
Media Transparency Initiative: An Exploratory Study of Global Media Practices

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What are the expectations?

- Independence of opinion
- Accurate, fair and honest practices
- A clear distinction what is paid for and what is not

A sense of ethical behavior

Disclosure of Sources = Transparency

Eight Factors that influence transparency

1. Long-time tradition of self-determination by citizens.
2. Comprehensive corruption laws with effective enforcement.
3. Accountability of government to citizens at all levels.
4. High adult literacy.
5. High liberal and professional education of practicing journalists.
6. Well-established, publicized and enforceable journalism codes of professional ethics.
7. Free press, free speech and free flow of information.
8. High media competition (multiple and competing media).

2007–2008 Global Media Practices Exploratory Study

- IPRA
- Institute for Public Relations (USA)
- Global Alliance
- International Federation of Journalists
- International Press Institute

Research Questions

- **RQ 1:** What are the most widespread forms of media influences?
- **RQ 2:** Do members of global professional communities accept these practices?

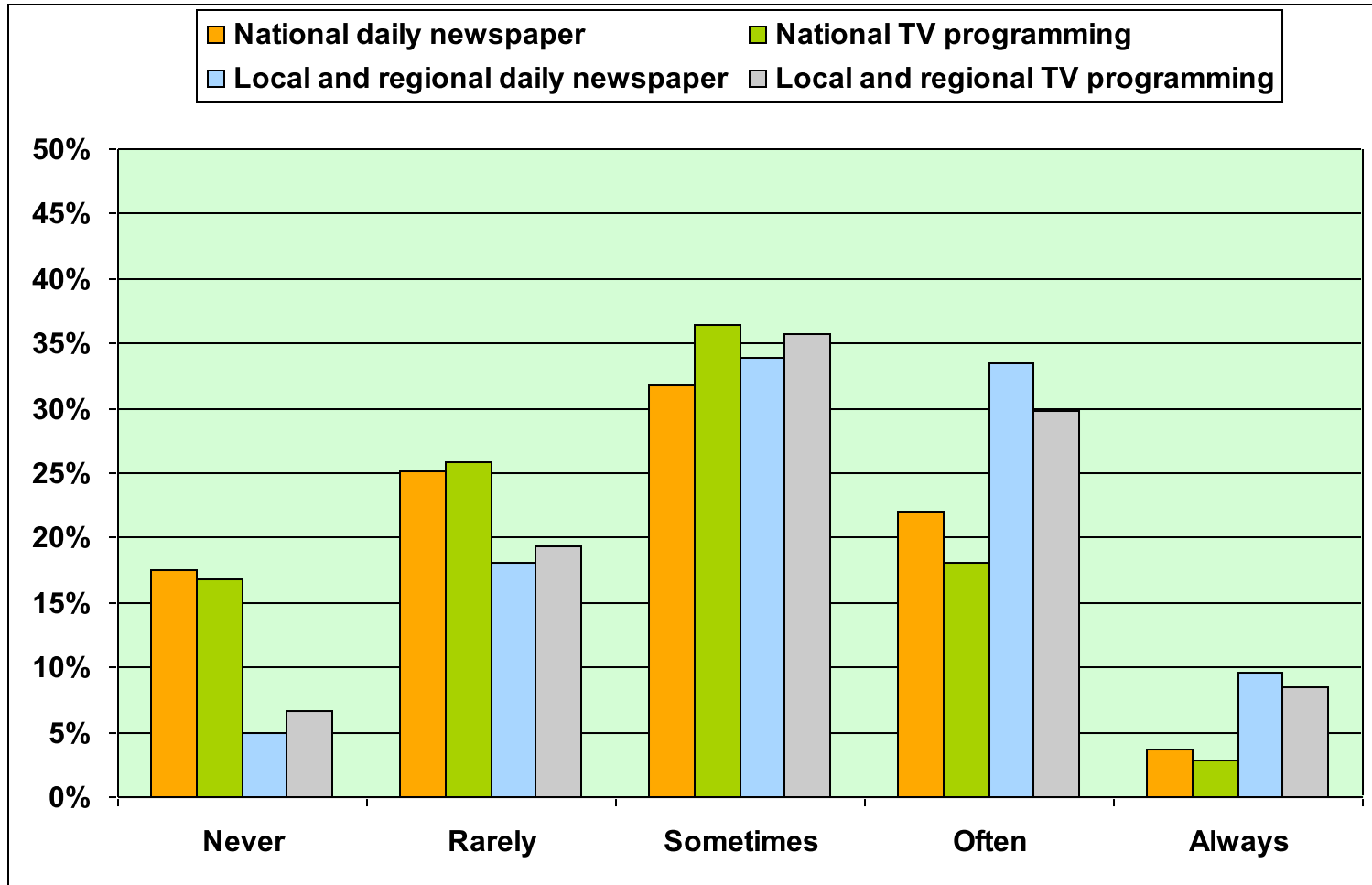
Methodology

- Online distribution of a survey in the fall 2007
- Population: Members of four major international professional organizations
- Total n= 403:
 - 93 Journalists: 35 countries and 10 regions
 - 310 PR Practitioners: 56 countries and 11 regions

