

The Educational Value of Public Service Media in Western Europe

An explorative analysis of the role of PSM in Western European societies and their (educational) value proposition in times of digital transformation

Student Name: Matthias Mostböck

Student Number: 606010

Supervisor: Matthijs Leendertse, MA

Master Media Studies - Media & Business
Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication
Erasmus University Rotterdam

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ABSTRACT

The public service broadcasting industry is undergoing rapid digital transformation processes fueled by technological advancements, evolving user behaviour, shifting audience interest in favour of commercial platforms and growing economic pressure as a result of increased competition, depending on the funding model. In view of these challenges, strategic considerations are necessary on the part of media institutions. This thesis comprehensively explores the educational value of public service media (PSM) as an essential public service. Initially, a literature review serves as a foundation to for understanding the unique role PSM play in promoting education and knowledge within Western European societies. When reviewing the democratic, social and cultural role of PSM as a public institutions on an educational mission, a gap was discovered in the existing literature on how this role of PSM is changing in the course of the digital transformation processes. Furthermore, it was also noted that there were hardly any scientific studies on strategic considerations in relation to PSM. Therefore, the following research questions were developed: RQ1: How can public service media in Western European PSM use their public value propositions to Europe strategically position themselves as providers of educational value in order to stand out from the competition in the ever-changing digital media markets? RQ2: How can public service media in Western Europe operationalise their educational mandate and translate it into an adequately innovative content offering that meets the demands of our time? Employing a qualitative research approach, this thesis used in-depth interviews as a data collection method and thematic analysis to examine the data. Twelve experts from the intersection of (public service) media and education were asked to provide valuable insights into their planning, production, and evaluation processes of their educational programming. The findings show, above all, in how multifaceted ways the educational value of PSM can be delivered. In a three-theme-structure, based on the experts' assessments of the current state, this study reveals room for improvement, offers insights into successful existing initiatives, and elaborates a modern, public-oriented educational media offering. In that way, possible paths of further advancement in the future were developed for PSM in Western Europe.

KEYWORDS: *Public Service Media, Value Propositions, Public Value, Educational Mission, Digital Transformation*

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1. Introduction

Public service media (hereafter PSM), in contrast to profit-oriented private media, have the inherent premise to serve the public by delivering value (Brown, 1996; Scannell, 1989; Syvertsen & Moe, 2009). Such value, can be created through different media offerings (Bryson et al., 2014; Enli, 2008; Ibrus, 2022; Meynhardt, 2009; Moe, 2010; Raats & Pauwels, 2011; Radoslavov, 2014). The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), whose model served as a template for many other PSM in Western Europe (ARD, n.d.; NOS, n.d.; ORF, n.d.), has defined five value dimensions in this context: (1) *democratic value*, addressing PSM's competence to support civic debates by providing trusted and impartial news and information that helps citizens make sense of the world and encourages them to engage with it; (2) *cultural and creative value*, addressing PSM's capacity to enrich cultural life and celebrate respective cultural heritages; (3) *educational value*, addressing PSM's ability to offer audiences of every age a world of formal and informal educational opportunities; (4) *social and community value*, tackling PSM's power to and build social cohesion and tolerance through greater understanding of each other; and finally (5) *global value*, the extent to which a PSM outlet manages to have an impact beyond national borders (BBC, 2004).

In short, PSM represent vital institutions from a democratic, cultural, educational, social, and geopolitical perspective (BBC, 2004). For this reason, and because only publicly financed media tend to have the resources to deliver all of the abovementioned value components to a satisfying degree (Goyanes, 2021), the majority of the democratically organised Western European countries, have decided to fund PSM collectively as a society (Campos-Freire et al., 2020). The underlying idea is that PSM deliver what private media, operating under the economic pressure of the free market, cannot offer (Moe, 2010). Paradoxically, it is vital to give society with what it *needs* (albeit unaware) rather than with what it *wants*.

In this regard, we also speak of the *educational mission* of PSM, which refers to the responsibility and commitment of publicly-funded media organisations to provide informative, educational, and culturally enriching programming to the public they serve (Koltay, 2011; Yessenbekova et al., 2020). This mandate is often enshrined in law or the mission statements of these organisations (ARD, n.d.; BBC, 2022; NOS, n.d.; ORF, n.d.). PSM outlets are expected to create and broadcast content that goes beyond entertainment and that helps to inform and educate the public on a wide range of topics, from current events and politics to science and culture (BBC, 2022). This includes programs that explore different perspectives, foster critical thinking, and promote cultural understanding and diversity (Raeijmaekers & Maesele, 2015). Furthermore, PSM organisations are responsible for providing access to educational resources and promoting literacy, lifelong learning, and civic engagement (Hobbs, 2010; Koltay, 2011, Radoslavov, 2014). They should strive to reach diverse audiences, including those with special needs or from marginalized communities, and provide programming that meets their needs (Trappel & Meier, 2022). Overall, the *educational mission* of PSM is to serve as a trusted and reliable source of information, while promoting the values of democracy, public service, and social responsibility (Brown, 1996).

In recent years, however, technological developments have completely turned the entire (established) media industry upside down and presented it with unprecedented challenges (Hirschmeier et al., 2019; Poell, 2020; Porlezza, 2019). From the perspective of PSM, digitalisation and its accompanying transformation processes have brought with them enormous opportunities (Rivera-Otero, 2021), but also serious risks (Lowe & Maijanen, 2019; Martin, 2021). While for decades hardly anyone dared to question the *raison d'être* of PSM (Schulz et al., 2019), the latest digital news report from Reuters (2022) reveals massive upheavals that could indeed pose existential threats to PSM outlets. Not only, are we witnessing a devastating crisis of confidence in the media (Holtz-Bacha, 2021; Sehl et al., 2020), but also the tendency of more and more people to no longer see why they should pay for (public) media (Reuters, 2022), possibly even compulsorily depending on the funding model (Campos-Freire et al., 2020). At a time when digital platforms are siphoning off an ever-increasing share of media consumption time, thus advertising revenues, from PSM (Just & Latzer, 2016; Kreps & Kimppa, 2015; Nielsen & Ganter, 2017), this necessitates strategic responses (Goyanes, 2021; Trappel & Meier, 2022).

1.1. Scientific relevance

In academia, many scholars have examined the concept of public value (Alford & O'Flynn, 2009; Bryson et al., 2014; Faulkner & Kaufman, 2017; Meynhardt, 2009; Moore, 1995). In the context of media, these public value studies tend to shift their focus towards journalistic aspects and information formats (Frau-Meigs, 2022; Fuchs, 2011). For example, Ersoy and Miller (2020) illustrate a public value sphere in which journalism communicates shared values and principles for conflict resolution. O'Sullivan and Heinonen (2008), on the other hand, show how traditional newsrooms are adapting to the practices and values of new media.

In addition, plenty of research exists on how technology has been transforming the media landscape (Kreps & Kimppa, 2015; Martin, 2021). Futures studies deal with scenarios of how artificial intelligence and extended reality features might influence media production and consumption (Matt et al., 2015; Millett, 2003) and various experts around the globe outline far-reaching challenges for media companies regarding an future uncertainties (Oliver & Parrett, 2017), resulting from digital transformations (Hirschmeier et al., 2019), the rise of digital platforms (Poell, 2020).

Furthermore, the cultural value of PSM has been widely investigated in the literature, with much attention paid to the creative role of media for society and its influence on communities (Ferracioli et al., 2022; Koltay, 2011; Lee et al., 2022; Park, 2018; Hastall, 2017). However, with respect to traditional broadcasting after the Western European model of PSM, little research has been conducted on how the value proposition of creating educational added value for the public can be fulfilled by PSM in contemporary times (Goyanes, 2021; Trappel & Meier, 2022). In view of the already mentioned challenges of the digital world and taking into account Porter's (1980) competitive business strategy, one can argue,

that it is exactly these educational value propositions that PSM should draw on as their main distinguishing features that differentiate themselves from other media. Barney (1991) argues that a distinctive competitive advantage within an industry is largely based upon resources that are valuable, rare, and cannot be easily substituted or imitated by others. In the media industry, this has been the case for decades (Chapman, 2005). Today, however, the internet offers easily accessible platforms where the entry barriers for content creation are lower than ever before (Van Dijck & Poell, 2015). Many media consumers have partly become content creators themselves, which eventually led to an overwhelming abundance of offerings (Van Es & Poell, 2020). As a result, the risk of PSM being replaced by other providers has become significantly greater (Goyanes, 2021). It is therefore all the more important to clearly define and further develop their unique selling points (Porter, 1980).

In the examination of USPs of PSM, one component emerges from the literature above all: the public service of creating educational value. It is precisely this value proposition that set them apart from their competition and help them stand out from the rest in the customer perception (Goyanes, 2021; Lowe & Maijanen, 2019; Scannell, 1989). Therefore, in view of the current entrepreneurial challenges PSM face in ever-transforming media landscapes, it is of existential importance for PSM to emphasise this USP to the public. After all, the public is their shareholder and in the long run probably only willing to fund them in the long run if their value is clearly justified in public perception (Campos-Freire et al., 2020). However, it does not really emerge from the current literature how exactly PSM can operationalise their educational value proposition and clearly communicate how they create value for the public. Therefore, to find out how traditional Western European public service broadcasters can preserve and possibly enhance their value in the public perception, the main question guiding this thesis is:

RQ1: How can public service media in Western Europe strategically position themselves as providers of educational value in order to stand out from the competition in the ever-changing digital media markets?

In particular, this present thesis represents an exploratory study (Swedberg, 2020) that approaches the public value of PSM from an evolutionary perspective (Cunningham & Flew, 2015; Ibrus, 2022). It aims to shed light on various theoretical approaches and to investigate, via expert interviews, which strategies PSM are currently pursuing to sustainably convince the public of their *raison d'être* in an era characterized by an overabundance of media products, be they established channels or emerging platforms (Martin, 2021). As suggested by Goyanes (2021), this study intends to add another building block to the academic field upon which PSM can develop strategies to meet the challenge of sustaining their (perceived) public value and cultivating loyal audiences that are sustainably convinced of the PSM's offerings and thus willing to support the idea of having PSM as a society.

1.2. Societal relevance

While previous literature has thoroughly discussed the democratic political (Goyanes, 2021; Park, 2018; Schultz, 1998) as well as socio-cultural aspects (Nielsen & Ganter, 2017; Raeijmaekers & Maesele, 2015) as initially discussed in the context of PSM's public value propositions (BBC, 2004), relatively little academic knowledge exists on the educational dimension (Goyanes, 2021). The educational mission that PSM institutions have imposed on themselves (BBC, 2022; Yessenbekova et al, 2020) seems to have yet widely been neglected in the academic debate around public broadcasting. However, understanding how PSM can fulfil their educational mission with contemporary content formats is not only relevant from a scientific perspective but also in a social context.

From a societal perspective, it is indispensable to have PSM that pursue an educational mission and deliver on it with timely content formats (Hippel & Freide, 2018; Kačínová, 2018). If PSM, in response to the outlined threat situation, fail to develop viable, future-oriented solutions that the public is willing to finance collectively, they leave the enormous opportunities offered by new media to private players on the market, who generally do not (have to) take educational aspects as seriously (Benson et al., 2017). In this respect, it is imperative in terms of media policy that PSM fulfil this mandate in a timely manner and convince media consumers of their offerings in the long term. Otherwise, only the free market would prevail and media would only produce what is in demand, which, as mentioned earlier, would leave society poorer of some essential offerings (Moe, 2010).

Considering the above and linking this back to five dimensions initially introduced (BBC, 2004), it becomes apparent that *democratic, cultural, social, global* all represent value propositions that predominantly matter on a societal level. Building on Winer's (2001) CRM framework, however, it becomes clear that while one should always keep the collective in mind when developing an entrepreneurial strategy, one must not neglect the individual customer. After all, the public opinion is ultimately nothing more than a collection of many individual opinions. In the PSM context, it is therefore important to establish strong relationships with individual users that build trust and convince (Schranz et al., 2018). According to this and returning to the five dimensions, it is above all *educational value* that crystallises as a value that directly affects the individual user (BBC, 2004). Here, as multiple initiatives show (Bauer & Hinteregger-Euller, 2021; European Commission, 2020; MacArthur Foundation, 2010), newly emerging digital tools provide media with opportunities to innovate the educational offering. As Goyanes (2021) shows, PSMs can benefit from such initiatives by partnering up with them and incorporating their insights into their programming. In doing so, PSMs can vastly improve relationships with users, which in turn helps to secure their economic position through stronger justification to the taxpayers who fund them (Campos-Freire et al., 2020).

Exploring these opportunities academically, can help PSM to better understand how to improve their offering by transferring existing (linear) formats to the digital world and, moreover, by implementing new (educational) programme types and thus further pursue their differentiation strategy of creating public value (Porter, 1980). In an effort not only to make a scholarly contribution to the broader media studies literature, but also to provide the field with specific knowledge about PSM and innovative media offerings to fulfil its educational mission, it was therefore decided for this thesis to mainly focus on this educational dimension of the PSM's public value propositions and investigate the following second research question:

RQ2: How can public service media in Western Europe operationalise their educational mandate and translate it into an adequately innovative content offering that meets the demands of our time?

2. Theoretical Framework

The following chapter takes up the concepts raised in the introduction and theoretically explores them in further depth. In a first step, the purpose of media and its roles for society are explained. Then, the differences between private and public media are elaborated. Here, historical backgrounds are briefly discussed, as this helps to better understand the developments in today's media markets and to identify challenges resulting from the drastic technological upheavals in the media landscape. Subsequently, the concept of public value is outlined, both in general and in the context of PSM. Thereafter, focus is placed on the educational mission of PSM and how their mission to educate is one of the key values for society. Finally, linking these values back to the challenges mentioned earlier, the need for strategic considerations in order to find answers to the ever-greater threat of digital competition is emphasised, paying particular attention to how PSM can create public value through the delivery of innovative content formats that meet the ravages of time.

2.1. The purpose of media and their roles for society

In democratic countries it is indispensable to have independent, critical and widely respected media that act in the interest of the general public (Curran, 2011; Goyanes, 2021; Park, 2018). Not for nothing is the media considered the fourth estate of a state (Schultz, 1998), an important societal institution (McQuail, 2003; Raeijmaekers & Maesele, 2015), and the watchdog of the powerful (Donohue et al., 1995; Ferracioli et al., 2022). Media serve a variety of roles and purposes, such as informing (Koltay, 2011), entertaining (Radosinska et al., 2020; Vorderer et al., 2004), providing a basis for forming opinions (Lee et al., 2022), allowing people to escape the real world (Hastall, 2017), and much more (Hobbs, 2010). In addition, media have an enlightening function, referred to as educational mission (Aufderheide, 2018; Wilson & Duncan, 2009), which will be explained in more detail in chapter 2.2.2. For now, it can be stated that media are vital social institutions (Park, 2018).

As alluded to in the introduction, in Western European democracies, media play a crucial role by holding the governments accountable through critical journalism, informing citizens about important issues and events, and facilitating public discourse and debate (Goyanes, 2021; Schultz, 1998). In healthy democracies, citizens need to be provided with the information they need to make informed decisions about issues affecting their lives (Curran, 2011; McQuail, 2003). Obviously, ordinary people cannot gather all this information themselves, which is why they rely on media (Koltay, 2011). Furthermore, democratic governments, as opposed to autocratic or dictatorial regimes, are the elected representatives of the people who are supposed to represent and implement the political will of majorities (Donohue et al., 1995). The extent to which they succeed in doing so needs to be neutrally evaluated controlling their effectiveness, exposing corruption, abuse of power, and other wrongdoing (Ferracioli et al., 2022). This helps ensure that those in power are held accountable for their actions (Schultz, 1998).

Another role that the media play in society is to promote public discourse (Braun & Gillespie, 2011; Saraisky, 2016). In order for citizens to be able to express their opinions and interact with others, they need a platform for (public) debate and discussion on important issues affecting their communities (Fetzer & Weizman, 2006). Media provide such a platform and the place where citizens can discuss how they want to live together (Saraisky, 2016). In this context, protecting freedom of speech and expression is also an important task of the media (Barendt, 2005). While Western democracies are often about majorities, in the spirit of diversity of opinion and plurality of society, the media must be careful to give voice to dissenting opinions and protect people from censorship or reprisals when they express their views (Raeijmaekers & Maesele, 2015).

