely to change how they feel about news. These individuals also tend to say they feel there are no differences between news organisations in their country. In other words, rather than selectively placing their trust in sources that take specific steps to differentiate themselves from less trustworthy alternatives, these least trusting audiences paint all news with the same broad (negative) brush.

In an earlier report from the Trust in News Project (Toff et al. 2021a), focused on senior managers' perspectives of their own news organisations' trust-building efforts, we highlighted trade-offs newsroom leaders must consider around investing in 'depth' versus 'breadth'. For many publishers, however much they may personally wish to increase trust broadly among the wider public, practical constraints mean they tend to prioritise deepening trust among those who are already relatively more trusting towards their news organisations' journalism. Trust is viewed mainly and understandably through an instrumental lens as a means to an end – the end being an increase in revenue through membership or subscriptions. That leaves large segments of the public who are less and less the focus of most news organisations' efforts to increase audience trust. As our survey data in this report shows, these audiences are indeed most resistant and hardest to reach.

For news outlets and other interested parties who seek to enhance trust among these most sceptical audiences, it is likely to require more fundamental forms of relationship-building that precede any of the four strategic approaches examined in this report. These audiences are the most likely to lump all news organisations together as untrustworthy while at the same time they are the least likely to spend time consuming very much news altogether. It requires making the case that specific forms of news on offer are valuable and useful in their everyday lives and unique compared to other sources of information available in their overall media environments. As promising as other trust-building approaches may be for more engaged audiences, this more fundamental task of persuasion may be needed to establish a suitable foundation for these other efforts to take root.

Implications of our findings

In the very first survey report we published as we began the Trust in News Project three years ago (see Toff et al. 2020), we noted that trust is a multifaceted relationship between the public and the press. It is rooted in a mix of direct experiences with news – often mediated by digital tools or other media technologies – combined with preconceptions held about news passed down through conversation and culture as well as ideas people hold about news that they get from other trusted sources, including friends, family, and elite figures like politicians and media commentators. With so many varied factors contributing to the way people think about news, trust as a construct is not only both difficult to measure, it is even more challenging to restore where it has dissipated.

Our findings in this report do offer some reason for optimism. Most say, to varying degrees, that they are likely to increase their trust towards organisations that take any of these four approaches. Although we acknowledge that saying certain strategies are likely to increase trust in theory is a far cry from whether embracing such strategies is actually likely to work in practice, we also think it is important to take what audiences say seriously. The alternative, after all, is relying solely on intuition and assumptions, which is only likely to reinforce the tendency of news organisations to cater to audiences who look like and think like the people running them.

We also see evidence in this report for particularly vicious and virtuous feedback circles when it comes to changes in trust in news. The less people trust news, the less likely they are to

engage in following it, and the less news they consume, the less relevant it seems to their lives and the less likely they are to see differences between organisations vying for their trust. As the ways in which people increasingly get their news continues to change, with more and more encountering news incidentally through fleeting moments on digital platforms, the opportunities for individual brands to build meaningful, habitual relationships with the public – the foundation, we think, for lasting trust – become few and far between.

Taken together, the findings in this report suggest that there is no silver bullet for cultivating the public's trust. Audiences have different preferences around what they are looking for from news organisations and what they would personally prioritise. Our findings also reveal the degree to which attitudes about many of these strategies are dependent on existing cleavages – social, political, and cultural – which are also unique to some degree to each country. Between the Global North and Global South countries that have been the focus of this project, different demographic segments have distinctly different relationships with civic institutions, which shapes people's expectations towards news media as an institution as well.

In other words, while our findings have pointed to many factors outside the control of any individual news organisation when it comes to earning the public's trust, one thing each can control is the degree to which they pay attention to these differences when it comes to their own strategies around engaging with the public. News organisations do not exist in isolation from the problems of their communities; however, audiences often expect them to be part of the solution to solving these problems, rather than extensions of the problem.

Focus of future research

This is the final report from the Reuters Institute's three-year Trust in News Project, but we have hardly exhausted the need for research on these subjects. We hope our work in this area in these four countries has helped put the nature of the problem in clearer focus and shone a light on the most promising evidence-based strategies for solving these challenges.

We see two specific areas as ripe for future research. First, our research has often pointed to the need for tailoring solutions to specific audiences rather than treating audiences as monolithic in their perspectives, preferences, and preconceptions. As such, we see a need for greater in-depth research that further clarifies these differences, especially as they are linked to the specific target audiences that individual news outlets seek to build trust with. As much of our work has dealt with news at a general level – focusing at times on the degree to which the public does and does not differentiate between news outlets in terms of their trustworthiness – we also think it is important to acknowledge that what will work for one news organisation may not work for others, especially as news outlets often have different ownership and funding structures, as well as different editorial policies and practices. Not all news organisations should be trusted and certainly not all for the same reasons. As we have taken an international comparative approach in our research, we have necessarily focused more on news in general in these countries, but we see considerable promise in focusing more specifically on selective trust towards individual brands in these and other markets.

Second, while we believe there is considerable merit in capturing the forward-looking attitudes of the public about what they believe will work when it comes to various trust-building strategies, we also believe the missing link here involves assessing what does and does not work *in practice* when such strategies are employed in the field. Randomised field experiments are needed to better test whether audiences do in fact respond in the ways that newsroom leaders, interested scholars, and even the public itself hope they might.²⁷

The findings in this report, and throughout the Trust in News Project, have reinforced the reality that there is no silver bullet to solve the problem of declining trust in news. That reality may be frustrating to those looking for simple solutions, but our research also helps clarify the nature of the problem. While there is evidence of declining trust in all four of these countries, it is also clear that much of the public does continue to see value in the role played by journalism in society. While some see few or no difference between news outlets and appear entrenched and unmoveable in their views, many more are quite willing to give journalists credit for efforts to re-engage, reconnect, and refocus coverage and editorial practices in ways that are better aligned with what the public expects of trustworthy news. These efforts, however, must be genuine and thorough-going.

