

# Research on the Path of Constructive News of Disaster Report in the Era of Convergence-Media—Taking the Coal Mine Collapse Accident in Alxa Left Banner, Inner Mongolia as an Example

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**Abstract:** In the age of convergence media, how can the news media report social emergencies in a more constructive way, how can they intervene and participate in the governance of social opinion, and how can they contribute to the formation, analysis and solutions of the causes of disasters and accidents? In this paper, ten video news reports with high overall popularity are selected from the "TikTok" platform, and the short video news reports on the coal mine collapse in Alxa Left Banner, Inner Mongolia, are analysed in terms of the topic, content, form, angle and target audience of the reports, in order to explore the role of constructive journalism in the news reporting of disaster events. It is found that there is a contradiction between authenticity and timeliness, between "acceleration" and "alienation" in news production and between "rationality" and "emotion" in reporting. The balance between "rational" and "emotional" reporting. On this basis, we reflect on and explore the possibilities of constructive news reporting and the progress of news production.

**Keywords:** The age of integrated media, Disaster news, Constructive journalism, Coal mine collapse

## 1. Introduction

On or about 22 February 2023, a large area collapsed in the mine of Inner Mongolia Xinjing Coal Industry Co., Ltd. in the Twin Wells Beach Ecological Migration Demonstration Area of Alashan League, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, causing a number of operators and vehicles to be buried. A press conference was subsequently held to increase the search efforts and expand the scope of the search in the rescue effort. However, news coverage in the aftermath of the accident presented a mixed bag of good and bad news. In a polarised society, the public's increasing right to be informed about what has happened and the varying levels of professionalism of journalists have all had an impact on the production of disaster news. The mass media is the first means and channel through which people obtain information about the outside world, and to a certain extent dominates the perceptions and judgements that influence information about disaster events. However, with the rapid development of mass media, people have more diversified means of accessing information. How can the media do a good job of reporting on disasters, how to accurately convey information about accidents to audiences, reduce information compartmentalisation, effectively set the agenda, guide the benign development of public opinion and maintain the well-being and stability of society are all questions we need to explore. This paper selects several media outlets such as "The-Beijing-News", "The paper", "CCTV News" and "ifeng" as research objects, and selects some news reports with high comprehensive hotness to analyse the news content presentation of the mining disaster accident in Alxa, Inner Mongolia, and brings some questions and revelations as a result.

## 2. Overview of Core Conce

### 2.1. Disaster News

In the modern Chinese dictionary, disaster is defined as "suffering caused by natural or man-made calamities." In this way, disasters can be divided in general terms into natural and man-made disasters. There are many definitions of natural and man-made disasters, but scholars have broadly summarised the

common qualities: suddenness, destructiveness, uncertainty, urgency and inadequate information.[1] We call the coverage of these disasters disaster news. Professor Liu Haigui divides disaster journalism into two categories: natural disaster reporting and humanistic disaster reporting, arguing that "the so-called disaster journalism is a journalistic genre that takes the conception, occurrence, development, hazards and prevention, resistance and mitigation of disasters and other human struggles with them as its subject matter." [2] Therefore, based on the nature of disasters, once an accident occurs, it will have a huge impact on society. The public is often most concerned about the disaster, which is why it is so important for the media to communicate and guide disaster news. Good disaster journalism can have a stabilising, mobilising and unifying effect on society. Disaster journalism is an important part of disaster management and an important part of maintaining the well-being of the population.

## 2.2. Constructive Journalism

Constructive journalism is a concept and practice of journalism that has gradually attracted the attention of the press in recent years. It emphasises the media's reporting of social events while at the same time working to build a set of solutions to social problems, proactively participating in social governance, stimulating public participation in public events, and working with the government to offer advice and solutions to social conflicts. According to scholar Tang Xujun, constructive journalism focuses on the solution of social problems, which is a journalistic practice or journalistic concept for traditional media to reinvent their social role in the era of public communication. [3] The definition of constructive journalism has not yet been unified, but it can be found that journalism focuses on providing solutions to social events and constructive opinions is the core definition of constructive journalism among scholars. In China, constructive news was first produced by "The paper", and the "Warm News" column launched in 2015 provided a reference for the development of constructive news. The use of this journalistic concept in disaster news reporting is more beneficial, and this is what sets it apart from other news genres.

## 3. The Content of Constructive News Reporting in Disaster News

Table 1: Inner Mongolia Alxa Left Banner coal mine collapse after some news reports.