It can thus be noted that media fulfil a variety of roles in society. After all, they play a crucial role in ensuring that democratic societies are informed, engaged and accountable, producing and transporting cultural, educational, social and geopolitical content (BBC, 2004). Of course, to fulfil all these roles, media need lots of resources (Cunningham et al., 2015). As mentioned above and in more detail later, the media's financial resources are becoming increasingly scarce (Hoskins et al., 2004), making it increasingly challenging to maintain the services they provide to society at the quality to which they have traditionally been accustomed (Goyanes, 2021). Given the just outlined importance of the media for a well-functioning society, the vast majority of Western European countries have agreed to publicly finance media beyond the free market (Campos-Freire et al., 2020). The idea behind this is that those media enterprises should offer what could not otherwise be offered under the economic pressure of the free market (Moe, 2010).

2.1.1. Private media vs. public service media

In this context, we need to distinguish between private and public media companies. The former typically operate for profit, are financed primarily by advertising revenues, and – just like all other capitalist enterprises – must produce satisfactory results for their shareholders (Alexander et al., 2003; Cunningham et al., 2015). Public media, in contrast, by definition operate on behalf of the public (Brown, 1996; Hoskins et al., 2004). It is the public who is their stakeholder to whom they owe their commitment (Van den Bulck & Raats, 2022), which is why, for decades, they were referred to as public service broadcasters (PSB). However, as Lowe and Bardoel (2007) pointed out, this term nowadays is somewhat outdated, as PSBs are no longer (or can no longer afford to be) pure broadcasters in the traditional sense (Campos-Freire et al., 2020; Hirschmeier et al., 2019). Out of necessity, in view of the ongoing transformations of our time, they have been developing an increasingly cross-media offering that is brought to the consumer via a wide variety of channels (Chiodino et al., 2020; Furht et al., 2019; Van den Bulck & Moe, 2017). For this reason, the term public service media (PSM) meanwhile seems more appropriate (Lowe & Bardoel, 2007).

As opposed to private media, PSM do not intend to achieve monetary return on investments for their shareholders (i.e., the public), but rather aim to generate public value with their media offerings

(Goyanes, 2021; Lowe & Maijanen, 2019; Scannell, 1989; Van den Bulck & Raats, 2022). In social science, value is associated with a myriad of epistemological concepts developed to understand social interactions (Kluckhohn, 2013). From a business perspective, value is considered the assessed worth of an asset, good, or service (Kenton & Stapleton, 2022). However, as Kelemen et al. (2016) and Kenter (2016) show, public value goes beyond this purely monetary approach and can also be of collective nature, as values we share as communities.

Depending on the country, public broadcasters at national or local level operate channels and programmes across all established distribution platforms, i.e. TV, radio, online, print, as well as through off-air events and other media cooperations in licence marketing and much more (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). The breadth of public service media is often forgotten and people tend to think of linear radio and television first, which is probably historically justified (Lowe & Bardoel, 2007). Content is produced in different languages depending on the nation, which is a huge challenge for multilingual countries such as Switzerland, but also a cultural asset for the people (SRF, n.d.). In the past, public service broadcasting was the dominant or only form of media in many countries (Scannell, 1990). Notably, this is where European countries differ from countries in the Americas, such as the United States, Mexico and Brazil, which even then relied heavily on commercial media (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Today, most countries in the world also have commercial media and the number of nations with only public service broadcasting has decreased significantly (Goyanes, 2021), which is probably also due to the fact that people can consume media across geographical borders with the possibilities of the internet and private media have been able to tap into much larger markets as a result (Cunningham, 2015; Campos-Freire et al., 2020).

While public broadcasting in some countries, such as Austria, Switzerland or France, is centrally operated by a single organisation (ORF, SRF, FT), other nations, such as Germany, have more than one public broadcaster (ARD & ZDF). An exception to this is the Netherlands, whose public broadcasting system, while airing on behalf of the overarching administrative umbrella Nederlandse Publieke Omroep (NPO), supplies its stations through various broadcasting companies. In contrast to the other countries mentioned earlier, these are not regional broadcasters, but separate legal entities (associations and foundations) that represent a certain population group and often have a certain underlying political tendency. In terms of plurality, some Dutch broadcasters are therefore more conservative, for example, even representing religious communities, while others are more liberal and represent trade union goals (NPO - our organisation, n.d.).

What is often heatedly debated in connection with PSM in Europe is the way in which these institutions are financed (Siggelkow & Rohwedder, 2022). In Austria and France, for example, there are repeated discussions about whether to abandon the current model of a household levy or broadcasting fee and simply finance PSM from the finance minister's budget pot, i.e. through tax revenues (Genzmer & Richter, 2022; Wenz, 2022). While this would solve the problem of people complaining about paying for

something they do not use (which is somewhat paradoxical, since similarly, everyone pays for roads, hospitals and museums regardless of how intensively they are used), experts criticise that the media would lose some of their independence from politics, since it would have to be renegotiated every year how much of the budget should be allocated to PSM, and in the best case "only" taking into account current economic developments (inflation, etc.). In the worst case, however, it would be subject to the arbitrariness of the government currently in power or the majority in parliament, which makes the matter extremely delicate (ORF, 2022).

Another point of criticism that both objective observers and PSM professionals themselves repeatedly raise is the restriction by relatively extensive legal requirements under which PSM have to operate in many countries (Feintuck, 2006; Puppis, 2008). It is repeatedly criticised that these are relatively strict and restrictive for the media and drastically reduce the competitiveness of PSM in today's age because they are thus not flexible and adaptable enough, especially with regard to exploiting the possibilities offered by digital platforms on the internet (Leurdijk, 2006). These possibilities, as well as many other implications of technological developments in the media landscape, will be explored in more detail in the following section.

2.1.2. Changing media landscapes – from linear broadcasting to contemporary PSM

In the course of the technological changes and digital innovation of the past two decades, PSM organisations, like all traditional media outlets, have encountered significant challenges (Hirschmeier et al., 2019; Poell, 2020; Porlezza, 2019). As already mentioned, public broadcasters had to make a transition from pure linear one-way broadcasting, to an interactive, multi-channel media environment, which is characterised by intensified competition and a veritable battle for attention (Reuters, 2022). With the proliferation of digital media and social media, traditional media outlets have experienced a decline in their viewership and readership (Van Dijck & Poell, 2015). PSM are no exception to this trend, as many people now get their news and entertainment from online sources and private streaming services (Reuters, 2022). Therefore, PSM find it harder and harder to attract and sustain audiences, especially those at a younger age (Schulz et al., 2019). Hasebrink et al. (2015) found, that as the youth have become more accustomed to digital media, they also changed their expectations for how content should be delivered and presented by contemporary media outlets, concluding that PSM must be able to meet these changing expectations in order to remain relevant. As a result, to stay competitive, PSM must find ways to adapt to the new digital affordances (Martin, 2021; Rivera-Otero, 2021). This, in turn, requires significant investments in technology and infrastructure, which seems problematic in view of the already mentioned limited budgets (Brevini, 2010; Dragomir, 2018). Moreover, speaking of funding, additional uncertainty and instability is expected based on the fact that PSM, next to the public funding, rely heavily on advertising revenue, which is about to shrink increasingly as digital platforms are siphoning off an ever-increasing share of media consumption

time from PSM (Just & Latzer, 2016; Kreps & Kimppa, 2015; Nielsen & Ganter, 2017). Moreover, a fairly recent phenomenon, possibly accelerated by social media, is that PSM (like other traditional media) are experiencing a severe crisis of confidence (Holtz-Bacha, 2021; Sehl et al., 2020). All these developments in the Western European media landscape confront PSM with a necessity for action (Goyanes, 2021). The final section of this theoretical framework therefore addresses the question of how strategic considerations can help companies cope with the challenge of an unpredictable future. Before that, however, the concept of public value will be illuminated and applied to the context of PSM, placing special focus on the aforementioned educational mission of PSM.

2.2. Public value

In relation to the public sector, it was Moore (1995) who first coined the term public value academically to describe the value of a contribution that an organisation makes to society. According to Bryson et al. (2014), public value is created when "producing what is either valued by the public, is good for the public, including adding to the public sphere, or both, as assessed against various public value criteria" (p. 448). However, as with many social concepts, public value can be considered something that "starts and ends within the individual" (Meynhardt, 2009, p. 215).

While private organisations in capitalist economic systems are generally not obliged to create added value for the public, but do so mostly, if at all, out of a motivation to make a profit, publicly funded institutions are quasi by definition (and sometimes even by law) obliged to act in the public interest (Faulkner & Kaufman, 2017). More succinctly, one could say that social institutions have the inherent goal of changing society in some positive way or producing something that is of collective worth (Meynhardt, 2009). According to Moore (1995), the term public value per se has nothing to do with public service media but was developed from a state administration perspective. In the following section, however, public value will be applied to the world of media and theoretically explained as a key concept of PSM.

2.1.3. Public value in the context of PSM

As social institutions serving the public, it is the PSM's inherent goal to work in the interest of as many individual members of society as possible and to create public value by producing something that is of collective worth to them (Curran, 2011; Raeijmaekers & Maesele, 2015; Van den Bulck & Raats, 2022). Studying public value in the context of PSM is therefore not only of scientific but also of societal relevance (Goyanes, 2021). As alluded to above, it is the inherent premise of PSM to create added value for the public (Lowe & Bardoel, 2007; Van den Bulck & Raats, 2022). It can even be argued that PSM nowadays consider the deployment of public value as their key competitive strategy (Porter, 1980), which they seek to distinguish themselves from private media (Goyanes, 2021). However, this has not always been the case: Historically, the predominant or even the only broadcasters in many countries were state media (Chapman,

2005; Gitelman, 2008), which by their very nature were not in any way independent or neutral but pursued a political agenda with their reporting (Van Aelst, 2014). In Europe, the era of PSB (at that time, it still was pure broadcasting) eventually began with the founding of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 1922. To this day, its trailblazing design is considered a role model which has been imitated across numerous European countries (ARD, n.d.; NOS, n.d.; ORF, n.d.). The fact that now we speak of public service media and public value is therefore, to some extent, the merit of the masterminds pioneering the BBC concept (BBC, 2022; Collins, 2007; Enli, 2008; Lowe & Bardoel, 2007).

In academia, PSM have been approached from different angles (Alford & O'Flynn, 2009; Ibrus, 2022; Meynhardt, 2009; Moore, 1995). Most scholars focused on the democratic political role of PSM as journalistic informants of society (Brevini, 2010; Harcourt, 2002; Raats & Pauwels, 2011). Others focused more on the cultural and entertainment aspects of PSM (Moe, 2010; Radosinska et al., 2020; Vorderer et al., 2004). Yet another group devoted most of their attention to PSM's educational mission and society's media literacy (Aufderheide, 2018; Hippel & Freide, 2018; Kačínová, 2018; Lowe & Maijanen, 2019; Moe, 2008; Wilson & Duncan, 2009). These three domains - information, entertainment, and education – can all contribute to society's perceived public value of PSM and were therefore included in the present research proposed here. However, as can be deduced from the SQ2, particular emphasis is placed on PSM's educational mission.

Today, when we speak of modern education, we can consider any tool that helps individuals to navigate life and contribute to society (Abulencia, 2021). Accordingly, in the context of PSM, this encompasses all actions taken by media organisations to enlighten and intellectually advance society, whether traditional or innovative, formal, or informal, in cooperation with schooling institutions or as part of their normal programming (CPB, n.d.; Keefer & Khemani, 2014), be it openly declared or subtly concealed. By combining the theoretical approaches of Alford & O'Flynn (2009), Goyanes (2021), and Ibrus (2022) with those of the research strand, centred around the educational facets, this research seeks to approach the topic in an exploratory manner (Swedberg, 2020). Moreover, as mentioned earlier, PSM companies are analysed from an evolutionary perspective (Cunningham & Flew, 2015; Ibrus, 2022). The rationale for this is that recent literature shows how rapidly circumstances are changing in the media sector today, which is why PSM must be viewed as companies in constant flux (Chiodino, 2020; Furht, 2019). In this context, Rodríguez-Castro (2022) describes that public value has evolved from a "trendy concept to a lifeboat for PSM" (p. 19), which, in view of the theory outlined so far and considering the challenges PSM encounter, seems to be a very apt formulation. In a nutshell, public value creation is *the* main USP of PSM over commercial media.

2.1.4. Educational mission of PSM

The educational mission refers to the role PSM play in providing enlightening resources to individuals and communities (BBC, 2022). The specific components of this mission can vary depending on the type of media and its intended audience (Collins, 2007). However, across the literature in this field, the following four elements were identified in relation to the PSM's educational mission: (1) *Providing accurate and timely information*, empowering individuals and communities to educate themselves by providing them with accurate and up-to-date information on a wide range of topics, including news, science, health, politics, and more (Beninger, 2009; Fuchs, 2011; Vasterman et al., 2005). (2) *Fostering critical thinking* by presenting audiences with multiple perspectives on issues they need to be informed about to make decisions and encouraging them to scrutinise information when forming their own opinions on issues (Arke, 2005; Feuerstein, 1999). (3) *Promoting cultural awareness and understanding* by depicting different cultural perspectives (i.e., lifestyles, customs, traditions) and thereby bringing diversity closer to the audience through storytelling (Klerfelt, 2004; De Ridder & Van Bauwel, 2015; Maguire & Matthews, 2010). (4) *Supporting lifelong learning* by providing the necessary resources for individuals to continue learning and growing throughout their lives (Kind & Evans, 2015; Knapper, 1988). This can include broadcasted formats but also interactive webinars where people can gain knowledge (Krivova et al., 2017) or quiz shows on the morning radio station (Healy et al., 2017). In summary, the educational mission of PSM is about using its power in reaching the masses to educate and inform as many individuals as possible, and encourage them to become more engaged, informed, and empowered members of society (Arke, 2005; Knapper, 1988).

By asking how Western European PSM can adapt and operationalise their educational mission as a public value in a media landscape of technological change, RQ2 addresses the PSM's issue of engaging and inspiring media consumers with educational formats (Kind & Evans, 2015; Porlezza, 2019). As indicated earlier, PSM outlets are expected to create and broadcast content that goes beyond mere entertainment (Goyanes, 2021). In order to build a sustainable loyal audience, Rodríguez-Castro (2022) finds two key elements arising as essentials for creating public value: *participation* and *innovation*. Translating this to the context of educational formats, one can argue that PSM must ensure that they not only provide the public with information based on high-quality research but also convey it through formats that are supported by cutting-edge technology and offer state-of-the-art audience participation to create involvement (Porlezza, 2019). After all, PSM have the legally enshrined mandate to take responsibility and commit to enriching their audiences with the abovementioned components (Koltay, 2011; Yessenbekova et al., 2020).

In this regard, this thesis aims to find out how all this can look in practice and how PSM companies can reconceptualise their educational mission in view of the challenges they face in terms of a disruptive future media landscape (Goyanes, 2021). As indicated above, the next section of this theoretical framework focuses on how the already discussed discontinuities in Western Europe's PSM environment constitute the need for strategic considerations intended to assist in successfully navigating the current situation.

2.2. Need for strategic considerations

The latest digital news report from Reuters (2022) reveals massive upheavals concerning PSM: not only, are we in the midst of a devastating crisis of confidence in traditional media outlets but also do we witness the tendency of more and more people to no longer see why they should be obliged to publicly finance what they perceive as outdated media products (Reuters, 2022). At a time when, the competition increasingly intensifies through the dominant presence of a few powerful tech companies, like Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Meta, and Apple that permeate media markets with their digital platforms, this poses a serious threat to PSM outlets from an economic standpoint (Campos-Freire et al., 2020). Moreover, as alluded to earlier, the advertising revenues of the traditional media (and thus also those of the PSM) are dwindling (Goyanes, 2021). PSM, however, as also explained earlier, should actually be in the process of investing in its future offering in order to keep it competitive in view of the high demands for the media of our time and to keep up with and grow along all the relevant technological innovations (Ibrus, 2022; Schulz et al., 2019). Clearly, one does not have to be a great economist to realise that this calculation, with increasing investment needs and decreasing financial resources available, cannot work out in the long run. Consequently, PSM faces a dilemma that requires strategic solutions (Matt et al., 2015; Millett, 2003).