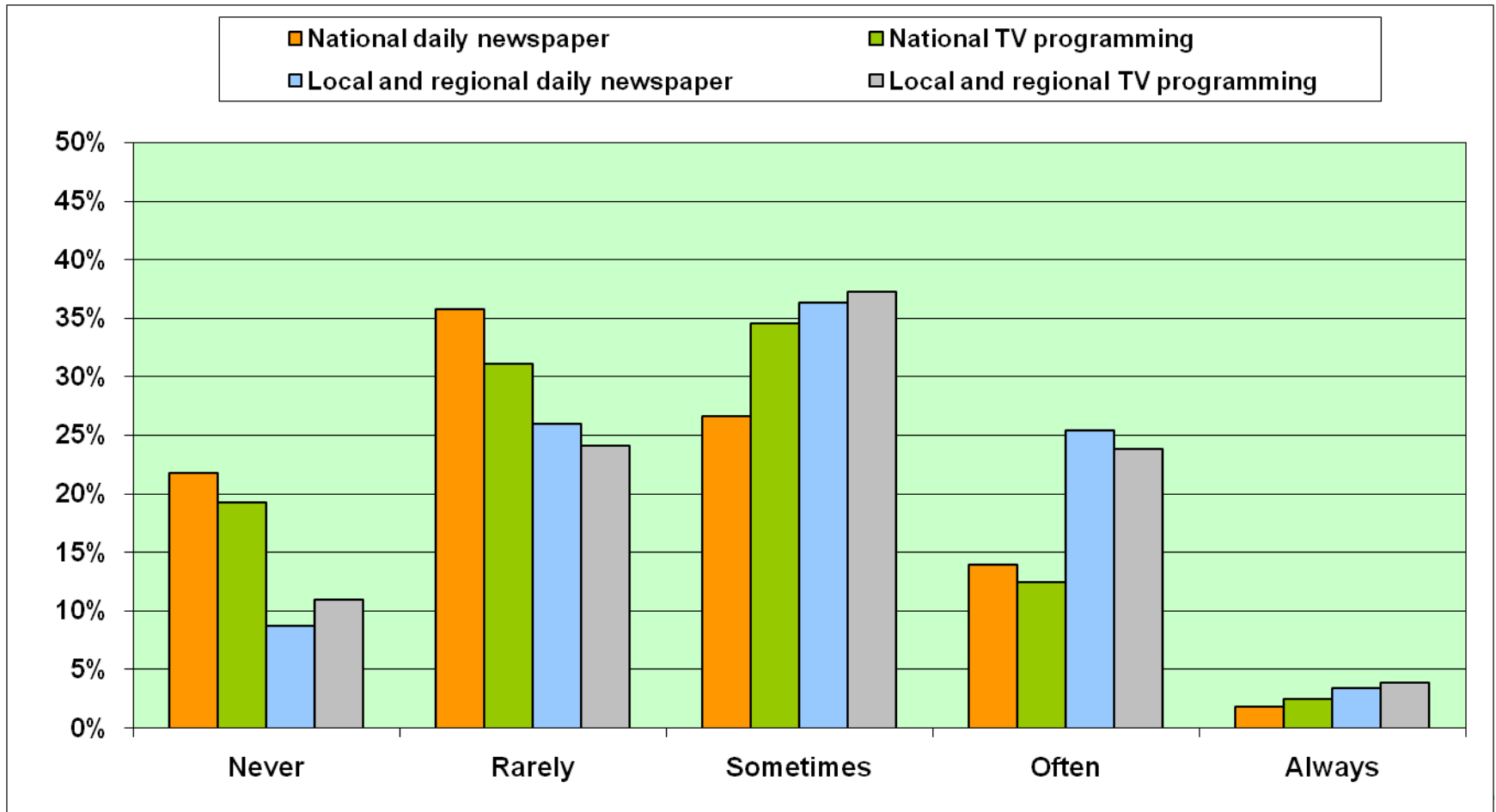
RQ 1: What are the most widespread forms of media influences?

- Indirect and direct payments for news releases
- Advertising department pressure
- Financial pressure