Sample source	"TikTok" platform account	Related hotness data	Main news coverage
The-Beijing-News	Dynamic news	17,000 likes, 4,203 comments, 6,347 retweets	3D reconstruction of a coal mine collapse in Inner Mongolia
Fuyang Daily	Fuyang news network	1,023,000 likes, 180,000 comments, 351,000 retweets	Surveillance footage of the incident of the open-pit coal mine collapse in Inner Mongolia released. The collapsed mountain basically covered the bottom workings completely, making rescue very difficult!
CCTV News	CCTV News	412,000 likes, 27,000 comments, 23,000 retweets	The head office reporter went straight to the core rescue site: some machinery was buried and rescuers were searching and rescuing
CCTV News	CCTV News	354,000 likes, 26,000 comments, 43,000 retweets	General Secretary gave important instructions on the collapse of an open-pit coal mine in Alxa Left Banner, Inner Mongolia
CNTV	CNTV	95,000 likes, 12,000 comments, 5,166 retweets	Peace be upon you! Follow the rescue scene of the collapsed coal mine in Inner Mongolia in the early hours of the morning.
Xiaoqiang quick comment	Xiaoqiang quick comment	34,000 likes, 3,482 comments, 4,459 retweets	The people involved are under control! The latest information on the massive collapse of an open-pit coal mine in Inner Mongolia combed through.
Cover News	Cover News	439,000 likes, 60,000 comments, 127,000 retweets	Disaster has caused 2 dead 6 injured 53 lost, Inner Mongolia collapsed mine had been fined more than 20 times.
Xinhua News Agency	Xinhua Daily Telegraph	26,000 likes, 2616 comments, 3056 retweets	Inner Mongolia Alax League open-pit mine collapse injured people interviewed: the accident before the mountain fell slag, rushed to organize evacuation, but it was too late.
Elephant News	Elephant News	83,000 likes, 17000 comments, 11,000 retweets	Inner Mongolia Alxa Left Banner, open pit coal mine secondary collapse, the collapse volume is huge net height of about 80 meters, there are 51 people still missing.
Public network	Mass reporting news	1445 likes, 281 comments, 323 retweets	Satellite aerial footage of open-pit coal mine collapse in Inner Mongolia before and after released.

In this paper, we have selected ten video news stories with high overall popularity from the "TikTok" platform for content analysis. "TikTok" is a platform where people can get news information faster, and it is also an easy platform to understand and accept news events, as shown in Table 1. Therefore, the

video news reports on the " TikTok " platform were selected for the study, spanning from February 22 to May 24, 2023, to analyze the reports on the coal mine collapse in Alxa Left Banner, Inner Mongolia, from five aspects of news reporting , as shown in Figure 1.

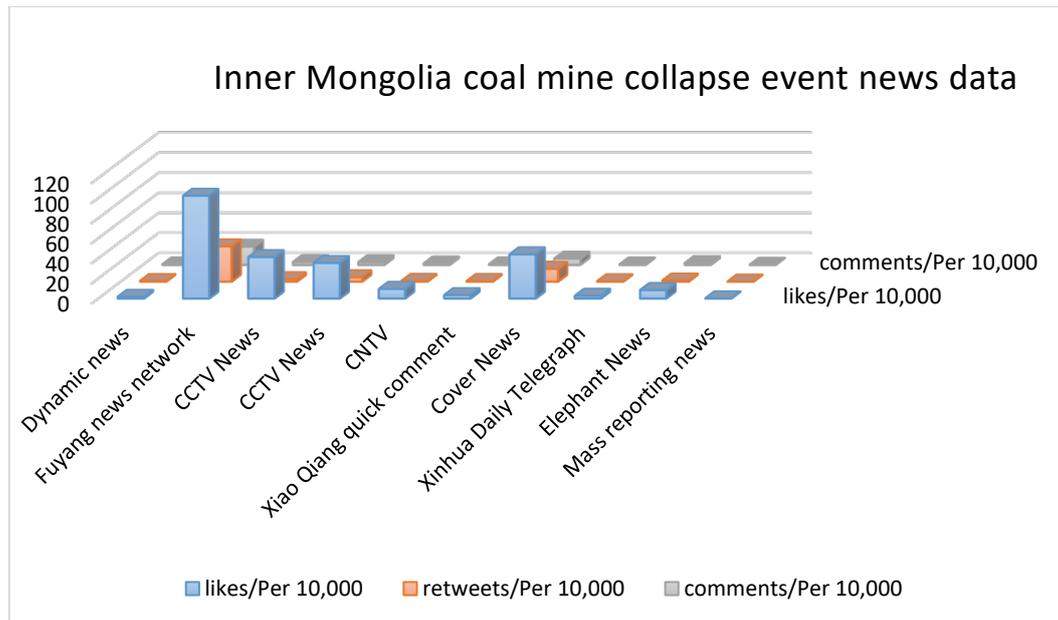


Figure 1: Inner Mongolia coal mine collapse event video news to praise evaluation comparison chart