In this respect, if cost leadership (being cheaper while providing the same quality of a comparable product) is not a viable option, Porter (1980) suggests companies to return to their core strengths (in order to further develop and increase the quality of one's own product, thereby outperforming the competition). In the case of PSM, it can be argued that, among other things they do well, their most outstanding asset is their enduring creation of public value (BBC, 2004; BBC, 2022). In fact, many scholars have identified public value as the main unique selling point of PSM (Collins, 2007; Ibrus, 2022; Raats & Pauwels, 2011; Rodríguez-Castro, 2022). Therefore, according to Porter's (1980) competitive approach, PSM must strategically re-think and adapt their most important asset in view of future media landscapes (Goyanes, 2021). In other words, it is a strategic necessity for PSM to reconceptualise the value propositions they aim to deliver to the public (BBC, 2004). While several PSM outlets seem to have already compiled strategy reports in this context (ARD, 1998; BBC, 2004; Department for Culture Media and Sport, 2016; ORF, 2019), there is a gap with regard to the operationalisation of PSM's public value dimensions in future media landscapes. Although the existing reports offer a good overview of all potentially relevant innovations that new media technologies could bring with them and also deepen the necessity of strategic considerations on the part of PSM in this context, they do not provide concrete directions or even practical guidelines (Jakubowicz, 2007).

This is where this thesis project comes in as an explorative study with a special emphasis on the educational value of PSM in the future. By means of qualitative methods (via thematic analysis of expert interviews), the research aims to identify which strategic approaches PSM can take in view of future challenges. In chapter 3, the methodology will be explained in more detail. For now, it can be stated that

the ultimate goal of this project is to answer the questions posed in the introduction, on the basis of which recommendations for action can be formulated for decision-makers in PSM companies, which, if implemented appropriately in practice, will ensure the long-term successful continuation of the PSM concept in Western Europe.

2.3. Conceptual framework

To round off and conclude this theoretical chapter, a specifically developed framework is presented below to summarise the findings of the literature review and to provide an overview of the discussed value propositions as essential differentiators of PSM in their strategic alignment. In this context, it first has to be noted that PSM find themselves in a disruptive situation with a number of pressing challenges to be solved. As illustrated below, a need for strategic positioning was determined based on the examined literature.

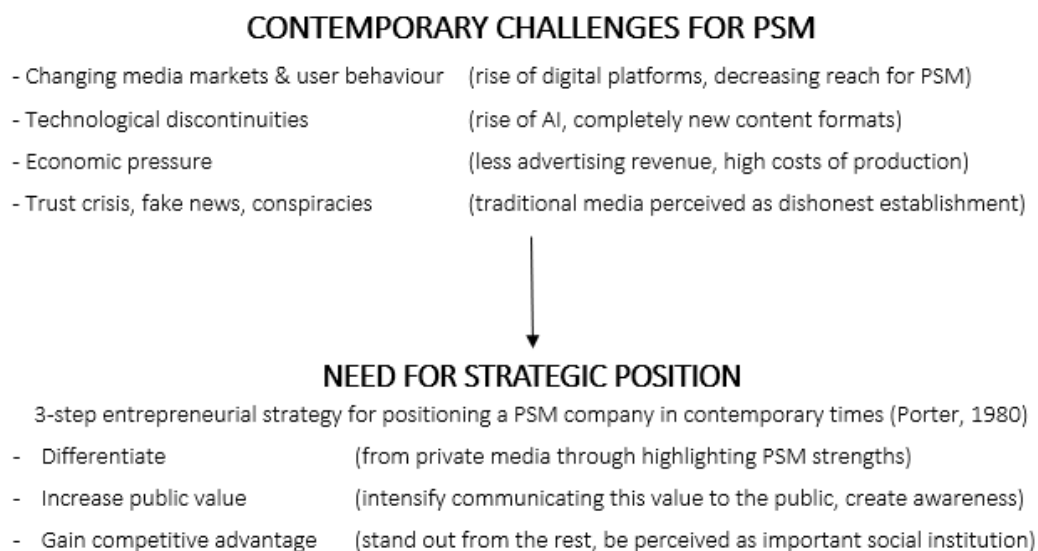


Figure 1: PSM challenges and the derived need for strategic considerations

Along the same lines, RQ1 was developed. Aiming to look into *how* PSM can achieve such a promising strategic position, USPs of PSM were analysed with the help of existing theory. The central concepts found in this regard were *public value propositions* and *educational value* in particular. As it has become apparent in the course of the theoretical framework, value propositions can be created in many different ways (Meynhardt, 2009). To simplify this, a conceptual overview is provided below. Starting from the media's challenges of the digital age, the need for strategic repositioning is derived. Subsequently, following, Porter's (1980) competitive business strategy, differentiation is identified as the key strategy for PSM to gain a competitive advantage. Based on theory, the tireless commitment to the creation of public value was determined as the key distinguishing feature of PSM over competitors (Goyanes, 2021). Drawing on the BBC's (2004) company paper about public value creation, five value dimensions were identified, namely: *democratic, cultural and creative, educational, social and global value*.

PSM VALUE PROPOSITIONS

Democratic value	Cultural value	Educational value	Social value	Global value
<u>SOCIETAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High standards for journalistic integrity Independent watchdogs of the powerful Responsible agenda setting, unbiased reporting 	<u>SOCIETAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural initiatives Resources for high-quality productions Serving small socially relevant local markets 	<u>SOCIETAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational offerings for children/adults Formal schooling programmes (safe sex, maths) Platform for informal information (cooking shows) 	<u>SOCIETAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portraying relationships within communities objectively Providing a platform for minority voices Promoting diversity 	<u>SOCIETAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International exchange of information (EBU) Value creation through collaborations of various national PSM (Eurovision)
<u>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freely accessible fact-based information Alternative source of information to profit-oriented commercial media 	<u>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entertainment Getting engaged with cultural heritages Fostering one's cultural identity 	<u>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving literacy and numeracy Promoting other important skills such as creativity, critical thinking & entrepreneurship 	<u>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSM user relationship Structure and daily routines Perspectives that might not be offered elsewhere 	<u>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get broader perspectives Escape borders by looking beyond the national horizon through PSM

Figure 2: Public value propositions as a key differentiator

For this research, it was decided to mainly focus on the educational value of PSM (see RQs above). As outlined above, education is not something that exists in a vacuum, but always is part of a bigger picture (Abulencia, 2021). To make more concrete and further define what falls under the PSM value proposition of pursuing an educational mission, any tool provided by PSM that helps individuals to navigate life and contribute to society was considered education (Abulencia, 2021). The forms these tools can potentially take in the future are practically unlimited. Therefore, the European Broadcasting Union's strategy report (EBU, 2022) and Broughton's (2022) "*PSM Horizon 2027*" were consulted. Following their ideas, each of the dimensions were operationalised on a *societal* and *individual* level. The former summarises how PSM benefit communities as a whole and how this is politically relevant for Western democracies, while the latter lists how these values matter on the personal level from an individual user's perspective. In particular, RQ2 asks how PSM can adapt and operationalise this educational mission as a one of their key public value propositions and tackles the issue of how they can deliver it in a timely fashion in a media landscape characterised by digital innovation. To make things more analysable, inspiration was, again, taken from the Broughton's (2022) report on the future of PSM. As alluded to above, the educational value can be created through anything that lets individuals develop intellectually (Abulencia, 2021).

Hence, the analytical framework for this research was similarly broad and focused not only on ‘formal’ educational content or school media. To provide an overview of how the educational value proposition of PSM was approached as *the* core research unit of this study, it is illustrated below how it was analysed both from a societal perspective and on the individual level. Moreover, it is shown how the role of PSM as providers of educational content is impacted by social changes and technological disruptions.

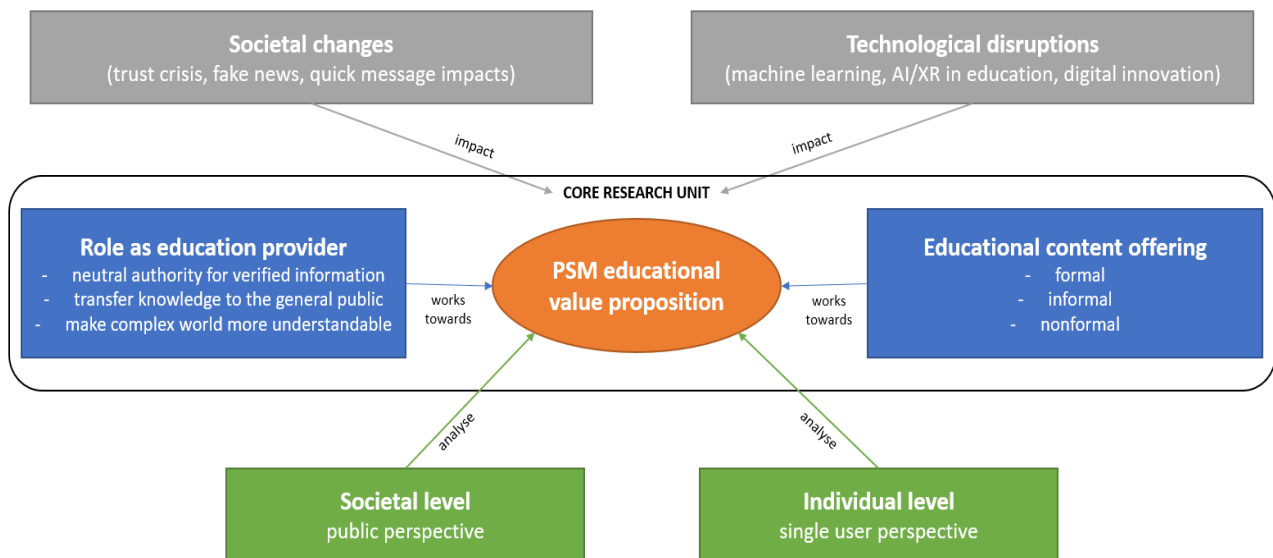


Figure 3: The analytical framework

3. Methodology

3.1. Qualitative research

As Syvertsen and Moe (2009) point out, "public service broadcasting is in no sense a precise analytical term" (p. 399). In asking how PSM can reinforce their public value, the research explicitly addresses the concept of public value, which, as noted before, can be viewed as a socially constructed concept (Alford & O'Flynn, 2009). As such, it requires a non-numerical approach and a flexible exploration of data (Brennen, 2017). Moreover, by inquiring into strategies related to the educational mission of PSM and how younger audiences can be convinced, the research requests an in-depth analysis of both theoretical concepts discussed in the previous chapter and insights from PSM practice (Van Es & Poell, 2020). In this respect, quantitative studies could provide insights of media consumers' perceptions of public value in a structured, numerical manner (Babbie, 2013). However, given the purpose of the research just outlined, qualitative research seems more capable of exploring the meanings of public value and how PSM currently operate (Flick, 2007). Since the proposed research aims to gain knowledge about how PSM can create and convey value to the public by adapting their educational mission, it is necessary to explore the complex meanings and underlying perspectives to eventually find patterns in them (Pathak et al., 2013). Qualitative methods allow for in-depth analysis and interpretation of data, leading to a deeper understanding of concepts (Brennen, 2017), which is why they were deemed most appropriate for this project.

3.2. Expert interviews

Expert interviews were chosen as the method of data collection for this research. Because the RQ1 addresses PSM's future strategies in relation to public value and its educational mission, it specifically asks for expertise of professionals who are occupationally involved with PSM. According to Van Audenhove and Donders (2019), expert interviews are a valuable method in policy analysis and communication studies. Aiming to capture a wide range of perspectives on strategies that PSM are currently pursuing or might potentially be pursuing in the future, it makes sense to consult individuals possessing expert knowledge in the specific field of PSM. Expert interviews offer unique insights and perspectives from individuals who have extensive experience and expertise in their respective domains. Qualitative semi-structured interviews allow researchers to gain in-depth and nuanced understanding of complex topics, providing valuable information for policymaking and decision-making processes (Van Audenhove & Donders, 2019). However, there are potential drawbacks associated with expert interviews. Firstly, the objectivity of the knowledge obtained through expert interviews can be debated, as biases and subjective interpretations may influence the outcomes. Secondly, defining and identifying who qualifies as an "expert" or an "elite" can be subjective and contentious. Lastly, power dynamics and biases may affect the data obtained, potentially leading to skewed or limited perspectives (Van Audenhove & Donders, 2019).

3.3. Research design

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, meaning that if the researcher seemed to find an anecdote mentioned interesting and worth to touch upon, he had the freedom to adjust his interviewing accordingly. For example, in view of the RQ2, interviewees were asked about their experience with PSM offerings initiated to fulfil their educational mission in a timely manner. Furthermore, they are encouraged to bring their personal opinions into play. While the interviews are guided by the different theoretical approaches found in relevant literature, particular emphasis is also placed on the practical solutions that PSM have come up with regarding the challenge of sustainably maintaining their (perceived) public value. In this method's context, critics might argue that this research project does not offer any new insights at all, but merely reflects the current reality in PSM. And, in fact, PSM themselves probably know best what they can do and what strategies they are already pursuing. However, this research aims to gather international expert opinions and analyse them based on theory. Following the example of Raats and Pauwels (2011), this comparative study aims to bring together the different pieces of the puzzle and draw a complete picture within the analytical framework discussed. After all, there is much to be learned from peers at home and abroad, potentially learning from their mistakes, adopting their initiatives, or perhaps even collaborating (Broughton, 2022). While surveys help determining general patterns in the data (Babbie, 2013) and focus groups disclose social interactions of respondents about a certain topic (Flick, 2007), in-depth interviews allow to really dive into a topic with an expert and make meaning of it (Boyce & Neale, 2006). They offer a flexible way of processing data (iterativity) and allow to reveal nuanced insights from the opinions from qualified experts for the topic of research (Bogner et al., 2009). Therefore, they are excellent for exploratory studies, such as this one is.

3.4. Reliability and validity

However, with respect to validity, reliability, and ethics, it should be mentioned that expert interviews have some potential drawbacks. First of all, experts are not representative of the general public and might have different opinions than the majority of people in the population (Kvale, 1996). Consequently, the findings are not generalisable but merely provide inspiration. Regarding reliability, it should be noted that although semi-structured interviews provide follow a general guide to ensure comparability, it is in the nature of the method that not every expert answers the exact same questions. As a result, reliability is in fact limited (Kvale, 1996). In terms of ethical considerations, it must be said that hierarchical dynamics between the interviewer and the expert might potentially play a role, as the interviewer may hold a position of authority or influence over the expert, which can make it difficult for the expert to provide honest and unbiased answers. However, as the researcher will introduce himself to all experts as a master student, they should feel comfortable to talk freely and with confidence. After all, they probably have a more sophisticated background in the field than the researcher himself (Kvale, 1996).

Finally, it has to be mentioned, although the researcher tried to be very neutral and unbiased, his personal opinion might have influenced the way the interviews went. This issue will, however, be discussed in more detail in the discussion chapter of this thesis, where both the strengths and the limitations of this research are presented.

3.5. Sample criteria and sample

Since only experts from the field were to be included in this proposed study, interviewees were selected purposively (Palinkas et al., 2013), i.e., it followed a purposive sampling strategy. Essentially, a variety of professionals were considered experts for this study: They could either be staff from the strategy, policy or audience research department of a Western European broadcaster, other corporate insiders such as editors or heads of digital strategy, policy makers, academics from the field of media research, media consultants, media literacy educators, knowledge brokers from cultural institutions, journalists, presenters or other individuals who have relevant expertise in relation to PSM, public-value-management or public value creation by virtue of their work history, or who have a notable background in educational programmes from other experiences. In the context of this research, experts were initially identified in collaboration with NPO (Nederlandse Publieke Omroep), a Dutch network of broadcasters and the organisation, which initiated the idea for this research project. Moreover, Matthijs Leendertse, the supervisor of this research project, helped the researcher to find experts within his personal network of media professionals. From there, further interviewees were sampled based on snowball sampling (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981), i.e., asking current conversation partners to forward this research project to colleagues and potentially connecting the researcher to new experts directly.

