

Media use and social integration

An explorative study on public service media's contribution to societal cohesion

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the relationship between media usage and indicators for social integration. I seek to answer the following overarching research question: How can we assess the contribution of public service media to societal integration? The chapter starts with conceptual considerations on societal integration, and I propose a set of indicators for the empirical study of individuals' social integration. The empirical basis of this research is a representative telephone survey of adults in Germany in 2018–2019. Findings demonstrate the relationship between indicators of media use and indicators of social integration and the specific role of public service media (PSM) in this respect. In the conclusion, I discuss implications of this research for the assessment of PSM's contribution to society.

KEYWORDS: contribution to society, media repertoires, public service media, social integration, media use

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Introduction

The focus of this volume, public service media's contribution to society, refers to recent academic, organisational, and regulatory efforts to redefine public service media's (PSM) remit and functions in digital media environments (EBU, 2015). It takes up earlier discourses on media performance (McQuail, 1992), media accountability (Baldi & Hasebrink, 2006; Mitchell & Blumler, 1994), and public value (Cañedo et al., 2022; Collins, 2008; Martin & Lowe, 2014). These discourses emphasise that PSM must prove that they perform in terms of certain quality criteria, that they are accountable to their audiences and the public in general, and that they offer some kind of public value. Compared with these concepts, the concept of contribution to society, as proposed by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU, 2015), puts even stronger emphasis on PSM's *societal* impact – that is, on the actual effects of its activities in society.

When it comes to investigating the performance of PSM, research often focuses on the supply side of the communicative process, that is, the content that PSM offer. As a rule, by means of content analyses, this type of research measures a range of performance indicators, for example, the relative amount of information, entertainment, education, and orientation, the public relevance of news, the diversity of genres, topics, and opinions, and the deliberative characteristics of PSM's output (Jandura & Friedrich, 2014). However, these indicators only reflect the communicative *potential* offered by the media – that is, a necessary but not sufficient condition for successful communication (Hasebrink & Hölig, 2020). In order to evaluate the degree to which PSM fulfil their communicative functions and actually perform – that is, contribute to society – we need to know why users consume this media, and which effects these reasons might have (see also Fehlmann, Chapter 2 in this volume; Just et al., 2017; Sehl, 2020).

The objective of assessing PSM's contribution to society faces several challenges. To the extent that media's contribution to society is understood as an impact or effect of these media, an assessment of this effect would require a kind of causal proof. Due to the complexity of mediated societal processes, this kind of causal argument seems to be an unrealistic target for the regular assessment of PSM's contribution to society. However, to provide at least some substantial empirical evidence in this direction, this chapter offers conceptual considerations and empirical findings on the interplay between indicators of individuals' patterns of media use and their social integration. Correlations between these indicators would not prove that it was the media that led to a particular societal effect. Nevertheless, they still provide important evidence that can inform a comprehensive evaluation of PSM's contribution to society.

Another challenge for research that sets out to assess PSM's contribution to society is the wide range of media functions that might be regarded as

relevant for society (e.g., McQuail, 1992). Therefore, it is necessary to specify which particular function should be in the focus of research. The research presented in this chapter deals with media's contribution to societal integration, which is one of the key functions of media in general, and of PSM in particular (Thomass et al., 2015). Moreover, in recent years, the perceived decline of societal cohesion has become a major concern in many countries. This decline is often attributed to changes in the media environment and an increasing fragmentation of audiences. Several studies have provided empirical arguments for the decline of societal cohesion – in this case, in Germany – by stressing “a loss of the centre” (Zick et al., 2019), increasing social inequalities (Groh-Samberg et al., 2018), a general polarisation of societal debates (Krause & Gagné, 2019), and an increase of symptoms of group-related hostility (Decker & Brähler, 2018). However, the understanding of societal cohesion and integration underlying these discussions is rather vague and heterogeneous. Therefore, integration is not a static target in itself; instead, it should be an issue of public communication to find out, in a given societal context, how much and what kind of societal integration is regarded as beneficial or harmful. This societal discourse or self-understanding needs empirical indicators of how society integrates itself and of the role of media in general, and specific media in particular. This is particularly important for PSM: As part of their public remit and legitimation, PSM must provide evidence that they fulfil an integrative function as their contribution to society (EBU, 2015).