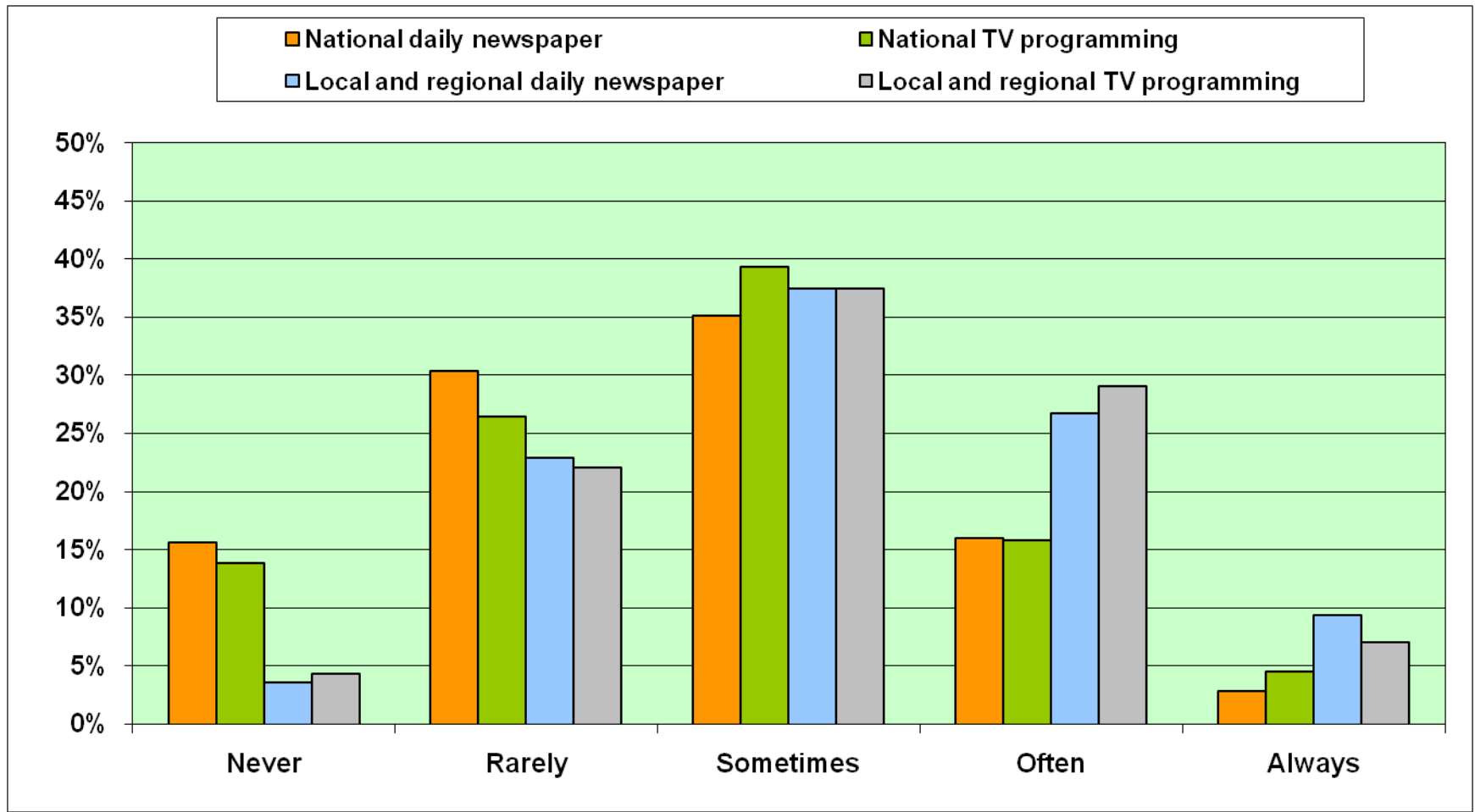
A news release that is not newsworthy appears in a publication in exchange for a paid advertisement. (n=316)