To provide an overview, Appendix A presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the sampling. In addition, Appendix B provides an overview of the 12 interviewed experts along with a quick description of their background and why they suit as experts for this study.

3.6. Data collection

Twelve in-depth, semi-structured interviews of approximately 45 minutes were conducted in May and June 2023. Interviews were conducted with the help of MS Teams and transcribed and recorded from start to finish. These automatically generated transcripts were then revised by hand and checked for any errors by matching them with the recordings. Three of the interviews were conducted in German language, the remaining nine were conducted in English. Eventually this resulted in an analysable dataset of 12 revised transcripts. All data was stored safely and treated confidentially by the researcher. While the written transcripts were saved, the video recording were deleted after the analysis.

3.7. Operationalisation

In the interview guide (Appendix C), it is presented how the theoretical concepts raised by the RQs (PSM and value propositions and the educational mandate) were eventually translated into concrete questions for the expert interviews. By placing a particular focus on the educational dimension, interviewees were asked open-ended questions with the instruction to elaborate on their perception of how PSM implement innovative educational formats to pursue their educational mandate value proposition and thereby contribute to building a more knowledgeable and empowered society (Kim, 2008). Moreover, in order to "go beyond the 'what' of the substantial dimension and include the 'why' and 'how' of the process dimension that media literacy promotion implies" (Radoslavov, 2014, p. 212), the questions incorporating the educational value of PSM were structured along different relevant aspects (Appendix C). As said before, the interview transcripts that emerged through applying this semi-structured guide when conducting the data collection process represent the unit of analysis for this research. Subsequently, it is described how exactly this analysis has been carried out.

3.8. Data Analysis

The dataset that emerged from the interview transcriptions was analysed via thematic analysis. As stated by Braun and Clarke (2006), "thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p. 79). The idea is to "interpret research data, and to derive ideas and themes from them" (Boeije, 2010, p. 88). "A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the RQ and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 82). The data was systematically "segmented" and "reassembled" with the aim of transforming it into findings via the help of coding as a "tool to create order" (Boeije, 2010, p. 94). This coding process was conducted based on the following six-step procedure pioneered by Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) First, the researcher scanned the data and note down preliminary ideas. (2) Then, initial codes were inductively generated based on salient features within the data. In order to organise these codes efficiently, a codebook was created in an Excel-Spreadsheet, as this facilitated the categorisation. (3) Thereafter, these initial codes and categories were bundled and converted into themes. (4) Subsequently, these themes were reviewed again and again while continuing the analysis process to check if they are applicable to the entire dataset or if they needed to be refined. (5) Once the themes were defined and labelled, the entire analysis was carried out. (6) Finally, a results section was formulated to present the findings of the analysis. To support findings substantially, illustrative excerpts and in-vivo-codes for specific sub-themes were quoted in the results chapter (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To conclude, a discussion chapter evaluated the outcome of the thematic analysis and linked it back to the literature discussed in the theoretical framework.

The interplay of a deductive approach in the theory-driven interview guide and the inductive way of coding as suggested by the Braun and Clarke (2006) procedure, was found to be a promising methodological strategy to come up with valid and reliable findings. On the one hand, the value propositions based on which the interview guide was designed came from the BBC's (2004) public value report, thus includes practical insights from the field. On the other hand, theoretical findings were used to come up with questions about the defined role for media in society and what education means for people in the digital age. In addition, the questionnaire was completed by current reports (EBU, 2022) in order to include future developments expected by experts.

4. Results

As initially discussed in the theoretical framework of this thesis, PSM in Western European democratic countries are in need of strategic considerations with regard to their educational role in society (Goyanes, 2021; Trappel & Meier, 2022). The following section aims at answering both RQ1 (*How can public service media in Western Europe strategically position themselves as providers of educational value in order to stand out from the competition in the ever-changing digital media markets?*) and RQ2 (*How can public service media in Western Europe operationalise their educational mandate and translate it into an adequately innovative content offering that meets the demands of our time?*) by presenting, analysing and discussing the main themes resulting from the thematic analysis of the expert interview transcripts. In short, the results consist of three parts: First, the purpose and the democratic importance of PSM in our contemporary times of change are described. Then, the educational mandate as the core public value proposition of PSM is discussed with a particular focus on the experts' statements about the individual educational value and the societal educational value. Finally, possible paths of further development are outlined based on the experts' evaluation of where there is room for improvement for PSM and based on the examples experts provided of successful educational programming and other enlightening media initiatives of Western European PSM.

4.1. The societal role of PSM and digital transformation processes

When asking the interviewees about the purpose of PSM and its role in Western European societies, the answers were predominantly similar: Most experts mentioned the PSM's role as a neutral authority for verified information. Petter Malmhøster, planning editor at the Swedish educational broadcasting, named *Utbildningsradio*, used the term "democratic infrastructure" when talking about the role of PSM, arguing that PSM are necessary to provide citizens with the information they need to make their own judgements and ultimately make rational choices at political elections. Wouter van der Horst, Head of Content & Learning at *Smartify* and former Museum Educator & Media Technologist at *Rijksmuseum*, on the other hand, answered that while the purpose of media, in general, is to spread ideas, PSM are important to "fill necessary gaps" and "be the voice of minorities in society". Along the same lines, Charlotte Sifvert, founder of *The Purpose Studio*, a Stockholm-based media production company for educational content, stated that PSM has a strong role in "creating a community and giving it a common ground to stand on". Furthermore, Charlotte Sifvert said that by portraying certain aspects of life, media play a role in defining "what is important for us as individuals" and holding society together by "agreeing on who we are as a part of a nation".

In short, the experts interviewed in this research all affirmed the role of Western European PSM as trusted providers of reliable information and impartial authorities to safeguard democracy as it has been elaborated in the theoretical framework. Moreover, the interviewed experts agreed that private media

alone cannot fulfil this democratic role to a sufficient degree and that there is, therefore, a need for publicly funded media to “raise the bar” for all participants in the market, as Josef Trappel, Head of Department of Media Policy and Media Economics at *Paris-Lodron-University Salzburg*, put it. So, by imposing certain remits on PSM that they have to fulfil, the standards that the private media have to meet in order to be competitive in the market are automatically raised as well, as Josef Trappel explained.

With regard to entertainment in PSM, the experts' answers were somewhat ambivalent. Although all agreed that it is an important function of the media to satisfy the human need for amusement, the role that PSM should play in this context was viewed in a differentiated light. For example, Wouter van der Horst says at the beginning of the interview, when asked what purpose the media fulfil, “never rule out entertainment”, but then relativises this later in connection with PSM and claims that as a programme director of a PSM he would channel fewer resources towards reality TV shows and similar formats and would rather use them in favour of educational programmes:

I do think entertainment has a place in public broadcasting, but not as much as now. I think that's also part of the discussion and why there's always this debate on the added value of PSM. Because if people only see quizzes, entertainment and then a just little bit of documentary, then, you know, it's confusing because then people think, OK, but why am I paying for this? I mean, obviously very populist but, you know, I can watch this on other channels for this as well. So really, going back to the purpose of PSM, in terms of education and information, I think that would be key.

Education, obviously the core subject of this research, is further discussed as the second main theme of the analysis, which specifically deals with the PSM's value proposition to follow an educational mission (chapter 4.2.). For now, it can be stated that the role of PSM as a societal institution of democratic, social, cultural, and global importance was affirmed in the interviews.

In the literature, there is continuous talk of profound changes in relation to the media and the public sphere (Hasebrink et al., 2015; Ibrus, 2022). Especially in relation to digital transformation processes, but also in relation to currently emerging social developments. When asked about these changes and what challenges, opportunities and risks they entail for PSM, the experts offered insights, which, in the analysis, could be coded and categorised into 3 sub-themes: Societal change, technological change, and the resulting challenges. For a clear presentation of these 3 sub-themes, their results are documented in the following sub-chapters.

4.1.1. Societal change

The sub-theme societal change bundles experts' statements on changes that are not directly related to technological developments, but more of a social nature. The predominant three codes in this sub-theme were *disinformation & trust*, *era of crises*, and *political interference*.

With regard to *disinformation & trust*, Per Olav Alvestad, a TV producer from the NRK said:

I always thought that when the Internet came, we would get rid of all the nonsense and all the misinformation. But the opposite has happened and it is because, on the Internet, there are no rules. As public broadcasters, we have to follow a set of rules and fact-check everything we publish. On YouTube, for example, people don't have to follow the same rules. Everyone can easily publish his/her opinion, which is a good thing, you know. But it also leads to a pollution of content. People sell opinions as facts and that's scary, if you ask me, because consumers cannot always assess this so well. It's difficult for some viewers to judge. So that is also another important task for PSM: educating people in knowing whom to trust and whom not to trust.

Other experts have mentioned the *overwhelming flood of information*, as has been identified in the literature (Koltay, 2011; Potter, 2018). Furthermore, experts agreed on the risk of fake news and alternative networks, which undermine the credibility of established PSM through spreading conspiracy theories. Spreading disinformation online, experts said, blurs the line between truth and manipulation and ultimately distorts the consumer's understanding of things. To combat these issues, responsible journalism, fact-checking initiatives, and media literacy programs are vital. Mette Hultgren, experienced editor at Sweden's *Utbildningsradio*, said on that note, that PSM have to stay confident in continuing to produce high-quality content and next to it prompt a dialogue with those who distrust PSM and try to actively involve them. Then, it might be possible to bring these groups back on board and reach them on a level, where trust can be restored, integrity maintained and critical thinking preserved.

Several experts mentioned the developments of the past few years, which were marked by crises of all kinds. While arguably the most pressing crisis facing humanity is global warming, Europe has slid from one crisis to the next. After a global pandemic that took its toll on liberal societies, geopolitical conflicts flared up, military confrontations are no longer a relic of the past and its economic consequences meanwhile affect every individual on the continent. The experts interviewed in the course of this study came back to these crises again and again in their interviews when talking about social developments that not least affect PSM. These statements were bundled under the sub-theme *era of crises* and strongly linked in the analysis to the apparent need of media consumers for security, stability and orientation. For example, Josef Trappel and Mette Hultgren explained that interest, approval and trust in PSM always increases during the peak of such crises. In this context, it was found in the analysis that, according to the interviewed experts, the overall political climate has a considerable influence on the reception of information by media consumers.

In this context, it seems all the more important that PSM, as anchored in theory, can operate undisturbed and fulfil their educational and informational mandate. However, when asked about what they see as the greatest current risks for PSM, several experts lamented attempted political interference in reporting and public attacks on the concept of PSM by right-wing politicians who seek to defund PSM. The sub-theme *political interference* was therefore used to summarise experts' statements about the tendency

of some opinion leaders to deliberately shift the social role of PSM. For example, Patrick Barwise, Emeritus Professor at the London Business School and author of the book "The War Against the BBC", reported that British broadcasting is constantly in the crosshairs for cuts by both far-left and far-right political forces, who have little sympathy for the idea of a free, critical and politically completely independent broadcaster. As a result, Barwise argued, the need for proper PSM funding has to be constantly debated in the UK. Roland Trabe, an Austrian expert on digital media in education, made a similar assessment in his interview when he criticised the situation with regard to the ORF's funding structure and the eternal attempts to exert political influence via its board of trustees (ORF Stiftungsrat).

In summary, it can be stated with regard to societal change that although the role of PSM was classified as strong, important and dominant in the interviews, it is by no means set in stone due to various political developments. In fact, PSM's societal role must be constantly reassured and justified in the view of media consumers and in the perception of the taxpayers financing PSM in order not to run the risk of losing this standing in society.

4.1.2. Technological change

During the interviews, the most frequently occurring changes discussed by the experts in relation to media in general and PSM in particular were of a technological nature. What is bundled under the umbrella term *digital transformation* was summarised in three codes within this analysis: *distribution channels*, *audience usage behaviour*, and *revolutionising technologies*.

As far as *distribution channels* are concerned, Annemiek Spronk, Genremanger for education, knowledge and philosophy at the Dutch *NPO*, pinpointed: "We have been in the luxury of everybody watching our linear television programming. But that way of media consumption changes. And we have to act fast enough." Similarly, Carla Valentin (*NPO Kennis*) highlighted that broadcasters hardly have any influence on agenda setting in the dashboard of smart TVs, i.e. which content is displayed in which order. The curating algorithms of private platforms such as Google or Netflix systematically suggest content to users and completely control the user's home screen. This problem is probably even more drastic in the mobile world. In order to appear as a broadcaster in the timelines of social networks, one has to play by the rules of these private platforms. In this context, the experts confirmed PSM's ongoing discussion about a sensible strategy in relation to using social networking sites. Annemiek Spronk said that there would be two camps within the *NPO*, one advocating the heavy use of social media and the other calling for a more restrained approach and pointing out the dangers. In Sweden, Petter Malmhøster expressed concerns about *UR's* independence, which he sees threatened by cooperation with or distribution through such platforms. Nevertheless, the experts agree that one must not close oneself off to new distribution channels. As Per Olav Alvestad (*NRK*) put it: "We have to be where the audience is". And this audience, as has already been shown in the examination of literature, is increasingly shifting to the digital space, where

private platforms call the shots. Therefore, Josef Trappel stressed the importance of a reasonable political solution on the part of the EU, which must create legal conditions for traditional media and PSM within the framework of the *Digital Markets Act* and *Digital Services Act* (Institute of European Media Law, n.d.), which should enable fair dealings and competition with these platforms.

The developments just mentioned around changing distribution channels are of course inevitably linked to *audience usage behaviour*, a code that has also been subsumed under the sub-theme of *technological changes*. In this context, Matthias Steinböck, an expert in digital education and game-based learning, argues that from his teaching experience, attention spans are indeed getting shorter and shorter. PSM, he argues, must therefore make every effort to be credible and interesting for the most diverse age groups and social strata through skillful audience management and target-group-oriented addressing. Charlotte Sifvert and Annemiek Spronk take a similar view, both convinced that PSMs must travel across the country in their national scope and involve people in their production. In this way, Sifvert and Spronk claim, it can be ensured that minorities also appear in the programme through which, in turn, new target groups feel addressed. This strengthens the respective national identity in society and stereotypically alienated social groups get to know each other better. The challenges that PSM has in terms of promoting social cohesion are discussed in more detail in chapter 4.1.3. and chapter 4.2.2.

As the last code category within the sub-theme on technological change, statements by experts on so-called *revolutionising technologies* were analysed. These include assessments relating to artificial intelligence, machine learning and extended reality features, which, according to some experts, will ensure even greater connectivity, even more user interaction and even greater participatory involvement in the media world. Wouter van der Horst, a declared media technology expert, speaks in this context of synthetic media, which make use of technological aids in production, modification and broadcasting. He sees the potential of these features, especially in the media and education sector, as enormous and explains that in the future, content will no longer be delivered to us purely on two-dimensional screens by accustomed presenters, but that digital space could surround us in a completely new way. Content could be made even more comprehensible and adapted to the personal preferences of the consumer. Despite all his enthusiasm about the groundbreaking possibilities of AI, Wouter van der Horst also points out the downsides: After all, these instruments also provide us with tools that make it much easier to produce disinformation that appears trustworthy and could, for example, lead to even greater deception among media consumers via deep fakes. Josef Trappel also put the brakes on the euphoria in the context of AI. Since it is (yet) a massively backwards-looking instrument, which can also be denounced as hallucinating probability parrot.

In summary, it can be deduced from the interviews that the majority of experts are aware of technological advances and their potential impact on the PSM sector, but they reject apocalyptic scenarios. When asked about any existing strategies around AI on the part of broadcasters, a majority of involved experts said that they did not really exist yet. For example, Roy Straatman, Head of Knowledge at *NTR*

in the Netherlands, said that although they are already eagerly experimenting with these tools and familiarising themselves with the possibilities in media production, they have not yet developed any concrete strategies with regard to integration into the PSM business. For now, it is *NTR's* priority to inform people well about the topic.