Against this background, I explore the relationship between media usage and indicators for social integration and seek to answer the following overarching research question:

RQ1. How can we assess the contribution of public service media to societal integration?

The chapter starts with conceptual considerations on societal integration, and I propose a set of indicators for the empirical study of individuals' social integration. After a short description of the method – a representative telephone survey of adults in Germany in 2018–2019 – I present findings that demonstrate the relationship between indicators of media use and indicators of social integration. In the conclusion, I discuss implications of this research for the assessment of PSM's contribution to society.

Social integration as part of public service media's remit

The objective of assessing media's contribution to societal integration is confronted with the challenge that the concept of societal integration or cohesion is not well defined (Chan et al., 2006). An important distinction refers to the level of analysis: On the one hand, the concept refers to system

integration, that is, the degree to which a society or public is integrated; on the other hand, it refers to social integration, that is, the degree to which an individual is integrated in the society (e.g., Lockwood, 1969). Furthermore, with regard to both levels of analysis, we must consider different or even contradicting opinions on how we can recognise integration, for instance, whether it is characterised by a high level of homogeneity of all members of society or rather by intense interactions between different parts of society.

This conceptual vagueness extends to theoretical and political debates on the specific remit of PSM that generally emphasise societal integration as one of PSM's key functions (Collins, 2008; McQuail, 1992). Even if the term is not literally used, many of the criteria that are supposed to characterise PSM are closely related to their integrative function. For instance, they are expected to provide their service to the whole population and not neglect certain groups, for example, young or less-educated people (Schulz et al., 2019). Accordingly, they are criticised for any strategy that might further audience fragmentation (Lassen, 2020). With regard to their role in modern democracies, PSM are supposed to reflect the diversity of societal topics and perspectives and thus offer an opportunity for all citizens to recognise their own positions and perspectives (Lund & Lowe, 2016). To conclude, while there is a consensus that PSM should contribute to societal integration, there is much disagreement about what kind of societal integration is needed. With regard to efforts to assess PSM's performance, public value, or contribution to society, this situation is a serious challenge. To solve this challenge, the argument here is that PSM should foster a broad societal debate on how these media should contribute to what kind of societal integration (see, e.g., Rodríguez-Castro & Campos-Freire, Chapter 11 in this volume). In order to substantiate this debate, research should provide empirical evidence indicating PSM's role in and contribution to society.

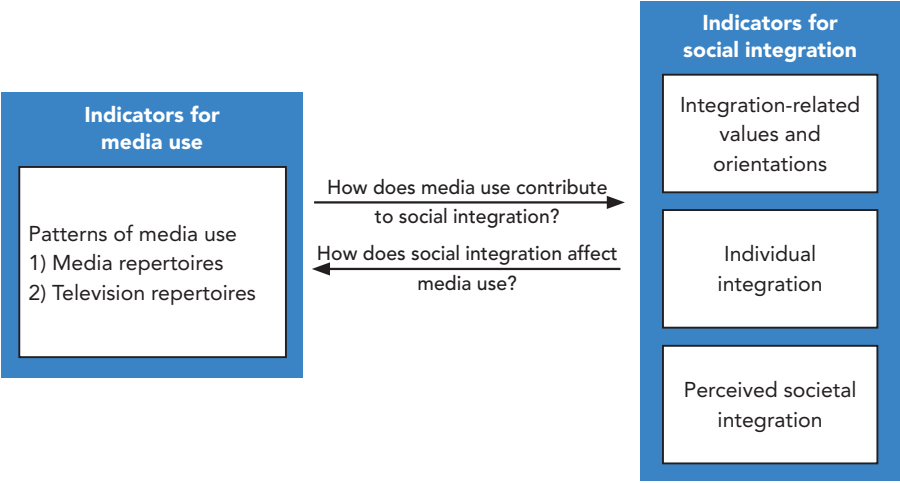
As one specific step within this broader ambition, this chapter proposes a conceptual framework for the empirical analysis of media's integrative functions, which focuses on the individual level of social integration (see Figure 4.1): The guiding question is how specific patterns of media use relate to indicators of media users' social integration. The reason for referring to "patterns" of media use is the following argument: Given the wide reach of media, the fact that an individual uses a particular medium, for example, television or the Internet, or a particular channel, for example, a public service or a private channel, is not very meaningful and does not tell much about the individual and their everyday life. In order to strengthen the link between individuals' everyday lives and media use, we must go beyond the level of single media to the level of media repertoires (Hasebrink & Domeyer, 2012), that is, the composition of different media that an individual uses. Patterns of media use will be described on two levels: The first level refers to different types of media – legacy media and online media – which helps to