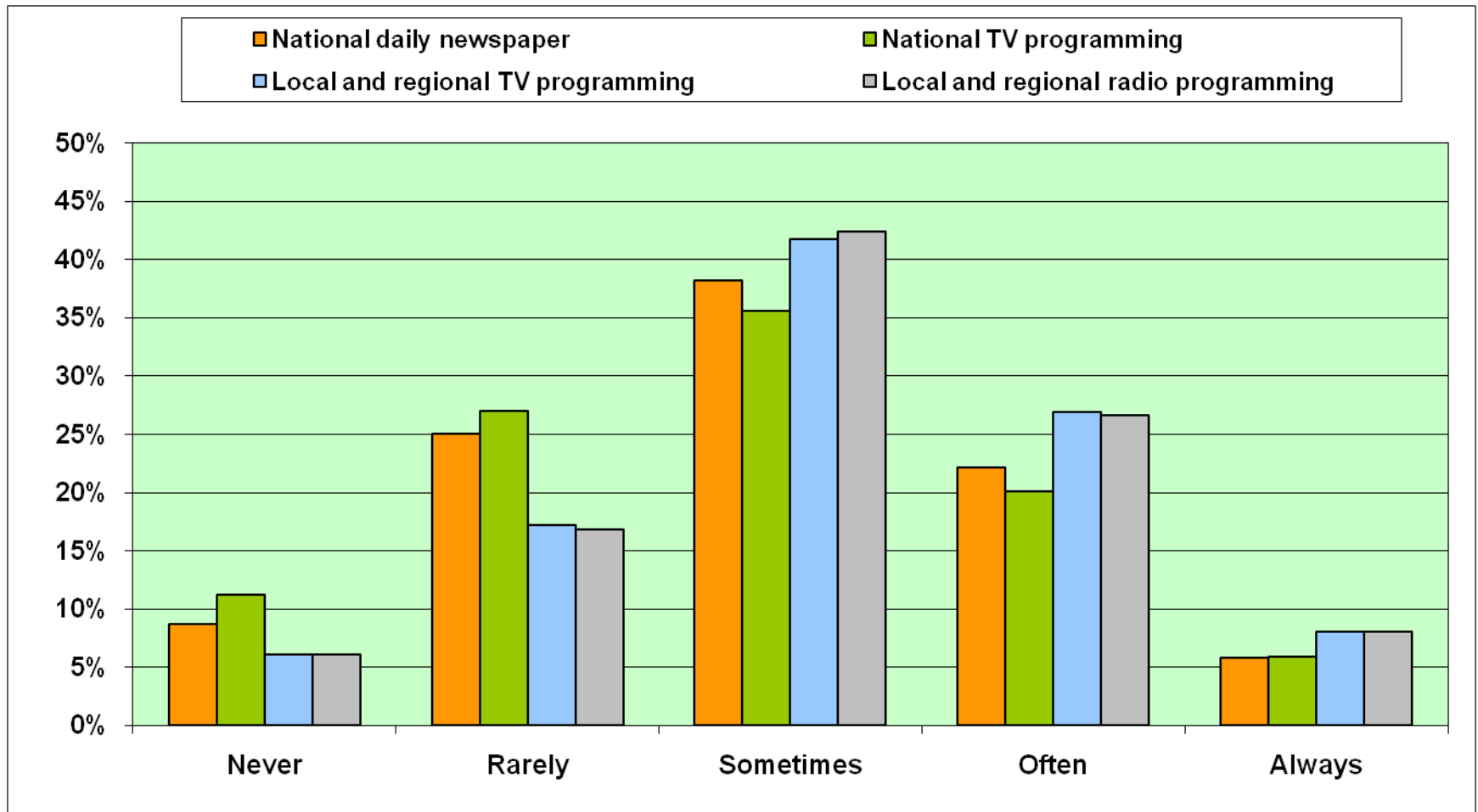
An advertisement is produced to look like a regular article or program and there is nothing to clearly inform the reader the message has been paid for.
(n=311)



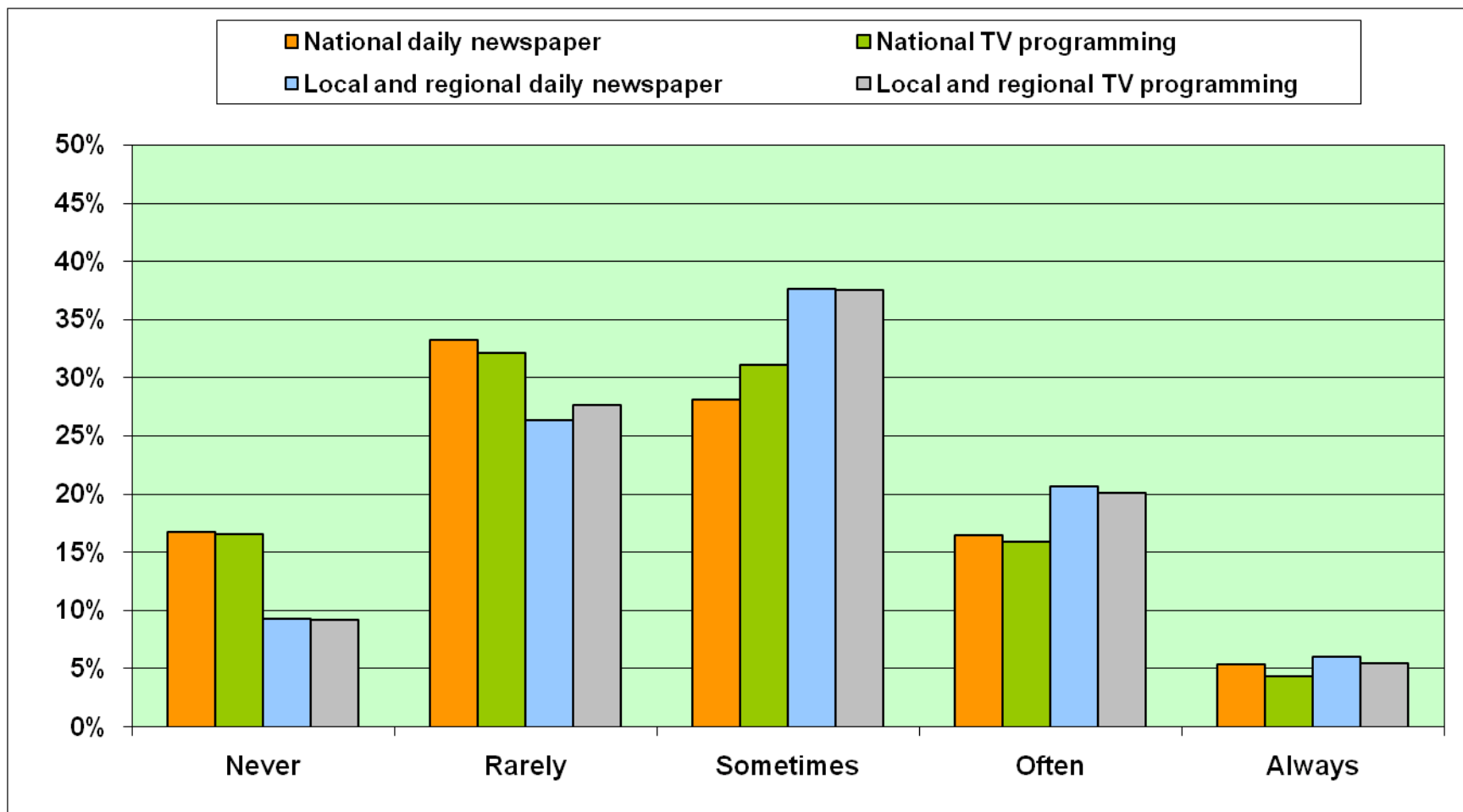
An advertising sales department of a media outlet influences decisions of editors in terms of which news from which sources gets covered. (n=299)