4.1.3. Resulting challenges

To sum up the main theme around the societal role of PSM and digital transformation processes, this final sub-theme bundles the *challenges* for PSM that were derived based on the changes described in the previous two chapters. Based on the experts' statements, it will be outlined how to cope with them in the best possible way.

Above all, stands the challenge of *financing* PSM, as both Roy Straatman and Patrick Barwise stated. As Josef Trappel noted, the funding models differ throughout the different European countries. While some PSM (e.g. in Spain) rely solely on advertising revenue, other PSM (e.g. in Austria) are financed through household levies. However, most countries typically fund PSM by a combination of public money (TV licence fees, household levies or general taxation) and advertising (Barwise, 2022). What can be taken away from the interviews, in this context, is that the importance of economic safeguarding of the PSM cannot be stressed enough. In other words, the interrelated financial challenges that appear to PSM have to be solved both on an internal managerial level and on an external lobbying level to assure enough independence from the government, and furthermore justify their own existence to the taxpayers.

The second challenge that emerged from the interviews was *reaching audiences*. This can be achieved through balancing the PSM programming according to the needs of different audiences and through targeting specific audience groups with not only state-of-the-art productions but also using adequate communication style. Annemiek Spronk, on that note, said that *NPO* needs to really develop "a new language" to address younger audiences. Per Olav Alvestad said that he personally believes the *NRK* should publish where ever the viewers are:

I think we should be on YouTube, be on TikTok, be on Instagram, and what's next because we need people to trust us as a source also on those platforms. We shouldn't just stay in our own spheres and hope that the users come to us, because they obviously don't. We have an age gap at *NRK*. We attract users until they are around 10. Then we lose them until they are around 25-30, which is usually when they come back to us. But those 15-20 years – it's an important time in a person's life, where we... Yes, radio, we still reach them via radio, and a few of them online but nothing or only very little through our TV content.

Alvestad's statement regarding the age-specific TV reach are bitter from the PSM's point of view, especially because TV productions are usually produced very cost-intensively (Barwise, 2022). However, Josef Trappel also notes that TV has evidently never been the preferred medium for adolescents and that

statistically, the average age of the TV audience has been rising for years. This development has of course been intensified by the immense increase in media offerings that has arrived with the internet.

In addition to *financing issues* and a struggle for *audience interest*, a third challenge was documented in the analysis of the interviews: *legal requirements*. PSMs operate under relatively strict regulations in most countries. For example, legal requirements apply to production, broadcasting and certain cooperations. While, from the point of view of the interviewed experts, these requirements serve the purpose of ensuring that PSM fulfils its public mandate and provides an appropriate media offer, some experts state that these requirements also have a restrictive effect. As PSM is simply not allowed to do everything: collaborations with private parties are strictly regulated - in the sense of impartiality, certain digital distribution channels are not intended for public service broadcasters - in the interest of transparency, and certain user data may not be used - in the interest of data protection. The result is a complicated corset of rules according to which PSM must operate. According to the experts, this corset is definitely justified, but it makes daily work more and more difficult. So the challenge for PSM is to nevertheless set up a modern programme that can be produced and broadcast while taking these framework conditions into account.

In conclusion, it can be said that all these three problem areas – *financing issues*, *audience behaviour*, and *legal framework* - must necessarily be solved by PSM. For as Roy Straatman put it, PSM must remain adaptable and be able to offer the user a 360-degree experience across all distribution channels, if they want to be competitive in the future.

4.2. The educational mandate as PSM's key public value proposition

Essentially, the educational value of PSM was the core unit of research in this study. With regard to the RQ2 of how can Western European PSM adapt and operationalise their educational mission as a public value proposition in a media landscape of digital innovations, the interviewees were asked a variety of questions in relation to education (see interview guide in appendix D). In the analysis of the experts' answers on them, the second main theme that was developed inductively from the dataset was labelled *the educational mandate as PSM's key public value proposition*. Within this theme, again, three sub-themes were categorised. In alignment with the conceptual model of this research (chapter 3.3.), the first sub-theme grouped statements around the educational value of PSM from an *individual perspective*. The second sub-theme looked at the educational value of PSM from the *societal perspective*, examining interview answers about media literacy and education from a broader public viewpoint. Lastly, the third sub-theme bundled codes that were mainly found in answers to the more strategic questions in the interview guide, which goal was to gain insights and get to know interesting initiatives from the experts on how to *elaborate a modern, public-oriented educational media offering*. Below, these sub-themes will be described in three sub-chapters.

4.2.1. Individual educational value

As suggested by the conceptual model of the RQ2, the interviewees were asked to provide answers on the educational value of PSM not only from the (potentially more obvious) societal perspective but also from those of the single user. From the theory, it was clear that individuals use media for a variety of reasons, but essentially always want to satisfy a certain need with their media consumption. As outlined in the theoretical framework, this need can be orientation (classification), information (knowledge), entertainment (relaxation), distraction (escapism), or a mixture of those. As a rule, media aim to deliver content, users demand in order to satisfy these needs. However, as the theory said, PSM (in contrast to commercial media) aim to additionally fulfil an educational mission. This can be achieved by PSM through *formal, informal, and nonformal* educational offerings.

Regarding *formal education* and PSM, two experts from Swedish educational broadcasting answered, that many people see the core of the *Utbildningsradio* (Sweden's educational PSM) in producing programmes for the lower level or the basic school system. Both Petter Malmhøster (*UR*) and Mette Hultgren (*UR*) explained that their work in producing educational programmes is aligned with the Swedish school curriculum, specifically for primary school students. Both experts emphasised the importance of collaboration with teachers and pupils, as well as engaging with reference groups to gather input before producing content. Unlike PSM in other countries, the Swedish *UR* grasps its role as a provider of formal schooling content more directly and produces content for the utilisation by teachers based on their needs in the classroom. In fact, maintaining close contact with the educational system is a legal requirement of the national PSM charter. Similarly, Roy Straatman (*NTR*) brought up "schooltv.nl" when asked about the formal education PSM provide in the Netherlands. Roland Trabe (*PH Vienna*) highlighted "Ö1 macht Schule" as a formal programme for school kids in Austria. Per Olav Alvestad (*NRK*) mentioned "NRK Skole", a platform providing schooling content in Norway.

In the context of *informal educational* value of PSM, codes that occurred quite frequently were *infotainment, hidden education* and *adult life-long-learning*. Roy Straatman (*NTR*) stated:

I think it's important that the audience doesn't see educational content as homework. Because then people think, well, okay I've been working all day long or I went to school and so now I just want to relax. But there are a lot of people who are still interested in specific subjects that, when they see them, they have an AHA-Erlebnis and think, wow, I didn't know this but this is a good story to tell at the birthday party or just a random fact to tell friends to create more knowledge about a certain topic. It's a nice way for people to get around in life and I think that this is our task: making the audience curious about educational or informative content. And this has definitely changed over the past year. We used to deliver educational content in a very formal way, with lecture-like formats, where experts presented information. Today we wrap the same information in other formats and give it a little twist, e.g., over a humorous game or an entertaining quiz show. So we also incorporate elements from other formats that give people clues. And after all, they see something they actually want to see, you know?

In this respect, to express the phenomenon of hiding educational content within entertaining formats, Matthias Steinböck expressed the term “*chocolate-covered broccoli*”, which was later used as an in-vivo code in the analysis. Charlotte Sifvert formulated it similarly when talking about the importance of “the frosting on the cake”, stressing that there is so much more PSM can deliver within “the cake”, in the context of lightweight (educational) drama. Annemiek Spronk, with regard to *informal education* through PSM, stated that the information must, firstly, be easily consumable for the user and, secondly, have a clearly tangible use or practical implications for the individual. In other words, Spronk argued, that the consumer must be able to comprehend in what sense this knowledge is relevant to him/her personally and how it could benefit them in their daily life. So, unlike the *societal educational value* (chapter 4.2.2.), which is rather holistic, the *individual level* of PSM’s educational offering relates more to what is in for the single user in practice.

Lastly, *nonformal educational value* was coded, when experts discussed PSM’s actions to initiate individual learning processes on the long run, i.e., when PSM initiatives were mentioned, that were designed to encourage individuals to engage with information privately and aimed at letting knowledge emerge somewhat naturally, e.g. via participatory programmes where people are invited to try things out for themselves. Carla Valentin (*NPO Kennis*) emphasised the opportunities for PSM to offer individuals information about the healthcare-related issues, such as personal experiences and quick snack-bite reports. She also stressed the importance of serving as a nonformal educational media platform that enables individuals to learn new skills, express their creativity, and enjoy the satisfaction of making something with their own hands (e.g. through a DIY-approach.), e.g. through a pursuing DIY (do it yourself) formats and similarly active approaches).

In a nutshell, the majority of experts in the interviews were convinced that PSM should deliver all types of an educational offering – *formal, informal, nonformal*.

4.2.2. Societal educational value

The sub-theme *societal educational value* bundled codes found in the experts’ answers in terms of social cohesion and togetherness, national identity and international comprehension, cultural belonging, digital inclusion and social integration. The role PSM as a societal institution, as has been discussed in the theoretical framework, according to the experts, can be considered being the social glue for the community of people living in the respective country.

In this context, Patrick Barwise repeatedly speaks of resilience to disinformation, which PSM should convey in order to build the basis for a mature society. In general, almost all experts mentioned the term citizenship in this regard. PSMs have a role to play in turning the people who consume them into enlightened, responsible citizens who are capable of making informed decisions. Matthias Steinböck, among others, describes the importance of (digital) inclusion and points out that often when you include

someone, you inevitably exclude someone at the same time, which makes targeted communication very important. Annemiek Spronk too addresses efforts of the NPO to promote diversity within the group and to live social inclusion in the sense of creating a public space. She is convinced that PSMs need to build empathy with the user through personalised, participatory formats and a "new language". As already explained in theory, the public, paradoxical as it may sound, apparently does not always know what it needs. Therefore, it is important for PSM to think all the more from the perspective of the general public and to consider what educational information could be of value to society. An example of societal educational value was given by Charlotte Sifvert, as she explained how she prompted a broader societal debate by getting viewers to start questioning their beliefs with the following show:

We had a popular concept with a format that was aired on SVT at 8:00 o'clock, "Swedish at any Cost". The viewers would just perceive it as another drama series but, in fact, we pursued a mission with it. It was a reality show featuring people from different parts of the world who have newly arrived in the country. For eight weeks, they were locked up in a villa in the coastal countryside with the task to learn the Swedish language. Over eight episodes, the viewer got to meet eight different people with different abilities and sets of skills. It became apparent what they found easy and what stopped them. So we learned a lot about how to teach our language. It was closely connected to the curriculum in learning Swedish and also included the use of digital tools... But for the viewers it was an entertaining series, serious about eight individuals learning something and having fun. And that's why we started *The Purpose Studio*, because we believe that the combination of entertainment and learning is... magic really. And you should never leave the one without the other.

Later in the interview, Charlotte Sifvert also came up with a similar experimental format called "The Dictator", which was targeted at 18-year-old first-time voters in the Swedish election. Again, by using eight people who were locked up in a temporary "fake dictatorship", it was intended to demonstrate to the viewer what this political system is like and why it is so important to go voting in order to prevent this from happening in real. In that way, and against a lot of concerned resistance voiced by elderly viewers in particular, it could be made clear to the Swedish youth, why education about certain democratic values matter so much on a societal level. Along similar lines, the analysis revealed the *societal educational value*, which was acknowledged by the experts as a PSM value.

4.3. Possible paths of further advancement - developing a future vision for PSM

In this last theme, coded statements were analysed in which experts, on the one hand, criticised current situations and circumstances in connection with PSM, and on the other hand, made proposals offering possible solutions. The aim of the current chapter is to create a basis for a vision for the future of Western European PSM by presenting the analysis carried out on these statements. The final theme brings together three sub-themes: *Room for Improvement*, *successful examples*, and *elaborating a modern, public-*

oriented PSM educational media offering. In the following chapters, these sub-themes are summarised.

4.3.1. Room for improvement

Content & production

In connection with the digital transformation already mentioned in chapter 4.1.2, several experts brought up new ways in content production and suggested broadcasters to open up to these possibilities, especially in an educational context. Roland Trabe, for example, would definitely not shy away from the use of digital tools and educational platforms, such as Actionbound, Simpleshow, Canva, among others, as he believes that this reflects the spirit of our times. Media strategists, in his opinion, need to know exactly how to direct users to the right content. Trabe himself says in reference to his job as a professional educator:

We are currently trying to move toward the new didactic approaches of action and production-oriented education, where learners are constantly involved and self-guided to find things out. This can be that they analyse a source and then create an infographic from it with the help of a digital tools, like it *Canva*, *InDesign*, or another platform. It may be that videos are created with Simpleshow or Python or interactive posters are developed with *PlayPosit* or *edpuzzle*. There are many, many digital tools that you can use for knowledge transfer. Pupils can become editors and produce what they have worked out beforehand. We also work a lot with digital games, podcasts, memes, role plays... the tools exist – it is just up to the teaching staff to bring it to life.

When asked, Trabe confirmed that he could well imagine these tools in the broadcasting sector, although he noted that the more heterogeneous the audience is, the more difficult it becomes to create an interactive learning experience.

Distribution & accessibility

On the same note, Matthias Steinböck discusses the importance of creating narratives that the public can understand in media production and public engagement. He mentions a game called "*Bury Me, My Love*" that tells the story of involuntary migration, specifically the Syrian refugee crisis. The game, designed like WhatsApp, allows players to experience and understand the challenges faced by refugees. By making choices through the chat-based journey, they influence the way it goes about, having to focus on money, health, and potential hazards while fleeing. Steinböck highlights the learning potential of such games and wishes to see more interactive efforts like these by PSM as well. However, Steinböck also stressed the importance of reflecting on and discussing such games with others who made different choices and mentioned that not every individual has the same psychological prerequisites, which also has to be taken into account.

With regard to the availability and accessibility of content, Steinböck believes that broadcasters should make their archives publicly accessible in order to make available the great treasures of historically relevant productions. He also believes that PSM should make statistic data more freely accessible and better processed. In the context of political elections, he says, "I've had enough of pie charts - it could all be

presented in a much more contemporary fashion". When asked, he explains that, for example, using swipe techniques (cribbed from Tinder) would make it easier for users to understand the differences between political parties and make them more palpable. This would make societal impacts more directly visible, when, for example, a parliamentary mandate moves from one party to the other. Equally called for in this context was a clear overview of the programme structure of PSM. Often, Steinböck said, people are not even aware of where they can find those formats that would be suitable for their needs. Hence, the visibility of the services and clearer navigation on PSM's channels could definitely be improved.

Another aspect where experts see room for improvement in terms of readiness of information and educational content is barrier-free accessibility. Although experts mention that things have changed for the better in this regard in recent years (e.g. audio transcription for the blind and visually impaired and messages in simple language for the less educated and language newcomers), it was repeatedly stated that PSM largely speak a language that is not understood by everyone or does not appeal to all individuals of society in the same way. A fully accessible, multilingual and universally understandable language is therefore recommended for PSM.

Digital development & Innovation

In terms of innovation-proneness, Wouter van der Horst criticised PSM of being a bit of hesitant when it comes to implementing new technologies. His suggestion would be to loosen the legal requirements around the use of digital platform a bit for PSM:

I think they [PSM] really missed the boat when it comes to platform technology. I mean, YouTube came around the corner and offered such a great opportunity for them to reach way more audiences and truly be accessible. However, due to the checks and balances in play they were not flexible enough to react. So if you ask me, ensuring that in the future, PSM are able to adapt to new realities is vital.