understand the implications of the digitalisation of the media environment for social integration (e.g., Lowe et al., 2018). The second level refers to different kinds of television channels – particularly public service and private channels – which helps to understand the specific role of public service and private channels.

In order to grasp individuals' social integration, indicators that reflect three different aspects of social integration were included:

- **Integration-related values and orientations:** These indicators refer to how people think about societal integration and what kind of integration they favour. This aspect of social integration is only loosely connected to normative considerations concerning the remit of PSM. As outlined above, there are different conceptualisations of “good” integration; therefore, the open research question here is about how certain patterns of media use are related to what kinds of integration-related values and orientations.
- **Individual integration:** These indicators reflect to what extent people engage in social activities, for example, political participation, membership in associations and clubs, or engagement in social initiatives. Theoretical work on democracy often emphasises that one of the core prerequisites for this form of government is that citizens actively engage in opinion-building on issues of public concern and in political and social activities. Accordingly, PSM are expected to encourage and to stimulate media users' interest and engagement in political and social activities. Therefore, one might expect that the use of PSM goes along with a higher level of integration.
- **Perception of societal cohesion:** These indicators refer to people's individual perceptions of societal integration: How do they perceive and evaluate the current state of societal cohesion and of democracy in their country? These perceptions build a conceptual link between the individual level of social integration and the societal level of system integration. With regard to normative expectations from PSM, these indicators are ambivalent and context-dependent; therefore, again, it is an open question about how the use of PSM relates to the perception of rather strong or weak societal cohesion.

Figure 4.1 Conceptual framework



As indicated above, the relationships between the concepts in this framework cannot be clearly interpreted in either of the two possible directions. The arrows in Figure 4.1 indicate the mutual interaction between media use and social integration: On the one hand, social integration might lead to specific patterns of media use, and on the other, media use affects social integration.

Method

Sample and data collection

German public service broadcaster ZDF, together with mindline media (Berlin) and Leibniz Institute for Media Research | Hans-Bredow-Institut (HBI, Hamburg), conducted a study with the objective of developing and measuring indicators for integrative media functions in order to further the public discourse about media's contribution to societal cohesion (see Hasebrink et al., 2019). Data were collected by a telephone survey among the German population. mindline media conducted the fieldwork in December 2018 and January 2019. The sample ($n = 1,205$) is representative for German-speaking individuals in Germany aged 14 years and older.

Operationalisation of key indicators

In order to assess patterns of media use on the level of types of media, we asked for the frequency of use of 1) television, 2) radio, 3) newspapers and magazines, and 4) online media. These indicators are not distinctive, since respondents were asked to also consider the online channels of television, radio, and print organisations. As a rule, the majority of respondents claimed

to use the four media on a daily basis, except print media (43%). According to these results, television stands out with the highest frequency of use – only 6 per cent said they never use the medium (for radio, this figure is 14%, for print media, 16%, and for online media, 17%). As is well known from previous audience research, these frequencies of use correlate with indicators for social position: Women and older groups tend to watch television more often; older groups are more likely to listen to the radio; older groups and higher-educated groups are more frequent readers of print media; and younger and higher-educated groups are more likely to frequently use the Internet.