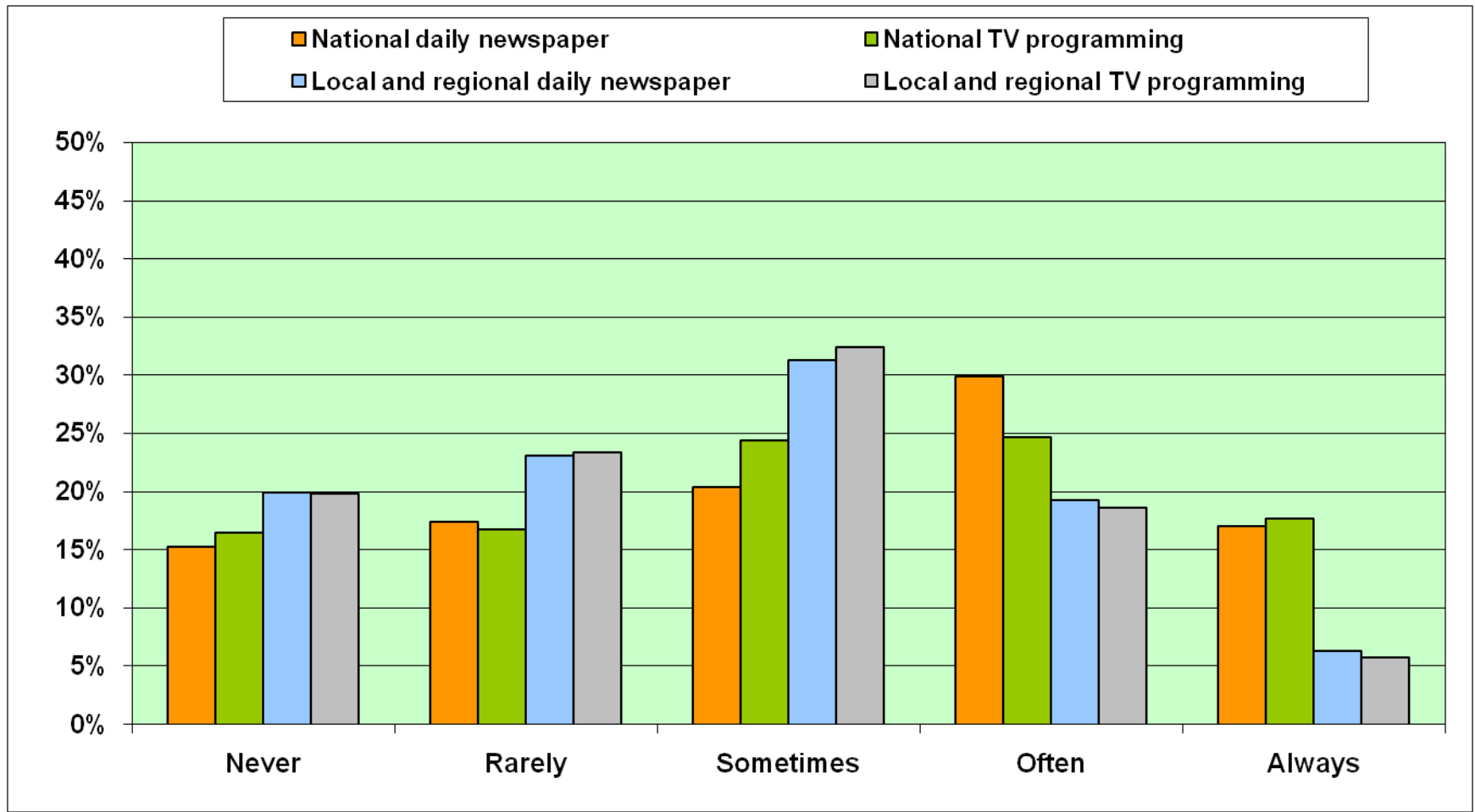
News sources put financial pressure on the media to influence media news judgment. (n=297)



A journalist who has a conflict of interest is also employed by a news source and this fact is not clearly disclosed in his or her news