Another expert, Charlotte Sifvert, criticised in her interview that PSM should make better use of user data in their evaluation processes. She asserts that it is not always about clicks, views or TV ratings, but rather about measuring impact and effects closely to the target group. The methods for doing this, she admits, are somewhat difficult, but in the context of an educational broadcaster, she says, for example, they regularly survey school classes before and after consuming a certain educational programme, measuring whether the children have understood the concepts presented and grasped what social impact they have. The two experts on education who were interviewed as part of this project have a similar view: Both Trabe and Steinböck argue for a more intensive use of data-driven evaluation methods that go beyond bare usage rates.

Public reputation & transparency

With regard to the public standing of PSM, Josef Trappel criticises the lack of proximity to the citizens on the part of the *ORF* in Austria:

The connection or the closeness between public broadcasting and the population is decisive in my view, especially in the digital environment, and I think this connection is quite weak in the case of the *ORF*. In the last few years, the *ORF* has somehow developed into a rather elitist company. And I think this development urgently needs to be reversed, from an elitist standpoint back to that of the people with whom it serves as a PSM. The connection between the population and the *ORF* is, in my view, in urgent need of repair and I believe that this would be an important step.

In the same way, Annemiek Spronk pleads for getting closer to the people in the NL again:

I think we [NPO] need to open up and come closer to the public again. We should not only be talking about famous people and the things going on in their lives but, rather, really go to all areas in the Netherlands and show ourselves, be vulnerable and communicate. We have to practice what we preach. I think it's very important that we involve the public more intensively again. That can also help to regain trust.

Later in the interview, however, Spronk mentions that there have already been some efforts in this direction on the part of the NPO. For example, pop-up editorial rooms in public places, outside the NPO media complex in Hilversum. There, people can participate in a journalistic fact-checking process and experience how the necessary validation and contextualisation of content works on a broadcasting level. Spronk is convinced that this truly brings people together and promotes interaction and trust.

4.3.2. Successful examples

In the following, strong examples of successful PSM programmes and formats are presented. Furthermore, promising out-of-the-box concepts of current PSM cooperations and collaborations are listed. These project initiatives and partnership productions are intended to provide inspiration to other PSM. Before that, however, educational initiatives and teaching projects will be highlighted that could also prove interesting from a didactic viewpoint in the context of the PSM programmes.

Educational initiative & teaching projects

In connection with the main theme 2 (educational mandate), digital education methods were discussed with teaching experts in this research. In the analysis of those, it appeared that game-based learning and the use of technologies, in general, was considered a very promising way of transferring educational content by the expert interviewed. In this context, again, the focus was placed on digital games, like "*Bury me, My love*", where fleeing and challenges in the life of a refugee were made comprehensible to school kids. Another example was given by Wouter van der Horst, who as the museum

educator of *Rijksmuseum* initiated “*SnapGuide*”, a digital tool that revolutionised museum engagement of young audiences in particular: With *SnapGuide* visitors can decide who shows them around in the museum, be it celebrities, artists, or famous YouTubers. The personal tour takes place both in the real museum and through a Snapchat-inspired mobile application. Moreover, visitors are challenged to take part in various tasks using their smartphone cameras. In that way, discovering the *Rijksmuseum* becomes a truly interactive experience and especially younger audiences were attracted. Such learning experiences show how learners can be mobilised from passivity to activity in the digital space. Along similar lines, PSM could equally act as a mouthpiece to bring to life and channel the knowledge assets of established public service institutions such as museums, theatres or libraries, Wouter van der Horst reckons.

Programmes & formats

In the interviews, the experts active in the broadcasting sector were asked if they could name successful programme formats that they have managed in their professional careers. A very exciting concept from the Netherlands that was mentioned by both Roy Straatman (NTR) and Annemiek Spronk (NPO) is „*Het Verhaal van Nederland*“, a history explaining Podwalk, initiated by *NPO kennis*. In this format, curious users could learn the history of the Netherlands by literally stepping into the story themselves, walking around certain locations in the country, listening to information via a podcast. This format was received with immense enthusiasm, according to the experts.

Patrick Barwise, on the other hand, mentioned rather linear more conservative, linear PSM formats from the UK and the USA. Firstly, “*CBeebies*”, a children's TV channel owned and operated by the BBC and, secondly, “*Sesame Street*”, a US-American family TV show. Both programmes represent rather antiquated formats, but according to Barwise, they fulfilled their role in promoting literacy nationwide and bridging many cultural and educational divides in humorous ways.

Another two local Dutch PSM production were highlighted by Annemiek Spronk, which were particularly successful because the big national broadcaster suddenly became very touchable for the people in the country. One was called “*Ruimteship Aarde*”, a documentary series by *KRO-NCRV* (part of the *NPO*) in which André Kuipers, a Dutch physician and ESA astronaut, provides a view of the planet from space. While this documentary offers beautiful nature images, it takes the viewer on a rather intellectual, raw-information-based journey of discovery. To make things more practical and experienceable, however, an additional tool is provided on the *KRO-NCRV* website, with which users can log in with their ZIP code and see, for example, how many stars they can see from their neighbourhood and elsewhere in the Netherlands. A similar approach was taken in the other PSM programme Spronk mentioned, called “*12 Straten Groener*”. Here, it was the goal to make the environment greener. So the *KRO-NCRV* initiated a competition between 12 streets in the Netherlands. In addition, again, using the ZIP-code-concept, allowed viewers to check how “green” their own street was and get tips on how to improve things in order to be

more environmentally sustainable. In the analysis of well-received programmes and formats, it appeared that localising the content offering while tackling globally relevant topics is a promising strategy for PSM.

Finally, the offbeat social experimentation show "The Dictator" by SVT and UR must be named. As already noted, this PSM production was about eight participants who were stripped of their possessions and rights, locked up in a Soviet-style camp and subjected to harsh living conditions. The participants did not know how they could move on in the show and possibly win a prize, they only knew that the environment was controlled by an all-powerful dictator. Co-editor Charlotte Sifvert, while mentioning the countless angry emails she received after this programme aired prime-time on the largest national TV channel in Sweden, also praised the programme for its thought-provoking nature and its ability to challenge viewers' notions of freedom and democracy.

Cooperations & Collaborations

In the analysis of the interviews, it was observed that several experts consider cooperation to be beneficial and furthermore believe that PSM should intensify and expand them in the future. These cooperations should also be entered into with regard to the PSM education mandate and help to deliver educational value to the public. In this context, for example, Charlotte Sifvert mentioned:

PSM absolutely need collaborations. That's one of the reasons why me and my partner left *UR* and founded *The Purpose Studio*. The relationship between PSM and third parties is complicated. There would be so many opportunities for cooperation, for example, the Swedish healthcare system, or museums, schools, libraries, it could even be McDonald's, you see. PSM must be open to cooperate and start producing things together with other institutions. But it is difficult. The budgets are really limited, so there's still very little happening, while there should be so much happening.

While Sifvert lamented that the legal framework for PSM offers far too little scope for cooperation, and even mentions incidentally that she had planned a literacy campaign at UR in cooperation with McDonald's, which unfortunately did not come to fruition, she also mentions an example where the Swedish PSM was indeed allowed to collaborate with a commercial company: This was in the exceptional situation during the pandemic, in which SVT, in cooperation with The Purpose Studio, launched a campaign together with SL, the Stockholm subway operator. Sifvert explains its educational value like this:

The SL (Stockholm public transportation) noticed that despite COVID restrictions, many young people were still using buses and subways. So they commissioned us with an educational campaign targeting young people through social media. So we designed a campaign that consisted of six films in Swedish and two in Arabic and Somali, specifically tailored to each subway line and the dialect spoken in the corresponding suburban area. By featuring relatable individuals on social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook, the campaign successfully reached its target audience. The use of social media allowed for measurable results, obtaining data and statistics for each of the subway lines. Eventually, this campaign was considered the most successful one we have ever

conducted, challenging the notion that the effectiveness of campaigns cannot be measured.

As this example illustrates, it sometimes requires innovative approaches to achieve an educational mission. This connects to what Steinböck said about not being afraid of using public data for educational purposes as PSM. While data protection is an important European fundamental right, one should not forget the great possibilities that targeted educational information can bring about.

4.3.3. Elaborating a modern public-oriented educational media offering

In the course of the interviews, the experts were repeatedly asked about strategic decision-making areas that PSM is confronted with. By analysing their responses to these, it was possible to identify some viable options. The following chapter summarises what emerged and explains how the experts envision a modern, public PSM educational offer.

Firstly, it can well and truly be said that the educational role of PSM does not have to be fully reinvented. As Patrick Barwise said, the mandate does not have to change, the mission is right as it is. However, the methods have to be thought through again. Educational methods have to be modernised in many aspects, such as content production, distribution platforms and communication didactics (see theme 2). In the analysis of experts' statements regarding the strategic alignment of PSM, three key sub-themes were identified in relation to the educational mission (RQ2): PSM have to, firstly, become more *diverse, inclusive & inspiring*, secondly, develop more into an *innovative modern & digital* medium, and, thirdly, act more *down-to-earth & transparent*. Subsequently, these three sub-themes will be outlined.

Diverse, inclusive & inspiring

In terms of diversity, the inclusion expert said that PSM should focus even more on representing differences in society. Sifvert mentioned that PSM provided a forum for a xenophobic Swede from the countryside to meet a Muslim - a member of a religion he was so afraid of, even though he had never come into contact with it. A similar project found in research on the topic is the book "Bauer & Bobo" by the Viennese journalist Florian Klenk, who visited an angry farmer who had previously berated him savagely on the internet. Both projects showed that the encounter with opposing perspectives can be enlightening, depolarising and inspiring. PSM should therefore definitely make use of this fertile ground and develop an educational programme via formats that depict and confront social opposites. The expert interviews are therefore quite helpful for PSM to strategise around the topic.

Innovative, modern & digital

Considering what Wouter van der Horst said about PSM occasionally missing the boat for technological advancements, it can be proposed to PSM to intensify strategic considerations around the issue of digital transformation. Digital platforms came to stay (Josef Trappel) and therefore, transforming

into a modern 360 medium (Roy Straatman) will be of vital importance. Moreover, as Roland Trabe explained, it will be important for society to promote digital media literacy among all citizens in a country and PSM can play an essential role in this process. The teaching of competencies and digital skills to users of digital infrastructures, so that they can move online not only as passive consumers but as actively participating citizens, must also be intensified, said Mette Hultgren. Eventually, it must be the goal of PSM to become a Public Service Network (Patrick Barwise). To achieve this, building a digital space, that is easy to consume, enjoyable to participate in and appealing to the audience is vital. PSM have to stay brave and stand their ground on the Internet, to be able to compete with the digital platforms of Google, Meta, Amazon, Apple and Microsoft.

Another type of cooperation, that was raised by experts, was cooperation at the international level of PSM. For example, they brainstormed the idea of a streaming platform that could be introduced at the level of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). This platform should be freely accessible to all citizens in Europe. With a broader public service offer that would be available without geo-tagging and synchronised in all languages, the European broadcasters could perhaps compete more successfully with streaming sites such as Netflix, experts argued. Having a shared and combined dashboard where users can watch all the content might be legally challenging, but could be a profitable strategy for the future. After all, European PSM could not only rely on co-produced content, such as the Eurovision Song Contest, but would also benefit from a wealth of content produced by other national broadcasters on their own.

Down-to-earth, relatable & transparent

Ultimately, on the basis of the interviews analysed, it is advisable that PSM strategically positions themselves more down-to-earth and closer to the people. Referring to Josef Trappel's statement about ORF being elitist, and considering the theory that the public is PSM's shareholder, it should be noted that PSM needs to get back to the people again in a sense. As Annemiek said, showing vulnerabilities is a strength and not something PSM should be afraid of.

Regarding transparency, Patrick Barwise noted that it can play a big role in whether the public perceives PSM as a credible source of information. By being more transparent about the journalistic principles applied and the processes in newsrooms, even when mistakes have been discovered, it may be possible to prevent people from turning away from PSM and distrusting the media in general. In this way, resilience to disinformation can be fostered (Humphrecht, 2020).

In summary, the theme *possible paths of further advancement - developing a future vision for PSM* is by no means to be considered an exhaustive strategy for PSM. However, by summarising the *possibilities for improvement* identified by the experts interviewed, outlining existing *successful programmes* and presenting *novel concepts* for PSM education, the topic provides a good basis for the strategic guideline formulated in the conclusion and discussion section following this chapter.

5. Conclusion & Discussion

This research aimed at developing a deeper understanding of how Western European PSM can fulfil their value proposition of delivering added value to the public and thus strategically differentiate themselves from the competition. Specifically, the following research question was posed: *How can public service media in Western Europe strategically position themselves as providers of educational value in order to stand out from the competition in the ever-changing digital media markets?*

On the basis of the expert interviews conducted, the following thematic focal points could be identified, which in the analysis show an enormous development potential for PSM. First, the societal role of PSM is considered by experts to be more important than ever. Even though there is more intense competition in the digital space and new players are entering the market with innovative concepts, PSMs are important social institutions that can promote orientation, enlightenment and cohesion, especially in times of war and crisis. By providing impartial news of current affairs and journalistically contextualising political analyses that facilitate public debate and discussion, PSM promote democracy, citizenship, civic engagement and social cohesion.

The experts therefore agreed that Western European societies should collectively finance PSM, as this has an enormous added value for the general public from a democratic, social and educational point of view. While experts identified a great need for improvement in the areas of content & production, distribution & accessibility, digital development & innovation and public reputation & transparency, they also cited some successful examples of innovative out-of-the-box initiatives and promising programme formats that PSM has delivered to society.

A particular focus of this paper was the educational mission of PSM. In view of the numerous social and technological changes of our time, the RQ2 raised the question of *how public service media in Western Europe can operationalise their educational mandate and translate it into an adequately innovative content offering that meets the demands of our time*. In a media landscape that is characterised by digital innovation and a flood of information that is poured on people every day, it is easy for users to lose track of what is going on. In this respect, the experts considered it all the more important that PSM, as trustworthy authorities, deliver an educational programme that is up-to-date at all levels. After all, in the course of digital transformation, our world has developed into an information society in which education is indispensable for the individual.

In the analysis of the expert interviews, it could be determined in connection with the educational value of PSM that education can be brought to the user in a variety of ways and that the methods for imparting knowledge are constantly evolving. In summary, it can be said that the educational mission of PSM, according to the experts, goes far beyond formal programme formats such as news or documentaries. Informal and non-formal methods promise a high level of user engagement. Emotional tools such as entertainment and humour can be used to convey knowledge in a way that is easier for the user to

consume. In this context, the combination of education and entertainment was frequently mentioned.

In addition, experts from the traditional education sector were interviewed and asked about didactic developments and the integration of digital tools in education. Here, the analysis revealed an enormous potential of game-based approaches. Game-based learning was a topic that is already causing great enthusiasm in European classrooms. Experts asserted that learners need to be brought out of passivity and into a participative, interactive and experiential procedure. Knowledge is created through activity, so the tenor goes. Applied to the PSM context, it can be said that there is a lot to learn from this.

As stated in the results, some broadcasters have embarked on inspiring projects that have adapted and operationalised the broadcasting mandate and brought it into the digital age. The analysis identified three main areas that were considered promising in this respect: Projects and initiatives from the traditional education sector, PSM programmes & formats and cooperations and collaborations. What all practical examples from these three main areas had in common, besides their successful results, was a clever mix of formal, informal and non-formal aspects and a balanced use of entertainment tools that promoted higher audience involvement. In the implementation of these examples, care was also taken to ensure that the practical benefits for the individual user were clearly recognisable to the user. In the analysis, this was summarised under the theme of transparency and down-to-earthness.

It is important to note that the educational mission of PSM is by far not only for children and young people, but that information is produced for all participants in society. This concerns different age groups, all social classes and geographical locations of a country. Diversity and inclusion were mentioned again and again by the experts in this context. In the course of analysing the educational value of PSM from an individual perspective, it became clear that PSM needs to get closer to people, cooperate with them and involve them in the programme. In recent years, some experts have noted a development in which PSM has increasingly distanced itself from society - this must be reversed urgently. PSMs, as explained in the theoretical part, are there for and committed to the general public, not just to a small, educated elite at the top of society.