In order to identify cross-media patterns of media use, based on single indicators, we applied an explorative cluster-centre analysis and identified four general media repertoires that represent our first indicator for patterns of media use (see Table 4.1). The most frequent one (57% of all respondents), pattern A, is characterised by daily use of online media and radio; in addition, they used television and print media several times a week. Thus, they have a very broad media repertoire. In terms of social position, this group represents the average population, with a small trend towards higher education. The most significant characteristic of pattern B is that these respondents did not use online media, while they often used the other three media. This was the oldest group (on average, more than 63 years old), with women and individuals with lower education being over-represented. Pattern C is just the opposite, these individuals often used online media, and only rarely the other three media. This was the youngest group, included mainly men, and tended to be less educated. Finally, pattern D is characterised by daily use of online media, and frequent use of television and print media, while radio does not play a significant role. This group stands out with the highest formal education.

The findings reflect well-known differences between social groups with regard to their media use. However, they also illustrate the relevance of a pattern perspective. For instance, most studies on media use report a positive correlation between the use of online media and higher education – so does ours. However, the pattern-oriented analysis identifies one group (C) that mainly relied on online media but tended to be less educated. Thus, the main difference between groups with higher and lower education is not rooted in the frequency of use of online media, but rather in the fact that online media are combined with other media.

Table 4.1 *General media repertoires and their social characteristics*

Repertoires	N	% of sample	Average age (years)	Female (%)	Higher education (%)
A: Daily online and radio, often TV and print	695	57.7	46.5	51.2	39.6
B: No online, other media often	244	20.2	63.9	58.2	11.1
C: Often online, other media rarely	144	12.0	34.6	39.6	26.0
D: Daily online, often TV and print, radio rarely	122	10.1	44.3	48.4	45.0
Total	1,205	100.0	48.3	50.9	31.2

The second indicator for patterns of media use provides information about the use of television and the particular role of public service television. Based on how often the respondents reported watching the most relevant public service and private channels, we distinguished four television repertoires: regular viewers of public service and private channels, that is, those who watch at least one public service channel and at least one private channel at least four times a week; regular viewers of public service channels but not of private channels; regular viewers of private channels only; and those who do not regularly watch any channel (see Table 4.2). The largest group (36.6%) was regular viewers of public service channels; they were older than the average, a majority female, and more highly educated. The second largest group (28.4%) included those individuals who watched neither public nor private channels on a regular basis; this was the youngest group, a majority male, and rather well educated. Members of the third group (22.6%) regularly watched both public and private channels; they were older and less educated. Finally, the fourth group (12.5%) was rather young, female, and less educated.

Table 4.2 *Television repertoires and social characteristics*

Regular viewers (at least 1 channel at least 4 times a week)	N	% of sample	Average age (years)	Female (%)	Higher education (%)
Neither public nor private channels	342	28.4	36.6	46.1	39.6
Only private channels	150	12.5	40.9	60.7	19.1
Only public service channels	441	36.6	59.0	54.2	36.8
Both public service and private channels	272	22.6	49.8	51.8	25.0
Total	1,205	100.0	48.3	50.9	31.2

In order to assess integration-related values and orientations, respondents were asked how important they considered 13 different values. By means of explorative factor analysis, we identified three independent dimensions explaining 53 per cent of the total variance:

- Factor 1 “Tolerance/Respect”: Tolerance towards other ways of living (loading: .74), respectful conduct (.72), justice (.67), equal opportunities (.67), to be taken seriously and to be heard (.64), helpfulness (.62), democratic thinking (.58), friendliness (.51).
- Factor 2 “Success/Performance”: Success (.81), orientation towards performance (.74), fun and amusement (.65).
- Factor 3 “Connection to homeland/Safety”: Connection to homeland (.76), safety (.59).