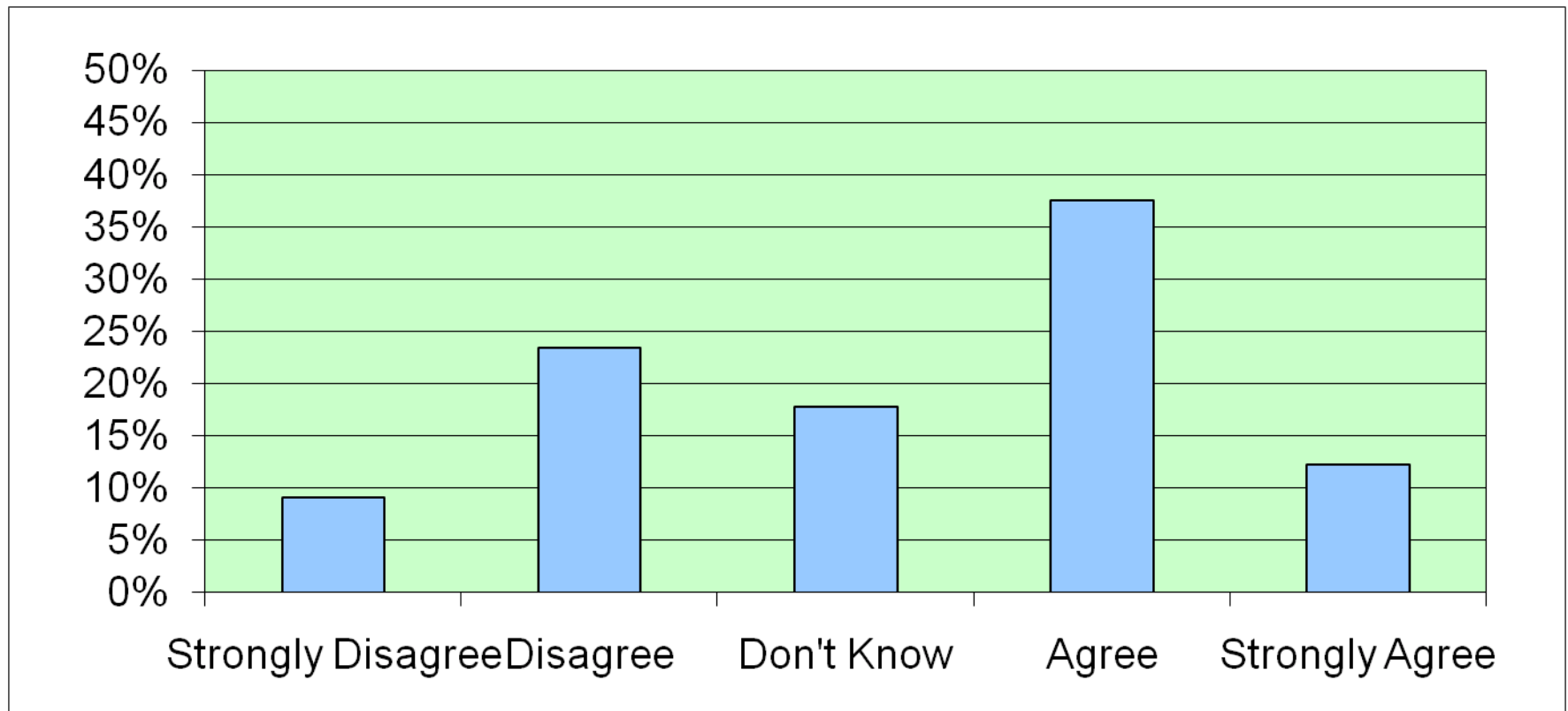


News media have a written policy covering the receipt of samples, free gifts or discounted materials from news sources.