In summary, after analysing the expert statements, it can be stated that PSM in Western Europe should fulfil three core promises with regard to their public educational mission: They should be (1) Diverse, inclusive & inspiring, (2) Innovative, modern & digital, and (3) down-to-earth, relatable & transparent. In order to meet user needs in all these areas and to be able to compete with digital platforms, it is important above all that PSMs do not close themselves off to technological developments, but also to social changes, but are open, flexible and adaptable companies that explore and embrace new formats and platforms to reach and engage audiences, adapt to changing media consumption habits and maintain their relevance.

5.1. Theoretical reflection and societal implications

The results of this study show that few contradictions could be found with regard to the theoretical aspects outlined in the initial framework. All experts agreed on the urgency of a functioning public media system. In contrast to previous literature, this urgency was not only illuminated from a democratic point of view, but also from an educational perspective. Furthermore, the results of the study show that often not only the overall societal view can be interesting in the analysis of PSM, but also the individual perspective is relevant. This perspective has been less strongly expressed in the existing literature, which is why it can be claimed that this present study contributes to a better theoretical understanding in the academic research field of PSM. However, what this all means for the general public cannot be ignored either, of course. The implications of this study are that PSM do indeed play a role in strengthening media literacy and educational content and should continue to play a part in this regard. Moreover, the democratisation of knowledge and the cultivation of critical thinking, as well as the adequate use of the technological realities of our time, are important in promoting social cohesion, contributing to a better educated society, and empowering individuals to lead an enlightened life of intellectual dignity.

5.2. Strengths & limitations

This study has several strengths. First of all, it should be noted that renowned experts from five different countries were interviewed, all of whom have a great understanding of their respective national media markets and were thus able to contribute insights to this study that would have been difficult to obtain from the outside. In this way, it was possible to identify international differences and learn from examples from other countries in the context of developing strategic recommendations for PSM.

In this context, however, it must be mentioned as a limitation that this explorative study was focused only on the Western European context. The decision to conduct the interviews exclusively in this region was influenced by practical considerations, such as the location of the researcher, as well as the fact that the concept of PSB originated and arguably holds the strongest position in Europe. However, this choice is a limitation as it provides a narrower perspective on the topic. Since only one region was considered, it is reasonable to assume that cultural factors may have influenced the results. It may be easier to find partners who share the same values and stories if they belong to the same country and have similar traditions.

Furthermore, it should be noted that all the experts are very positive about the concept of public service broadcasting. On the one hand, because they themselves are employed by such an organisation, do research in this sector, or on the other hand, because they are politically minded in such a way that they consider public service media to be important. Of course, it should be mentioned in this context that there are definitely also critical voices that are less convinced of the PSM concept. However, with regard to the research objective, these voices were deliberately neglected in this study.

As a final limitation, it should be mentioned that although certain implications were hinted at in the majority of the interviews and the strategic recommendations for action given seem promising for the future of PSBs, the practicability and feasibility was somewhat neglected, i.e., quite banal problems in the operational implementation of educational broadcasting were left out. In relation to the hyperopia of managers focusing too much on the future and neglecting urgent problems, this can be noted as a limitation.

5.3. Suggestions for future research

Elaborating on the limitations, one potential future research field in the area of PSM could be exploring the impact of emerging technologies on audience engagement and participation from a quantitative viewpoint. As mentioned before, with the rapid advancement of technology, there are new opportunities and challenges for public service broadcasters to connect with their audiences. Investigating how emerging technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, interactive platforms, and personalized content delivery can enhance the educational value and interactivity of public service broadcasting in Western Europe would provide valuable insights for the industry. Such research could examine the effectiveness of incorporating these technologies into programming, the potential for fostering audience participation and co-creation, and the implications for promoting digital literacy and media education in the context of PSM from a numerical perspective.

Secondly, drawing on the findings resulting from the interviews, it would be interesting to study how the process of implementing game-based educational experiences could function in a broadcasting environment. Future research could explore the design, development, and integration of educational games within the programming of PSM in Western Europe. Investigating the effectiveness of game-based learning approaches, the engagement levels of audiences, and the impact on educational outcomes would provide valuable insights into leveraging the interactive and immersive nature of games to enhance the educational value of public service broadcasting. Furthermore, understanding the potential challenges and considerations in implementing such experiences would contribute to the development of effective strategies for incorporating other didactic tools and educational elements into broadcasting initiatives.

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Appendix A – Inclusion & exclusion criteria

Domain of expertise	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Media / broadcasting professionals	Employed for a media company, staff from corporate media departments, audience research, editorial staff, any other employee who can provide insights into of media companies	Mere marketing managers for a non-media company, social media content creators, influencers
Business strategists / consultants	Any relation to the field of media and education, expertise in strategic matters (ideally in terms of public broadcasting)	No relevant connection to field of media or education
Journalists / presenters / editors	From both private media houses of any distribution channel (print, TV, radio, online, etc.) and public service broadcasters. Any contact with value propositions of media	Mere social media influencers, media agencies, marketing professionals
Politicians	Experienced in policy-making around media issues, actively shaping and co-designing media structures OR experienced with any project in relation to public value management	Only passive contact with media (e.g., through interviews)
Scholars, academics, (media) market researchers	Academic background in the field of media studies, education, who have ideally already dealt with public education mandates, audience statistics, media usage quotas, etc.	No background in the field of media or education
Educative programme managers	Expertise with educational projects, programmes for children, literacy educators, who have ideally been in touch with broadcasters before	Pure elementary pedagogy
Public institution experts	Staff from museums and theaters, zoos, and other public institutions in the field of innovative knowledge transmission, potentially AI-supported	No relation to innovative initiatives

Appendix B – List of interviewed experts (sample description)

Expert name (Country of expertise) Interview date Professional position(s) @Company	Expert's experience and relevance to the study
<p>Wouter van der Horst (NED) 4 May 2023</p> <p>Head of Content & Learning @Smartify</p> <p>(former) Educator & Media Technologist @Rijksmuseum</p>	<p>Wouter van der Horst is currently the Head of Content & Learning at <i>Smartify</i>, a mobile app which can scan artworks and return information about them. Previously, Wouter has also worked as an Museum Educator & Media Technologist at the <i>Rijksmuseum</i> in Amsterdam, where he initiated plenty of innovative projects around young audiences' engagement by bringing together digital content and the educational mission of the museum. Moreover, Wouter is a Practor for Media Literacy at <i>Mediacollege Amsterdam</i> and Founder of <i>We Share Culture</i>, a media, tech & storytelling consultancy for learning institutes. Due to his professional background, Wouter has an outstanding knowledge in the field of digital education, media literacy, and creative storytelling and could therefore contribute to this study by outlining potential digital strategies for PSM both in terms of content creation and distribution.</p>
<p>Petter Malmhøster (SWE) 9 May 2023</p> <p>Planeringsredaktör UR Samtiden @Sveriges Utbildningsradio AB</p>	<p>Petter Malmhøster is a Planning Editor at the <i>Sveriges Utbildningsradio (UR)</i>. He has been working at <i>UR Samtiden</i> since its start 13 years ago. There, he followed the mission of supporting the Swedish society through education by providing a broad range of independent and reliable knowledge. By combining journalism with pedagogy at <i>UR</i>, Petter has created programs for children, young adults, and elderly people and gave teachers or parents a valuable tools to explain, clarify and deepen knowledge. As a well-experienced editor at the Swedish educational broadcasting cooperation, Petter could provide this research with illuminating insights into the practice of educational broadcasting formats and name the contemporary challenges.</p>
<p>Roy Straatman (NED) 10 May 2023</p> <p>Head of Knowledge @NTR (Nederlandse Publieke Omroep)</p>	<p>Roy Straatman is the Head of Knowledge at <i>NTR</i>, the Dutch broadcaster, supplying TV and radio programming of an informational, educational, and cultural nature to the national public broadcasting system, the <i>Nederlandse Publieke Omroep</i>. Besides his role at <i>NTR</i>, Roy is a Trainer & Facilitator for creative innovation and concept development. Prior to this, Roy was the Creative Director at the <i>Endemol Shine Nederland Mediagroep BV</i>, where innovative entertainment programmes are produced for every platform. With his background in content creation, initially as an editor and later as a director, Roy has excellent expertise in how to package and distribute knowledge in a timely manner. Furthermore, as Head of Knowledge at <i>NTR</i> he clearly knows how broadcasters need to package educational content for an audience that demands easily consumable and entertaining information from media.</p>
<p>Annemiek Spronk (NED) 10 May 2023</p> <p>Genremanager @NPO (Nederlandse Publieke Omroep)</p> <p>(former) Head of Public Education @Rijksmuseum</p>	<p>Annemiek Spronk is the Genremanager for kennis, educatie en levensbeschouwing (knowledge, education and philosophy) at the <i>NPO (Nederlandse Publieke Omroep)</i>. She previously also worked as Head of Education at the <i>Rijksmuseum</i> in Amsterdam in the Public & Education Department. Annemiek is also experienced in creating innovative museum exhibitions for children aged between 6 and 13, that are not classic and "boring" but truly create remarkable educational experiences. Annemiek knows how to bring teaching material to life and make lifelong learning possible by stimulating the audience's curiosity through not only theoretical knowledge but also interesting practical implications. She has a deep understanding of how to connect people and make knowledge touchable for them through creative initiatives. Moreover, Annemiek could contribute to this study by providing interesting insights into current development processes related to the visual image of the <i>NPO</i>.</p>
<p>Patrick Barwise (UK) 15 May 2023</p> <p>Emeritus Professor of Management @London Business School</p> <p>PSB Expert and Co-Author of the book "The War Against the BBC"</p>	<p>Patrick Barwise is Emeritus Professor of Management and Marketing at <i>London Business School</i>. He joined LBS in 1976 after an early career at IBM and has published widely on management, marketing and media. He is also former Chairman of <i>Which?</i>, Europe's largest consumer organization; Chairman of the <i>Archive of Market and Social Research</i>; an Honorary Fellow of <i>The Marketing Society</i>; a Patron of <i>The Market Research Society</i>; an experienced expert witness in international commercial, tax and competition cases; and an advisor to, and early investor in, several successful online business start-ups. As Co-Author of the book "<i>The War Against the BBC</i>", Patrick Barwise is unquestionably a true PSB expert. Following on from his keynote speech at RIPE 2022 in Vienna, the most important academic conference on public service media, he offered this study various aspects of the discourse on media's educational quality from the perspective of different European broadcasters and elaborated on what is at stake in the eventual destruction of the PSB system in Europe.</p>

<p>Josef Trappel (AUT) 19 May 2023</p> <p>Head of Department(s) - Communication Studies - Media Policy and Media Economics @Paris-Lodron-University Salzburg (PLUS)</p> <p>Director of EMJMD Digital Communication Leadership (DCLead) @Erasmus+ Joint Master Programmes</p>	<p>Josef Trappel, University Professor for Communication Policy and Media Economics heads the Department of Communication Studies at the <i>University of Salzburg</i>. He studied journalism, communication and political science, then worked as an expert on media policy issues at the <i>Federal Chancellery in Vienna</i> and at the <i>European Commission in Brussels</i>. He then headed the media and communication department of <i>Prognos AG</i> in Basel, Switzerland. Habilitation at the University of Zurich. In addition, Josef Trappel is director of the Erasmus+ Joint Master Programme <i>Digital Communication Leadership</i>. In the context of this present study, Trappel presented valuable explanations about the democratic role of (educational) public service media, economic interrelations, as well as data about media consumption behaviour. Furthermore, Josef Trappel explained the Austrian national situation in terms of media policy, media structures and innovation in the digital transformation.</p>
<p>Roland Trabe (AUT) 23 May 2023</p> <p>Continuing Education Coordinator @PH Vienna – Centre for Learning Technology and Innovation (ZLI)</p>	<p>Roland Trabe is a Continuing Education Coordinator at the <i>Institute for General Education in Secondary Education (IAS) of PH Vienna</i>. As an education expert at the <i>Centre for Learning Technology and Innovation (ZLI)</i> he deals with thematic areas related to the integration of digital media and tools in the classroom and regularly brings new ideas and a breath of fresh air to Austria's classrooms. The use of modern (digital) media and contemporary e-learning methods are a matter of course for Roland Trabe. He is also intensively involved in <i>European Union Studies</i>, in particular with <i>European Values</i> and <i>European Identities</i>. All these professional backgrounds made Roland Trabe an excellent expert for this study. He did not only contribute with fresh ideas and modern approaches from the field of subject teaching at school but also outlined his idea of European Values to be taught to the public via PSM.</p>
<p>Mette Hultgren (SWE) 24 May 2023</p> <p>Redaktör UR Samtiden @Sveriges Utbildningsradio AB</p>	<p>Mette Hultgren is an experienced editor of the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Corporation (<i>UR Samtiden / Sveriges Utbildningsradio AB</i>). She has been working there for almost 14 years. Starting her professional career as a journalist focused on science and environmental research, Mette Hultgren was later involved in a televised morning news show. Today, she is producing educational public service programmes for viewers of all ages, be it school kids, young adults or an elderly audience. Since August 2017 Mette Hultgren is also part of the strategy team at <i>UR</i> and therefore responsible to find answers for the numerous challenges that PSM are presented with in the course of the digital transformation. With all her experience, Mette Hultgren clearly benefited this study, especially through providing an insights into the strategic approaches she has been developing for the Swedish educational broadcasting.</p>
<p>Charlotte Sifvert (SWE) 24 May 2023</p> <p>Founder @The Purpose Studio</p> <p>(former) Producer @Sveriges Utbildningsradio AB</p>	<p>Charlotte Sifvert is an executive producer, project manager, author and ideas developer, who won several awards and nominations including the <i>Japan Prize</i> and <i>Kristallen</i>. Pedagogy is part of her DNA – she understands the psychology of learning and has the experience of a whole career in the field of media & education. In the context of this study, Charlotte Sifvert highlighted how to make learning a more engaging, rewarding and effective experience. As the “founding mother” of <i>The Purpose Studio</i>, Charlotte Sifvert has brought together a diverse network of pedagogists and storytellers who are on their mission to make a positive social impact through conveying knowledge and education to the people. In doing so, Charlotte Sifvert is not only relying on her experience as a TV producer, but also develops educational programmes for other distribution channels, such as podcasts, online explanation videos for social media, and in-person workshops.</p>
<p>Matthias Steinböck (AUT) 24 May 2023</p> <p>Project Assistant – Teaching Digital Thinking @University of Vienna</p> <p>PhD Candidate – Game-based learning @TU Vienna</p>	<p>Matthias Steinböck is an expert for digitisation in education, massive open online courses (MOOCs), and game-based learning. As a Project Assistant at the <i>University of Vienna</i> he has contributed to the "<i>Teaching Digital Thinking</i>" initiative, where Austria-wide strategies were developed for the conception, mediation, dynamisation and sustainable implementation of digital education for training students in basic information technology knowledge and contemporary digital skills. Furthermore, Matthias Steinböck has played a part in the MOOC "<i>Digitales Leben</i>". On top of that, he researched how digital games suit for teaching and how educational content can be learnt in a playful way. In his interview as part of this study, Steinböck also outlined how game-making is an emerging business and thus something PSM should get their hands on rather sooner than later.</p>

<p>Per Olav Alvestad (NOR) 24 May 2023</p> <p>Television presenter @NRK (Norsk rikskringkasting)</p>	<p>Per Olav Alvestad works as a TV presenter at the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation called <i>NRK (Norsk rikskringkasting)</i>. There, he produced educational formats for the Norwegian youth, such as the popular science program <i>Newton</i> or the factual infotainment show <i>Ikke ød det dette hemme</i>. Moreover, Per Olav Alvestad presented the Norwegian magazine programme <i>Schrödinger's katt</i>, which informs about research, popular science and technology. Therefore, it is fair to say that Per Olav Alvestad really knows how to design scientifically inspired reports on television as well as news documentaries about a variety of topics. He is especially experienced in presenting programmes in an exciting and entertaining way. Hence, Per Olav Alvestad benefited this study with insights on how public broadcasters can package educational content in a format, which especially younger people enjoy consuming.</p>
<p>Carla Valentin (NED) 5 June 2023</p> <p>Editor-in-chief @NPO Kennis (Omroep NTR)</p>	<p>Carla Valentin is the Editor-in-chief of <i>NPO Kennis</i> – a knowledge platform initiated by the <i>NPO</i> (as part of the <i>Omroep NTR</i>) for anyone who wants to know what's going on. Through her position Carla Valentin definitely knows how to provide clear answers to questions that arise from the public, be it about current general issues or things related to one's individual life. The format she is in charge of is characterised by concise stories with unique videos from all the Dutch public broadcasters (<i>Omroep NTR</i>). While <i>NPO Kennis</i> aims to provide easily consumable answers, attention is paid to separating fact from fiction and real from fake. Carla Valentin is a great expert when it comes to an innovative delivery of public value propositions. In this study, she gave an insight into how PSM can help the public to better understand the news and the world around them. Furthermore, Carla Valentin stressed how knowledge can take individuals one step further, and thus benefit society as well.</p>

Appendix C – Consent form

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, CONTACT:

Matthias Mostböck

Breitnerstraat 103B, 3015XE Rotterdam, The Netherlands

606010mm@student.eur.nl | +43 670 202 98 66

DESCRIPTION

You are invited to participate in a master thesis research study about the educational value of Western European public service broadcasters. In particular, this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of how PSM can strategically differentiate themselves from competitors through public value propositions.