As we and others have argued, trust is a relationship that requires effort on both sides – among those who seek to be trusted and on the part of those whose trust is sought. It requires starting from a place of mutual respect and openness, not only on the part of audiences but leadership within news organisations as well. The public is unlikely to extend their trust towards news outlets that do not themselves take the public’s preferences seriously. By examining these preferences across four diverse societies, we have shown the extent to which these perspectives are not monolithic. Building a foundation of trust starts with taking these differences seriously and responding accordingly.

²⁷ See Stroud and Van Duyn (2023) for a recent example of such innovative research.

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Technical Appendix

This study has been prepared by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism's Trust in News Project to understand how audiences think about newsroom strategies around building trust in news. Surveys were fielded in each of the four countries between 19 May and 22 June 2023 using Ipsos's proprietary online panels in the US and the UK and face-to-face recruitment in Brazil and India, to better account for the diversity of these populations and lower internet penetration in these countries.

Ipsos was responsible for the fieldwork, sampling approach, and construction of survey weights (where relevant) to account for systematic differences in non-response. The Reuters Institute team oversaw the survey design, reporting, and interpretation of the results. Although all survey methods have trade-offs with respect to achieving a fully representative sample, both the RISJ team and Ipsos took care, where possible, to ensure inclusion of demographic groups that are more difficult to reach.

- In Brazil, sampling took place across all major regions and was performed at a municipal level. In India, 19 states were represented in the sample, covering all major regions. Face-to-face interviews were conducted door to door, with efforts being taken to ensure that respondents were interviewed in the privacy of their homes. In the UK and the US, quotas were applied to achieve a sample broadly representative of the online populations in each country.
- Surveys were conducted primarily in Portuguese (Brazil) and English (the UK and the US). In the US, the survey was also conducted in Spanish for respondents who selected to do so, although few chose that option as panels are largely maintained in English. In India, the survey questionnaire was translated into Hindi and other major languages including Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Tamil, and Telugu.
- The survey questionnaire took approximately 20 minutes to complete online on average but slightly longer in a face-to-face setting. The questions were generally consistent across the four countries, with some adjustments made due to different demographic categories and contexts as well as translation issues that could sometimes arise.
- The data has been weighted to reflect nationally representative profiles in each country. In the UK and the US, age, gender, employment status, education (college graduate/non-graduate), and geographical region were used as sampling weights. Additionally, race and income were used as sampling parameters in the US, and similarly, ethnicity and social grade were used in the UK. All except race were used for sampling weights in India and Brazil. Census data in both of these countries were more than a decade out of date at the time these surveys were conducted, which limits the ability to use certain characteristics as sampling weights.

- It should be noted that some of the questions in the survey are dependent on recall, thus making the responses imperfect or subject to biases. We have tried to account for such issues through careful questionnaire design and testing. At the same time, surveys can be a good way of capturing attitudes towards news media and newsroom strategies, tracking activities and changes over time.
- Full methodological reports concerning sampling techniques and complete questionnaires will be made available on request.

Table A: Specifics of the survey

Country	Sample size	Mode	Language	Quotas	Weighting
Brazil	2,000	Face-to-face	Portuguese	Age, gender, social grade within region, urban/rural within region	Age gender (split by urban or rural), region, ethnicity and social grade, education
India	2,050	Face-to-face	Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Tamil, and Teluga	Age, gender, social grade across urban/rural locations	Age, gender (split by rural and urban), geographic region, state, social grade, education
United Kingdom	2,179	Online	English	Age, gender, region, employment status and ethnicity	Age, gender, employment status, education, region, ethnicity, social grade
United States	2,000	Online	English and Spanish	Age, gender, region, employment status, race, Hispanic/Latino origin	Age, gender, employment status, education, region, race, Hispanic/Latino origin, income

RISJ PUBLICATIONS

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- Hearts and Minds: Harnessing Leadership, Culture, and Talent to Really Go Digital*
Lucy Kueng
- Worlds of Journalism: Journalistic Cultures Around the Globe*
Thomas Hanitzsch, Folker Hanusch, Jyotika Ramaprasad, and Arnold S. de Beer (eds) (published with Columbia University Press)
- NGOs as Newsmakers: The Changing Landscape of International News*
Matthew Powers (published with Columbia University Press)
- Global Teamwork: The Rise of Collaboration in Investigative Journalism*
Richard Sambrook (ed)

SELECTED REPORTS AND FACTSHEETS

- Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2023*
Nic Newman, Richard Fletcher, Kirsten Eddy, Craig T. Robertson, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen
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Amy Ross Arguedas, Sayan Banerjee, Camila Mont'Alverne, Benjamin Toff, Richard Fletcher, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen
- Race and Leadership in the News Media 2023: Evidence from Five Markets*
Kirsten Eddy, Amy Ross Arguedas, Mitali Mukherjee, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen (factsheet)
- Women and Leadership in the News Media 2023: Evidence from 12 Markets*
Kirsten Eddy, Amy Ross Arguedas, Mitali Mukherjee, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen (factsheet)
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