Each of these three dimensions reflect particular aspects of social integration that do not exclude each other: In statistical terms, they are independent from each other; thus, among the respondents, all kinds of combinations of the three dimensions are possible. The three dimensions vary with the respondents’ social position: “Tolerance/Respect” was more salient among women and among people with higher education; 20–29-year-olds had the highest values on this dimension, and the oldest group (70+) had the lowest. “Success/Performance” stood out among younger groups, and among men, while education did not make a substantial difference. “Connection to homeland/Safety” was more important for younger and older groups than for middle-aged people; and less-educated groups rated this aspect higher.

The way in which people integrate themselves into society can be described by their social and political activities and their membership in organisations. In this study, we asked for membership in political parties (5%), religious groups (37%), unions (15%), clubs (37%), citizen initiatives (9%), environmental organisations (7%), or other organisations (5%). For the analysis, we calculated the overall number of organisations the respondents reported being involved in. 31 per cent were not members of any organisation; the average number of memberships was 1.2. This value was slightly higher among people with higher education (1.4) and 40–59-year-olds (1.3) – however, the overall differences between the age groups were not significant in this respect.

Beyond membership in organisations, respondents were asked to say how often they performed ten different social activities. Again, by means of explorative factor analysis, we identified three independent factors that explain 51 per cent of the total variance:

- Factor 1 “Helpfulness”: helping neighbours (.72), donating money or goods (.66), engaging for the protection of the environment (.57), engaging on an honorary basis (.56), discussing societal or political issues with family, friends, or colleagues (.50).

- Factor 2 “Political engagement”: participating in demonstrations (.73), participating in political assemblies or pre-election events (.73), signing signature initiatives or petitions on political or societal issues (.64).
- Factor 3 “Media-based activities”: Writing letters to the editor or writing comments on online articles (.83), expressing one’s opinion about political or societal issues (.78).

“Helpfulness” was more pronounced among women, 30–59-year-olds, and people with higher education. “Political engagement” was more likely for men, people aged 20–29 and 60–69, and particularly higher-educated people. “Media-based activities” were more frequent among men, and particularly among 14–19-year-olds.

In order to assess individuals’ perception of societal cohesion, we used two items. First, respondents were asked how they perceived the societal cohesion in Germany. Almost two-thirds (64%) answered “rather bad”, almost one-third (31%) “rather good”, and the remaining (5%) had no opinion. This perception was independent of gender and age; however, less-educated people were more likely (69%) to have negative perceptions of societal cohesion than higher-educated people (55%). Second, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the status of democracy in Germany. 50 per cent claimed they were “(rather) dissatisfied”. Less-educated people (59%) and 60–69-year-olds were even more likely to be dissatisfied.

Results

In the following, for each of the three aspects of social integration, I shortly describe their correlation with the frequency of media use and with the two levels of media repertoires.

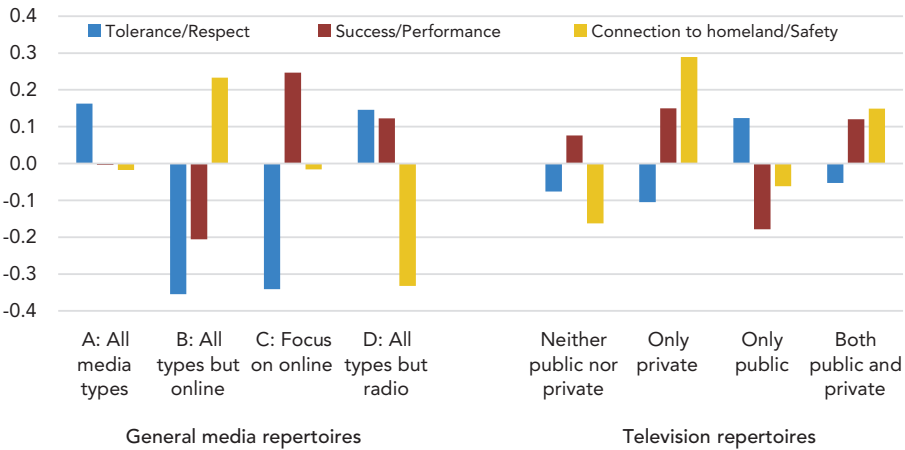
Integration-related values and orientations