### 3.1. Themes of Coverage: Diverse and Realistic

The themes in the coverage of the Inner Mongolia mine disaster were mostly based on the reality of the rescue operation, showing the spirit of solidarity and urgency of the people in the rescue process. A disaster is not just a group of people suffering, it is a process that is constructed and interpreted, so its public nature requires a more realistic approach to news production. That is, it focuses on the reporting of the course of the disaster event, the publication of the current state of the disaster, the in-depth analysis and interpretation of the causes of the mining disaster, and the understanding of the causes and consequences of the disaster. The public expects the media to provide key facts and information, to take on the responsibility of alerting and reflecting on the companies and governments involved, and to open up a platform and space for the public to discuss. [4] At the same time, this realistic reporting is also due to the urgency and suddenness of the mine disaster. The public is not interested in the "chicken soup for the soul" style of news reporting narrative, but this time the news media reported on the mine disaster in Inner Mongolia based on facts and public rationality, from the rescue process, relevant experts, before and after the disaster, the injured people, etc., with a variety of topics and rich presentation.

### 3.2. Content of the Report: Integrating Reports and Sorting Out the Disaster Process

The content of the report was informative and met the public's need to understand the disaster situation. CCTV News followed the rescue situation from the time of the accident, with reporters explaining the collapse of the collapsed body and reporting on General Secretary's instructions on the Inner Mongolia coal mine collapse, with fair and objective content. The Guangdong Radio and Television News Centre's "Xiaoqiang Quick Comment" account provides a comprehensive overview of the latest situation, combining personal commentary with objective news content, using emotion and personalised language to make the coverage of the disaster more personal and close to the public, creating emotional resonance. This blend of reporting content is closer to the idea of constructive journalism, with informative content to sort out the disaster process.

### 3.3. Reporting Format: Video + Animation + Live Streaming with Public Interaction, Restoring Details of the Scene in Three Dimensions

Disaster news often has intuitive and impactful images of the disaster. The "Fuyang News Network" premiered surveillance footage of the collapse of an open-pit coal mine in Inner Mongolia, which received a lot of public attention and showed the severity of the disaster and how difficult it was to rescue.

The-Beijing-News "Dynamic News" used 3D technology to recreate the moment of the collapse of the coal mine, using "on-site reconstruction" to restore the causes and details of the disaster, increasing public acceptability and providing additional background and explanation to fully understand the progress of the incident. "CCTV News' live coverage of the relief work and answers to questions from the public, mostly in positive words, is a healing communication compared to other news reporting genres. This intuitive, three-dimensional form of news reporting, which encompasses many news reporting genres, has a good presentation of the analysis and interpretation of the disaster and the rescue situation, and has obvious advantages in constructive news reporting, broadening the news dimension and value while attracting more public attention, and is more widely used in the reporting of disaster events, as shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

