

International Social Work
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Representation of Social Work in German Mass Media

Presentation and Perception of Social Work

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Structure and Organization

- Aims of Thesis
- Theoretical Framework
- Current State of Research
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Outlook

Research Questions

	Representation	Perception
Research Question	How is the media representing social work?	How is social work perceived by social workers and its users?
Research aims	<p>Which social work topic does German mass media represent?</p> <p>How does German mass media represent clients, professionals and institutions of social work in the chosen German mass media?</p>	<p>How does the public perceive the media representation of social work?</p> <p>How do social workers perceive media representation of their own profession?</p> <p>How do users of social work perceive the media representation of social work?</p>

Current State of Research

Representation	Perception
Insufficient research	Insufficient research (existing publications are mostly in English)
Research has focused on public relations	Research has focused on the reciprocal relation between medial representation and public opinion

Methodology

	Representation	Perception
Field of research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Two periods of evaluation➤ Five different media➤ Five chief categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Five expert interviews➤ Group discussion
Method of evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ qualitative structured content analysis (Kuckartz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ qualitative structured content analysis (Kuckartz)

Results

	Representation	Perception
✓ Priorities of media	➤ The media focuses on certain social work topics, whereas there is a lack in coverage of other fields of social work practice (e.g. social work in high schools, homelessness and inclusion)	➤ One-sided reporting
✓ How the media typically represents social work topics	➤ negative representation of children and youth welfare services in two chosen German newspapers (BILD and RTL II news)	➤ Social work topics are often conveyed negatively

Results

	Representation	Perception
✓ How the media reflects social work topics	➤ Children and youth welfare services are represented well	➤ The media seldom succeeds in representing social work realistically
✓ Different media	➤ Differences between local press and nationwide media	➤ Differences between local press and nationwide media
✓ Different media	➤ Significant differences in terms of reliability, depth of information and details	➤ Significant differences in terms of reliability, depth of information and details
✓ Position and status of social work in media representation and society	➤ Related disciplines are quoted frequently, whereas there is no explicit mentioning of social work as a single, independent and autonomous discipline	➤ Lack of a sense of autonomy and independency of the discipline of social work

Conclusions



- Reciprocal relation between perception and representation of social work
- Gaps in the current state of research
- Issues about the purpose and matter of social work
- The framework is insufficiently considered
- The gap between representation and reality

Conclusions



➤ Media representation affects the following three areas:

1. Public opinion
2. Social work practice (positive and negative)
3. Clients of social work

**Thank you for your
attention!**