Correlations with the frequency of use of all four types of media were positive for “Tolerance/Respect”: The more frequently people used the Internet ($r = .23$), radio ($r = .14$), print media ($r = .10$), and television ($r = .09$), the more important they rated tolerance and respect. The dimension “Success/Performance” was positively correlated with use of the Internet ($r = .12$), but negatively with use of radio ($r = -.10$) and print media. This reflects the underlying role of age with younger groups being frequent users of the Internet and highly interested in success and performance within their everyday lives. The third dimension, “Connection to homeland/Safety”, was slightly positively correlated with use of television ($r = .10$) and radio ($r = .06$) and negatively with use of the Internet ($r = -.10$) and print media ($r = -.08$).

Figure 4.2 shows the average factor values of the three dimensions in general media repertoires and television repertoires. General media repertoires are particularly characterised by substantial differences with regard to “Tolerance/Respect”. In repertoires A and D – that is, those who frequently used all media types or all but radio – tolerance and respect are very important; in the other two repertoires, B and C – that is, those who did not use online media at all, and those who focused on online media – these values are rather unimportant. Interestingly, beyond this commonality, repertoires B and C show opposite results for the other two dimensions: While those who did not use online media (B) emphasised connection to homeland and safety as important values, those who mainly used online media (C) focused on success and performance.

For the television repertoires, the differences are less pronounced; nevertheless, we observed distinct patterns. Regular viewers of public service channels were highest on “Tolerance/Respect” and lowest in “Success/Performance”, while regular viewers of private channels were highest on “Connection to homeland/Safety” and “Success/Performance” and lowest on “Tolerance/Respect”. Those who combined public and private channels showed a similar but less accentuated pattern than those who regularly watched private channels. The fourth group – that is, those who did not regularly watch any channel – were mainly characterised by the low importance of “Connection to homeland/Safety”.

Figure 4.2 Integration-related values and orientations and media repertoires (factor values)



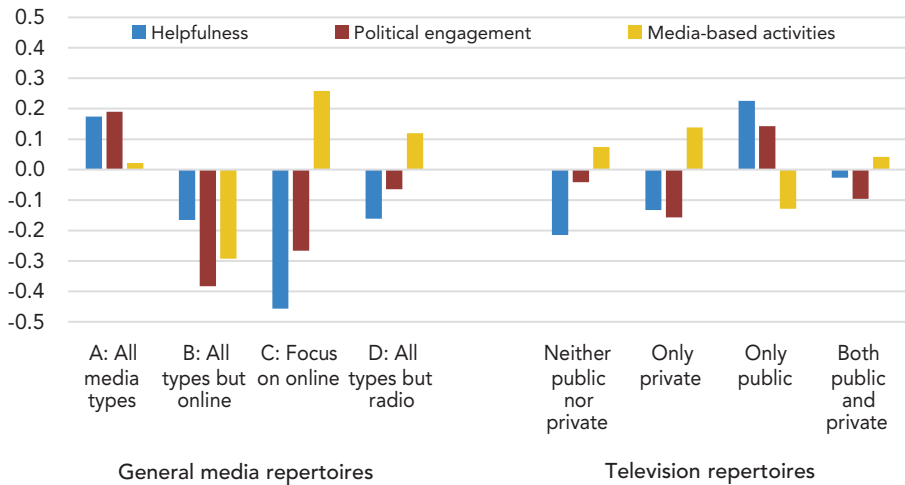
Individual integration

The analysis of correlations between indicators for social activities and the frequency of use of media types (without table) shows that, as a rule, more frequent media use goes along with more social activities and more memberships in organisations. Most of the coefficients are positive; the two exceptions – negative correlations between television and radio use with “Media-based activities” – are due to the specific items underlying this dimension, which explicitly mentioned online activities.