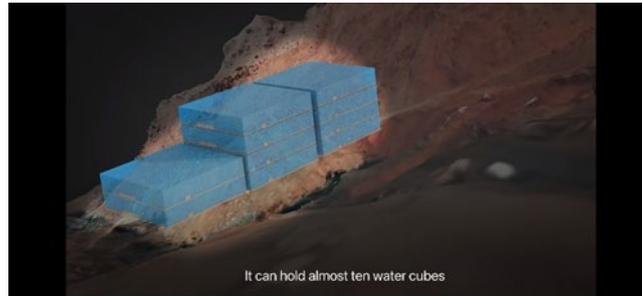


Figure 2: 3D reconstruction of the mine collapse site

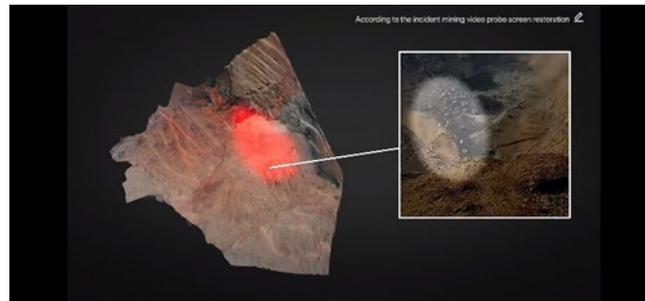


Figure 3: 3D reconstruction of the mine collapse site

#### 3.4. Reporting Angle: Positive, Spreading Scientific Relief Solutions

In past disaster reports, China focused on reporting the victorious results of the active struggle against the disaster, pursuing timely propaganda values and effects, but with the mature development of disaster journalism, the media is no longer limited to certain social effects, "people-oriented" and "matter-oriented" The media has been able to reflect the disaster in an objective manner. [5]The overall emotional tone and coverage of the mine disaster in Inner Mongolia was mainly positive, with efforts to rescue trapped people, high levels of government attention, and updates on the progress of the rescue, as well as a few neutral sentiments. The tone of the comments under the video news was mostly questioning the company's credentials and arguing that the rescue was hopeless. The comments on some of the video accounts posting information about the rescue were mostly prayers for the safety of the people involved. It can be found that the integration of positive emotions in the reports can calm the panic caused by disaster information. The active guidance and participation of the news media can effectively focus social attention, dispatch and integrate resources, and constructive reports link the government, the public and the disaster event organically, which has a positive effect in solving problems, conveying news and calming public emotions.

#### 3.5. The Target Audience: A Wide Range of Categories, Reflecting Empathy and Authority

In the ten stories selected for this article, the target audience included experts and scholars, coal mining units, people with knowledge of the incident, people who experienced the disaster, journalists, media technology, and political commentators. In the case of new disasters, due to the lack of knowledge about the formation of the disaster and the difficulty of rescue, the choice of experts to report on the disaster is a good way of conveying authoritative information and satisfying the public's right to know, as well as answering questions and increasing the authority of the news. In addition, reporting on those

who witnessed the disaster allows the public to know the details of the disaster, to recreate the situation and to empathise with it. Reports on coal mining units and people with knowledge of the incident can add context and explanation to the collapse of the mine and convey to the public the possible causes of the accident. In the age of integrated media, the use of technological products also adds impetus to constructive news reporting. The video accounts of The Xinhua News Agency and Public Network use satellite and aerial footage to show the before and after of the disaster at the coal mine, using the power of technology to give a visual impact and shock, and to let people understand the seriousness of the accident and be alert to it in future accident prevention. The political commentator, on the other hand, presents objective facts with a personal touch that is more relevant and empathetic to the audience. The diversity of subjects in the practice of constructive journalism presents a more realistic and comprehensive picture of disaster relief and helps to expand the sources and content of the news.

#### **4. The Problems of Constructive Journalism in Disaster News**

In the production of disaster news, the demand for "immediacy" is very obvious, and sociologist Rosa believes that "social acceleration" is the core of modernity and the root cause of the pathology of modern "alienated" society. It is also the source of the pathology of modern 'alienated' society. In the case of news production, the temporal and spatial structure of news production is also characterised by an "acceleration" that corresponds to this. This 'accelerated' production also brings with it a certain amount of 'alienation'. [6]

##### ***4.1. The "Acceleration" of News Production Leads to Homogenization of Production***

The problem of homogenisation is the most common problem in news production, especially in video news, and such copying and indiscriminate reproduction not only leads to an excessive waste of news resources but also undermines the authority and credibility of the news media. In the news coverage of the Inner Mongolia mine disaster, several news media published the same or similar videos, and some accounts had identical videos and news. From this disaster incident, it can be seen that the problem of homogenisation in disaster news reporting is one of the reasons that affects the development of constructive journalism. Too much homogenisation of content can also lead to "sympathy fatigue". Many news media only report superficial information about the accident, but do not put much effort into the causes of the accident and future preventive measures, and do not dig deep enough to find valuable news. Only by producing news with questions and thoughts and finding unique perspectives can constructive journalism be brought to bear on a disaster.

##### ***4.2. Journalistic Ethics Give Way to Journalistic Timeliness***

Journalistic ethics have several basic guidelines: to be truthful and objective, impartial and unbiased, the principle of proportionality and humanism. [7] Because disaster news has to deal with human nature, it is inevitable that there will be problems with journalistic ethics. Some video media have falsified and deceived the public in the face of disaster reporting. The "death front" was published before the damage was clear, and speculation was made about the circumstances of the disaster. In the case of the MU5735 flight on 21 March, People revealed that the people on board the MU5735 flight had been killed shortly after the accident in "People on flight MU5735". The "killed" statement was made hastily before the official investigation was finalised. Such issues can lead to a loss of credibility in the media and disrupt the public opinion environment. In addition, sudden disasters often require journalists to "press for time" and present news content as quickly as possible. In such "first-post" and "headline-grabbing" situations, there is even a disregard for ethics and morality. Speculation about those killed, digging into their privacy and even contacting their families to find out about the mine disaster without thinking about it, can cause secondary damage to both the families and the public, and is done on top of consuming the suffering of others. This is harmful to the production of constructive news.