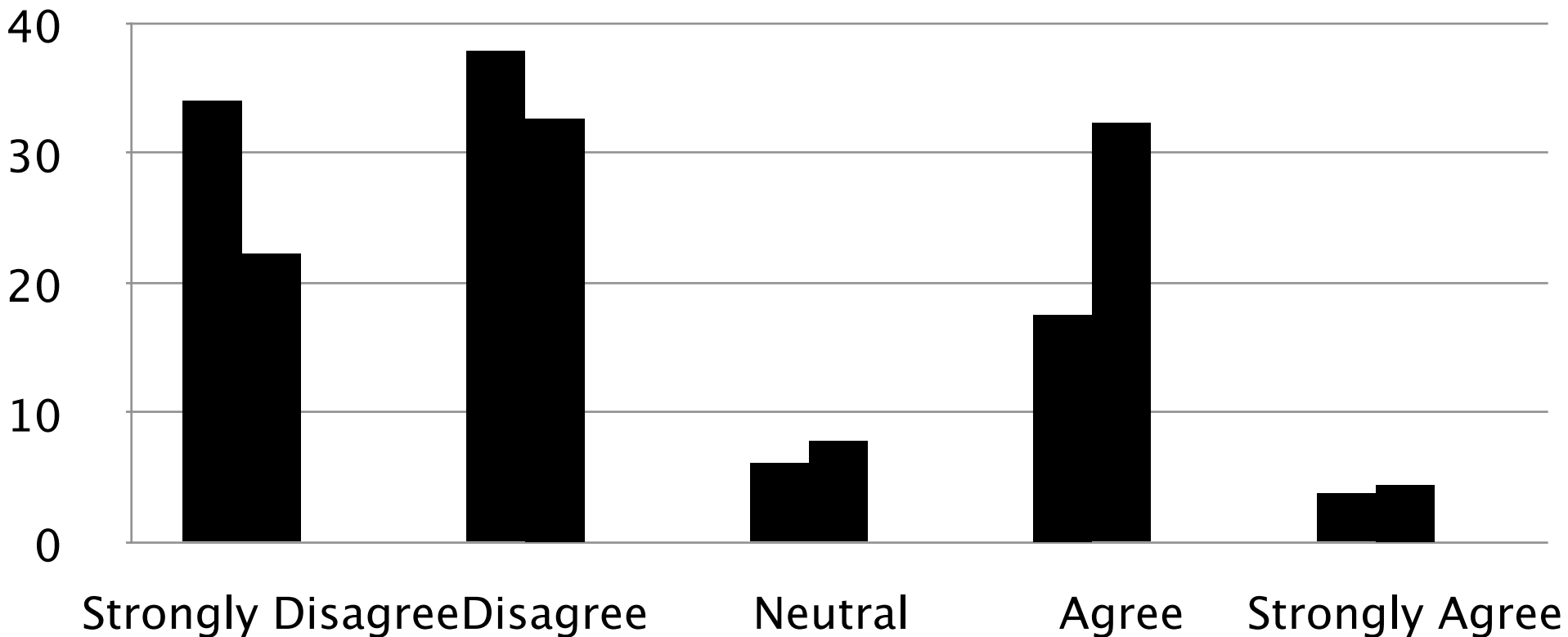


RQ2: Do members of global professional communities accept these practices?

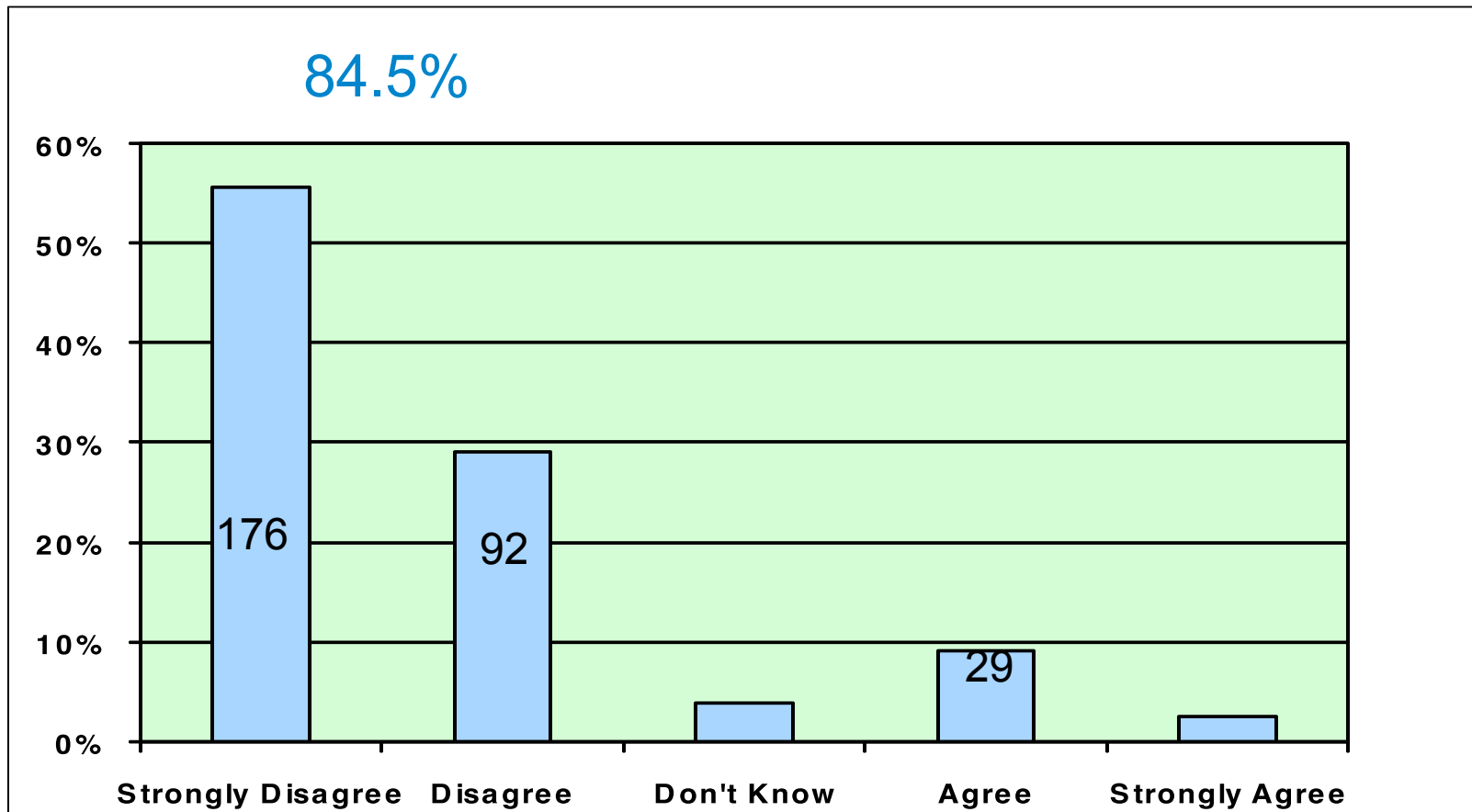
It is considered OK to accept payments by national media in my country. (n=320)