Figure 4.3 illustrates the level of social activities in the groups that were built based on their media repertoires. Both general media repertoires and television repertoires go along with significant differences in all three dimensions. As for general media repertoires, “Helpfulness” and “Political engagement” are highest in the large group of those who were characterised by frequent use of all media (A), while the other three groups are below the average. These two dimensions are rather low for both those who did not use online media at all (B) and those who mainly focused on online media (C). Plausibly, these two groups clearly differ in the frequency of “Media-based activities”. Thus, high or low use of online media as such does not allow for implications regarding social activities; instead, the findings indicate that a broad repertoire that, besides online media, includes television, radio, and print media goes along with the highest level of social activities. This is supported when we look at the number of memberships in organisations (without table): The broad repertoire A has the highest average number of memberships (1.36), while groups B (0.83) and C (0.86) have the lowest.

As for television repertoires, “Helpfulness” and “Political engagement” were highest among regular viewers of public service channels; in the other three groups, both dimensions were below the average. For “Media-based activities”, findings were exactly reverse. Interestingly, the pattern of activities for regular viewers of private channels and for regular viewers of both public and private channels were similar, with the former being more accentuated. In contrast, those who regularly watched public channels clearly differed from those who combined the two kinds of channels. The findings on membership support these observations (without table): regular viewers of public channels were most likely to be members of social organisations (1.37), and regular viewers of private channels least likely (0.97); the other two groups had only slightly more memberships (1.08).

Figure 4.3 *Dimensions of social activities and media repertoires (factor values)*

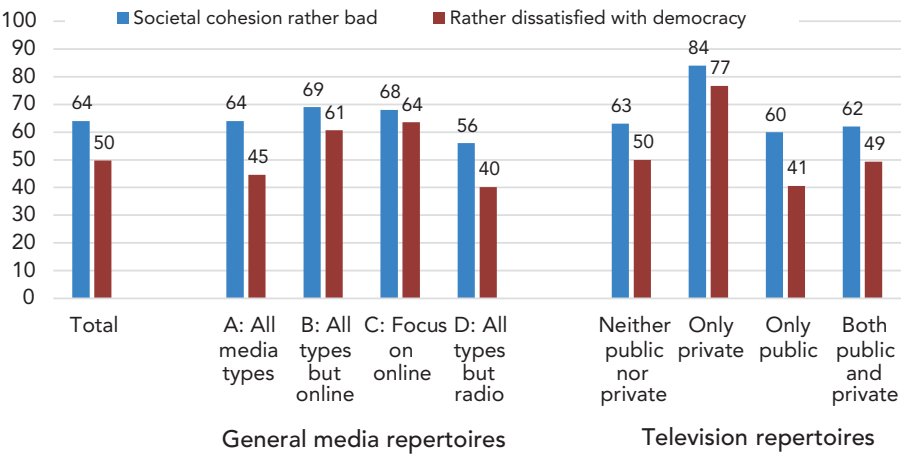


Perception of societal integration

More frequent use of print and online media correlated with rather positive answers to both questions. It may be assumed that formal education is the explaining factor. More frequent use of radio correlated with higher satisfaction with democracy. With regard to television use, there were no significant correlations with these indicators.

People with different media repertoires differed with regard to the perception of societal integration (see Figure 4.4); since the two indicators (perception of societal cohesion, satisfaction with democracy) are closely correlated, these differences are quite similar. As for general media repertoires, the perception of societal cohesion was most sceptical in the group that did not use online media (B); second was the group that focused on online media (C). These two groups were also least satisfied with democracy; in this respect, group C was most dissatisfied. The other two groups – those who frequently used all media (A) and those who frequently used television, print, and online media (D) – expressed a more positive view of societal integration. As for television repertoires, the striking finding is that regular viewers of private channels are much more negative about societal cohesion and democracy than the other three groups.

Figure 4.4 Perception of societal cohesion and (dis)satisfaction with democracy in media repertoires (per cent)



Comments: Questions (translated from German): “What do you think: All in all, how is social cohesion in Germany?”; “How satisfied are you with the status of democracy in Germany?”

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to develop indicators for the assessment of PSM’s contribution to society, particularly regarding the integration function of media. The main argument was the following: If we find a relationship between specific patterns of media use and indicators for social integration, we can argue that media matter – not necessarily in a deterministic causal understanding, but as relevant factors in the complex process of individuals relating themselves to and forming society.