##### ***4.3. The Imbalance between Rational and Emotional Reporting***

Emotional reporting is often more compelling and persuasive than rational reporting. In an age of fake news, constructive journalism, although based on the principle of objectivity and impartiality, can inevitably be mixed with journalists' personal emotions and even unintentionally subjective guidance to the public. Secondly, in the attention economy, people become tired of paying attention to the later stages of disaster news, and some news media adopt a curiosity perspective to produce news, making the

reporting of rational and emotional imbalance. As a result, the use of constructive journalism in disaster situations is also facing enormous challenges.

#### ***4.4. The Contradiction between Truthfulness and Timeliness of News***

Truthfulness is the first and foremost life-force of news, and news cannot be called news if it is not true. Constructive journalism also puts authenticity in the first place. In the era of integrated media, the news dissemination subjects are more diversified and the news sources are more abundant. In the pursuit of timeliness, some emerging media are leaving authenticity behind. The TikTok platform is currently a platform where people receive news information quickly, but it is also a platform where gatekeepers are not strict enough and real news is mixed with fake news. Especially in the case of major news events like disaster news, if fake news is involved in the whirlpool of public opinion, it will damage the public's right to know and the credibility of the media. Only by balancing truthfulness and timeliness, as well as social and media benefits, can constructive journalism be effective.

### **5. The Enlightenment and Path of Constructive News Report in Disaster News**

#### ***5.1. Actively Guiding Social Opinion and Building Good Social Values Together***

Constructive journalism is, in a sense, a return to and strengthening of the positive function of news communication. In terms of the social environment we live in, constructive journalism is essential in order to stabilise the public's mindset and spread positive emotions after a disaster. Emotional expressions in public space can often inspire anger and panic among internet users, and the information that swarms over them at once can destroy their rational thinking. So constructive news path practices are of greater significance in improving the negativised emotions on our networks.[8]The media can use constructive solutions to guide the public and act as a link between the government and the people to better convey positive messages and build good social values together.

#### ***5.2. Innovative Thinking on Constructive News Writing and Changing the Mindset of News Production***

Constructive journalism is not just an idea, it is a practice. If you want to make better use of constructive journalism in disaster news, you should start from the source, carry out new news production ideas, change the situation of homogenisation of news, convey the deeper information of news and dig more news values. Focusing on problem solving and solution exploration is the direction of future development. In the era of integrated media, combining with Internet technology, artificial intelligence and big data can not only improve the efficiency of news production, but also enhance the objectivity and timeliness of constructive news, making news reporting more interactive and innovative.

#### ***5.3. Diverse Reporting, Enhanced Dialogue with the Public and Collaborative Production***

In today's rapidly developing new media, everything is connected, and technologies such as satellite remote sensing technology, aerial photography by drones and VR panoramas are developing rapidly. These technologies can show the scene in a comprehensive three-dimensional and intuitive way, with a different perspective of the general public, and can break through the vicious conditions of the disaster scene and share the dangers of journalistic writing. [9]Often the source of news production is no longer the professional news media, but also the people who are at the scene of a disaster or incident. Their accounts together complete the depiction of the disaster scene and restore the details of the accident on the spot. In the main body of communication constructive journalism should adopt a more open approach, pull the public into collaborative production, strengthen dialogue with the public, integrate public issues and discussions into constructive journalism, continuously explore the plurality and balance of content production, provide optimal strategies for disaster accidents, pull constructive journalism practices out of the whirlpool of public opinion, and achieve a virtuous production cycle.

### **6. Conclusions**

To do a good job of constructive reporting on disaster news, it is necessary to work together from many aspects of society. The idea of audience- and disaster-centred journalism can only be developed in the long term. Active media exploration and constructive discourse in disaster incidents can effectively

contribute to the solution of social problems and reshape the value authority of the news media. Although there are still shortcomings in current news coverage, constructive journalism will be a sustainable model of reporting in disaster coverage. In future practice, China will continue to broaden its international perspective, strengthen its learning, establish constructive thinking based on problem-solving, and enhance the local construction of constructive journalism, so as to continuously improve the discourse system of constructive news production and foreign communication in China.

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