By Occupation: Journalists and PR practitioners

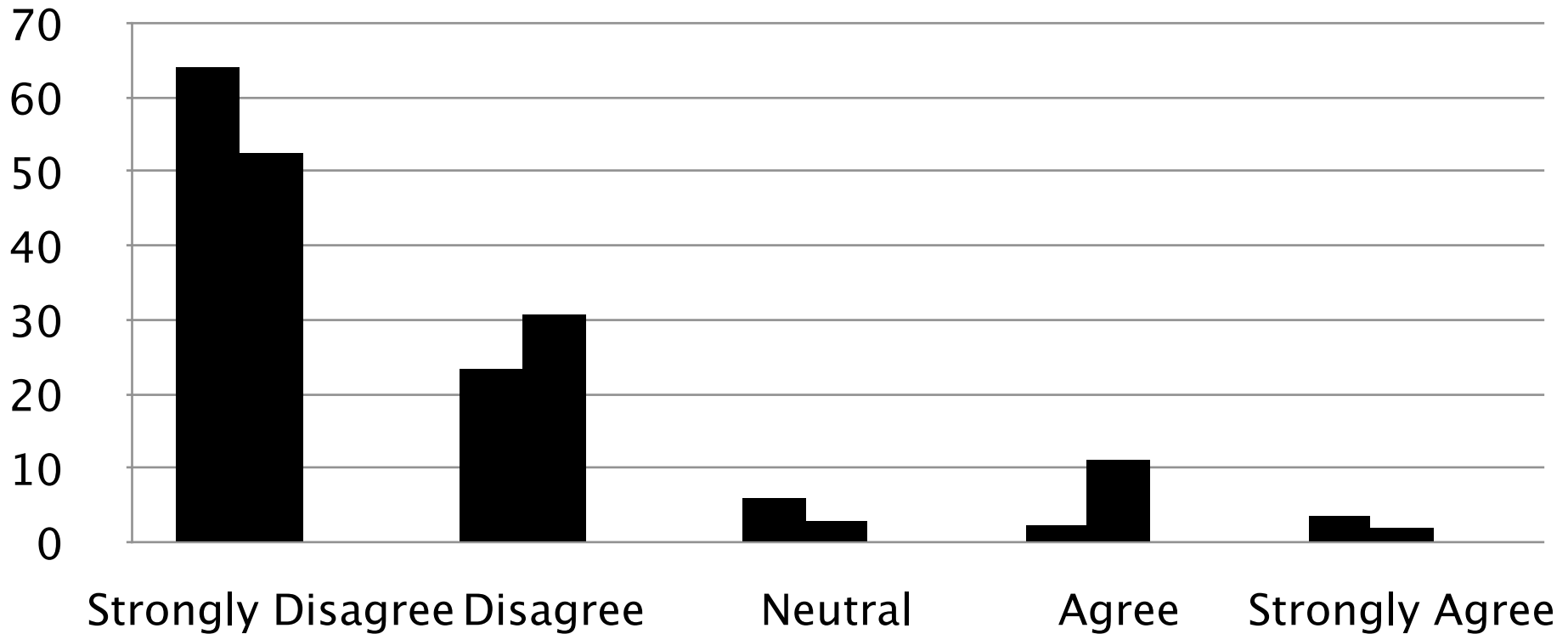


Do you personally agree this practice is acceptable? (N=317; M= 1.74; SD=1.06)



By Occupation

- Journalists (N=81)
- PR Practitioners (N= 236)
- Column1



PR professionals

“I think it can be a fuzzy line. It's hard to know if they do or they don't unless you are with the company working with the magazine or newspaper to advertise in a unique way. Sometimes it's just a matter of reading the small print – although sometimes – it's VERY small for a reason.”

“Many free local newspapers do not want to cover material from companies – if they do not pay for an ad at the same time – this should be fought – we are sources of content (not advertisements).”

Journalists

“In my experience such things are seldom if ever direct. The publisher and senior editors will of course be acquainted with some of the ad sales folks, who will of course have opinions about whatever industry is being covered, and about how major advertisers feel about the work the publication is doing... As a reporter I've never received specific guidance on such things, but one always knew who the big players were and whether one was getting under their skin.”

Interested in conducting a survey
in your country?

Contact Dr. Katerina Tsetsura via
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THANK YOU!