The data presented here refer to the quite abstract levels of media types and the distinction between public service and private television channels. They do not reflect characteristics of specific brands, genres, formats, or even single products. Nonetheless, the findings clearly show substantial differences between subgroups with different media repertoires: These groups differ with regard to their orientations towards social integration, to how they integrate themselves, and to their perception of societal cohesion.

This finding holds true when we analyse the role of single media types, of general media repertoires, and also of specific television repertoires, that were built just on the distinction between public service and private channels. As the latter analysis allows drawing conclusions with regard to the specific role of PSM, we focus on these channel repertoires (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 *Overview of indicators for social integration within television repertoires*

	Social position	Values and orientations	Individual integration	Perceived societal integration
No regular viewer	younger male higher education	- Connection to homeland + Success - Tolerance/Respect	- Helpfulness + Media-based activities - Membership	–
Only private channels	younger female lower education	+ Connection to homeland + Success - Tolerance	- Helpfulness - Political engagement + Media-based activities - Membership	- Societal cohesion - Democracy
Only public service channels	older female higher education	- Success + Tolerance - Connection to homeland	+ Helpfulness + Political engagement - Media-based activities, + Membership	+ Democracy
Public and private channels	Lower education	+ Connection to homeland + Success - Tolerance	- Political engagement, - Membership	–

The largest group, regular viewers of public service channels, is – in line with well-known findings from audience research – rather old, female, and well educated. This group emphasised tolerance rather than success and connectedness to their homeland; furthermore, their everyday life tended to include more activities related to helping others, to political engagement, and to membership in different kinds of organisations. On the other hand, they were reluctant when it comes to expressing themselves on social media.

From this pattern, the other three repertoires deviate in different directions. The second largest group, those who do not regularly watch either public service or private channels, is rather young, male, and well educated. This group was interested in success, while connectedness to the homeland and tolerance were less in focus. Integrative activities were rather seldom, except self-expressions on social media.

The group that combined regular use of public service and private channels is less educated. Their values refer to connectedness to their homeland and success; their political engagement and membership in organisations were rather low.

The fourth group, those who regularly watch private channels but no public service channels, is rather young, female, and less educated. Similar to but even more accentuated than the third group, they focused on connectedness to their homeland and success, while tolerance was less salient for them, and political engagement and membership in organisations were low. Different from the previous group, their everyday activities were less directed to helping others; on the other hand, they were rather interested in media-based activities. Furthermore, this group was by far more sceptical about societal cohesion and the state of democracy than the other groups.

These differences between the four groups that were built based on a simple indicator – that is, orientation towards public service or private channels – underline the eminent role of media use for how different groups integrate themselves and perform different patterns of social integration. In this respect, media – particularly PSM – matter. Regarding our objective to grasp the specific contribution of PSM to societal integration, the findings demonstrate that integration cannot be regarded as a one-dimensional concept, along which we can distinguish those who are integrated and those who are not. Instead, there are different ways to integrate oneself – and these are linked with specific media repertoires. Therefore, the question of what extent to which media in general or PSM in particular contribute to societal integration cannot be answered by stating that these media as such further or hinder integration. Media practices are interwoven into individuals' everyday practices, through which these individuals connect themselves to (or disconnect themselves from) society and specific societal groups. The findings can help us better understand who uses what kind of media for what kind of integration. For the debate on PSM and their specific contribution to societal integration, the findings show that PSM do matter in terms of social integration. Thus, the empirical evidence presented here can stimulate public discourse on the specific role of PSM (see Rodríguez-Castro & Campos-Freire, Chapter 11 in this volume): For which groups should PSM offer which kinds of service that can be used for which kind of social integration? Can PSM be satisfied with the result that their core audiences are more oriented towards tolerance and respect, but less towards success and connectedness to one's homeland? Is it a merit of PSM that their audience engages less in political activities and has a rather positive view of democracy? Alternatively, is it their failure that they are not able to reach those who are less interested in politics and highly sceptical of the state of democracy?

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