Moreover, it shall be explored how PSM can fulfill their educational mandate modern way and which solutions appear practicable as a response to the challenges of the digital transformation.

Your acceptance to participate in this study means that you accept to be interviewed. In general terms, the questions of the interview will be related to media, education and digitalisation.

Unless you prefer that no recordings are made, I will use a the recording function as well as the automatic transcription of MS Teams for the interview.

You are always free not to answer any particular question, and/or stop participating at any point.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

As far as I can tell, there are no risks associated with participating in this research. Yet, you are free to decide whether I should use your name or other identifying information (such as your position in the organisation) not in the study. If you prefer, I will make sure that you cannot be identified, by using a pseudonym or more general identification, only mentioning age and gender, etc.

I will use the material from the interviews and my observation exclusively for academic work.

TIME INVOLVEMENT

Your participation in this study will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

PAYMENTS

There will be no monetary compensation for your participation.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

If you have decided to accept to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you prefer, your identity will be made known in all written data resulting from the study. Otherwise, your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact – anonymously, if you wish— the thesis supervisor Matthijs Leendertse, leendertse@eshcc.eur.nl

SIGNING THE CONSENT FORM

If you sign this consent form, your signature will be the only documentation of your identity. Thus, you DO NOT NEED to sign this form; you may prefer to consent orally. Your oral consent is sufficient.

I give consent to be audiotaped during this study:

Name	Signature	Date
------	-----------	------

I prefer my identity to be revealed in all written data resulting from this study:

Name	Signature	Date
------	-----------	------

This copy of the consent form is for you to keep.

Appendix D – Interview guide

****** ENGLISH VERSION ******

I. Introduction

Greet, build rapport and trust with the interviewee (transparency, respect, humor)

Explain confidentiality + if anything occurs, they can always stop answering etc.

Outline what the research is about – start simple, first easy questions, then “harder” ones

Researcher: Thank you, again for taking your time, I really appreciate that you participate in my research and help me to find out more about the public value of PSM.
To start, I would like to pose five rather general questions and I would ask you to really provide short answers, like only one or two sentences, which we will then discuss thereafter in more depth. Are you ready?

Part I – Media, PSM and society

(approx. 10 minutes)

Q1: What is the purpose of media?

Probe: Why did you mention this one purpose first?

Do you consider this one the most important?

What about X, Y, and Z?

What do you think of this outside a W. European context?

Q2: What does society need media for?

Probe: You mentioned X as the key role of media for society

– could you explain why mentioned this one?

Information? Entertainment? Education? Inspiration?

Q3: What is the biggest challenge of media today?

Probe: In your opinion, X is the biggest challenge of media today.

– could you elaborate on this a bit? Why do you think that?

What is the biggest risk?

What is the biggest opportunity?

Q4: Do we need to publicly fund media?

Probe: You stated, that we (as society) should publicly fund media

– aren't private companies supposed to be more efficient?

So why indeed are not private media not sufficient?

Q5: If European countries did not have independent public service media, what is the one thing their people would miss the most?

Probe: You mentioned X, when I asked you what societies would miss the most in a world lacking PSM. – Why exactly this?

Who could replace that role? Is it even replaceable?

Researcher: After discussing (public) media and its role for society in general, we are now moving on to the second part of this interview, which will be dedicated to the value propositions of PSM. With this research, I am trying to find out more about what these value propositions are, what they could look like in practice and how they can be used as a USP of PSM, which also helps to argue why taxpayers in Western European democracies should fund them collectively.

Q6: What value propositions do PSM have in your perception?

Probe: The BBC has defined five dimensions of values they aim to deliver to the public: democratic, cultural, educational, social and global value. For this theses, it was decided to mainly focus on the educational dimension – what do you think falls under it?
How successful is [company] in delivering these values atm?

Q7: We have initially discussed challenges for media. What concrete business strategy do you think is the best to meet and master these challenges?

Probe: We have mentioned X, Y, Z. How should PSM react to this?
digital competition, higher costs of production, crisis of trust, low attention spans, platformisation, multi-screen consumption
How has [company] changed in order to adapt to X, Y, Z?
How have value propositions changed? Or do they have to?

Q8: How can PSM communicate their public value propositions?

Probe: Do you think PSM need to be more offensive in legitimising themselves to their shareholder (i.e., the public)?
In many countries, people mistrust PSM as they argue, they were part of the establishment and only protect the powerful instead of controlling them and hold them accountable. Moreover, they are super expensive and do not deliver a timely programme anymore. They are a thing of the past and we should cut them – What would you, as a PSM PR manager answer?

Researcher: The creation of educational value seems to be one of the key value propositions of PSM and something they could use to justify their existence to the public. Therefore, I am trying to answer with this research how Western European PSM can adapt and operationalise their educational mission as a public value proposition in a media landscape of digital innovation. Now, in the final part of the interview, I would like to, again, focus on the educational value of PSM in particular.

Q9: How do you see the role of PSM as education provider?

Probe: How do you think it will change in the future?
What are, in your opinion, the main risks / opportunities?

Q10: How can the educational mandate be fulfilled by PSM in concrete terms?

Probe: Can you name initiatives / practical applications?

Do you think education through linear TV programs is limited?

Have you heard of kennis.nl? schooltv.nl? ZIBZack? etc.?

Q11: What do you think makes a modern PSM educational offering?

Probe: What do you think of the formal/informal/non distinction?

Is the educational offering mainly overt or covert?

Do you think people prefer subtle educational programmes over openly declared ones? Does it depend on certain demographics?

Q12: Do you have concrete ideas on how PSM could improve in terms of their educational content in the next five years?

Probe: How can new target groups be reached with educational value?

Do you think, education in easy language would be an idea?

What role could digital tools / AI / XR play in this process?

Q13: How could PSM capitalise on innovative digital tools in terms of education?

Probe: How could PSM ensure they also reach younger audiences?

Do you have ideas on how AI or VR could be used for this?

How can schoolkids be convinced of PSM? What content?

Do you have any interesting collaborations in mind?

What should digital education look like?

(within and outside the PSM context)

1. Conclusion – Manifesting a vision for a future public broadcaster *(approx. 5 minutes)*

Researcher: To sum up, (and please correct me, if I am wrong) the most important aspects you mentioned were X, Y, Z. You think that PSM should do X, Y, Z, to foster relationships with users, justify themselves to the taxpayer, and do X, Y, Z to remain viable in the future. Is there anything I forgot to mention now?
Would you like to add anything before I come to my final question?

Q13: Looking into the near future, how do you visualise a modern broadcaster that delivers educational value in a timely manner?

Probe: Do you see new possibilities through emerging digital tools?

How do you assess the PSM market position?

Are you rather optimistic or pessimistic (utopian) about it?

Ask for any final remarks they might have on the topic before wrap up

II. Acknowledgement and farewell

Ensure the interviewees that they will get full access to the results of the study
Appreciation of the time they have spent and farewells

Teil I. – Medien und ihre gesellschaftliche Rolle

(ca. 5-10 Minuten)

In meiner Arbeit berrachte ich öffentlich-rechtliche Medien aus einer gesellschaftlichen Perspektive, aber auch individuelle Perspektive, daher meine Einstiegsfrage:

F1: Wofür nutzen denn Sie persönlich öffentlich-rechtliche Medien in erster Linie?

Was ist für Sie der Hauptzweck von öf.-r.?

F2: Wozu braucht die Gesellschaft Medien? (betrachtet aus gesamtgesellschaftlicher Perspektive)

F3: Warum müssen/sollten wir die Medien öffentlich finanzieren?

Ginge das über private Medien nicht effizienter / innovativer / schneller?

F3: Was ist aktuell die größte Herausforderung der Medien?

Was ist das größte Risiko?

Was ist die größte Chance?

Bezug: Österreich und den ORF beziehen, gerne aber auch über die Grenzen hinaus: Westeuropa!

F5: Bekanntermaßen verschiebt sich ein immer größeres Interesse der Medienkonsumenten in Richtung digitaler Plattformen, wie TikTok, Youtube oder Instagram, insbesondere junge Leute trifft man häufig nur noch dort an – welchen Umgang empfehlen Sie öffentlich-rechtlichen Medien diesbezüglich? Sollten sie ihre Inhalte dort zur Verfügung stellen oder rein auf ihre eigenen Plattformen setzen? Schließlich füttert man die Algorithmen privater Tech-Konzerne und hat keinen Einfluss mehr auf das Agenda-Setting...

Teil II – Nutzenversprechen von öffentlich-rechtlichen Medien

(ca. 15 Minuten)

Es geht also um das was man unter PUBLIC VALUE zusammenfasst. Zum Einstieg wieder einer Frage aus der individuellen Perspektive:

F6: Welchen Wert / Welches Nutzenversprechen / Welchen Value schätzen Sie denn am meisten?

Die BBC hat fünf Wertedimensionen definiert, die sie der Öffentlichkeit vermitteln will: demokratische, kulturelle, erzieherische, soziale und globale Werte.

Für diese Arbeit wurde beschlossen, einen starken Fokus auf die Bildungsdimension zu legen – also auch das, was Reith's als „inform – educate – entertain „ für die BBC als Auftrag definiert hat.

Nun muss dazu gesagt werden, dass es hier keineswegs rein um formale Bildungsinhalte geht

Wir haben die Unterteilung in formal / informal / und nonformale Bildungsangebote

Meine Frage auf den österreichischen Kontext:

- ➔ Wie erfolgreich ist der ORF derzeit bei der Vermittlung von Bildungsinhalten?
- ➔ Formal informal nonformal – wo würden Sie Fokus setzen? Was muss intensiviert werden?

Teil III - Der Educational Value von (öffentlich-rechtlichen) Medien

(ca. 15 Minuten)

Die Schaffung von Bildungswerten scheint eines der wichtigsten Wertversprechen von PSBs zu sein und etwas, mit dem sie ihre Existenz in der Öffentlichkeit rechtfertigen könnten. Daher versuche ich mit dieser Untersuchung zu beantworten, wie westeuropäische PSM ihren Bildungsauftrag als Wertversprechen in einer Medienlandschaft der digitalen Innovation anpassen und operationalisieren können. Nun zum letzten Teil des Interviews, möchte ich mich noch einmal auf den Bildungswert von PSM im Besonderen konzentrieren.

- **Frage: Widerstandsfähigkeit gegenüber Online-Desinformation (Negativspirale!)**
- **Wie kommen wir raus?**

F9: Wie sehen Sie die Rolle von Medien als Bildungsanbieter?

Wie wird sich Ihrer Meinung nach in Zukunft verändern?

Was sind Ihrer Meinung nach die wichtigsten Risiken/Chancen?

Q10: Wie kann der Bildungsauftrag durch PSM konkret erfüllt werden?

Können Sie Ihnen bekannte Initiativen / praktische Anwendungen nennen?

Q11: Was macht Ihrer Meinung nach ein modernes mediales Bildungsangebot aus?

Ist das Bildungsangebot hauptsächlich offen oder verdeckt?

Glauben Sie, dass die Menschen subtile Bildungsprogramme den offen deklarierten vorziehen? Hängt dies von bestimmten demografischen Merkmalen ab?

Sollten Medien als Sprachrohr gesellschaftlicher Institution fungieren? (MUSEEN THEATER SCHULEN) – vorhandenes Wissen unter die Leute bringen, nicht immer neue Inhalte notwendig..

Teil IV – Vision für eine zukünftige öffentliche Rundfunkanstalten

(ca. 5 Minuten)

Medienstrukturen und Innovation im digitalen Wandel

F12: Haben Sie konkrete Ideen, wie sich PSM in den nächsten fünf Jahren in Bezug auf ihre Bildungsinhalte verbessern könnte?

Wie können neue Zielgruppen mit Bildungsinhalten erreicht werden?

Glauben Sie, dass Bildung in leichter Sprache eine gute Idee wäre?

Welche Rolle könnten digitale Werkzeuge / KI / XR in diesem Prozess spielen?

F13: Wie könnte PSM innovative digitale Werkzeuge für die Bildung nutzen?

Wie könnte PSM sicherstellen, dass sie auch ein jüngeres Publikum erreichen?

Haben Sie Ideen, wie KI oder VR dafür genutzt werden könnten?

Wie können Schüler von PSM überzeugt werden? Mit welchen Inhalten?

Haben Sie interessante Kooperationen im Sinn?

Wie sollte digitale Bildung aussehen? (innerhalb und außerhalb des PSM-Kontextes)

Zusammenfassend (und bitte korrigieren Sie mich, wenn ich falsch liege) waren die wichtigsten Aspekte, die Sie genannt haben, X, Y, Z. Sie denken, dass die PSM X, Y, Z tun sollten, um die Beziehungen zu den Nutzern zu pflegen, sich gegenüber dem Steuerzahler zu rechtfertigen und X, Y, Z zu tun, um in der Zukunft lebensfähig zu bleiben. Gibt es irgendetwas, das ich jetzt vergessen habe zu erwähnen? Möchten Sie noch etwas hinzufügen, bevor ich zu meiner letzten Frage komme?

F13: Wenn Sie in die nahe Zukunft blicken, wie stellen Sie sich eine moderne Rundfunkanstalt vor, die zeitnah einen pädagogischen Mehrwert liefert?

Sehen Sie neue Möglichkeiten durch neue digitale Tools?

Wie schätzen Sie die Marktposition von öffentlich-rechtlichen ein?

Sind Sie diesbezüglich eher optimistisch oder pessimistisch?

F7: Wir haben eingangs über die Herausforderungen für die Medien gesprochen. Welche konkrete Geschäftsstrategie ist Ihrer Meinung nach die beste, um diese Herausforderungen zu meistern?

digitaler Wettbewerb, höhere Produktionskosten, Vertrauenskrise, geringe Aufmerksamkeitsspannen, Plattformisierung, Multiscreen-Konsum ...

Wie hat sich [ORF] verändert, um sich an X, Y, Z anzupassen?

Wie haben sich die Wertversprechen verändert? Oder müssen sie das?

F8: Wie entsteht Public Value und wie kann man diesen kommunizieren?

In vielen Ländern misstrauen die Menschen den PSM, weil sie argumentieren, sie seien Teil des Establishments und würden nur die Mächtigen schützen, anstatt sie zu kontrollieren und zur Rechenschaft zu ziehen. Außerdem sind sie sehr teuer und liefern kein zeitnahes Programm mehr. Sie gehören der Vergangenheit an, und wir sollten sie abschaffen. Was würden Sie darauf antworten?

Nach ca. 45-60 min. Gespräch

Verabschiedung & Dank

Appendix E – Coding Scheme

Figure 4 illustrates how the coding process was conducted after DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2011, p. 139).

As outlined in the research design chapter, the analysis was mainly approached inductively (developing codes from the raw data). However, as *Figure 4* implies, the literature from the theoretical framework was consulted to support the development of codes. In summary, this research used both inductive and deductive methods.

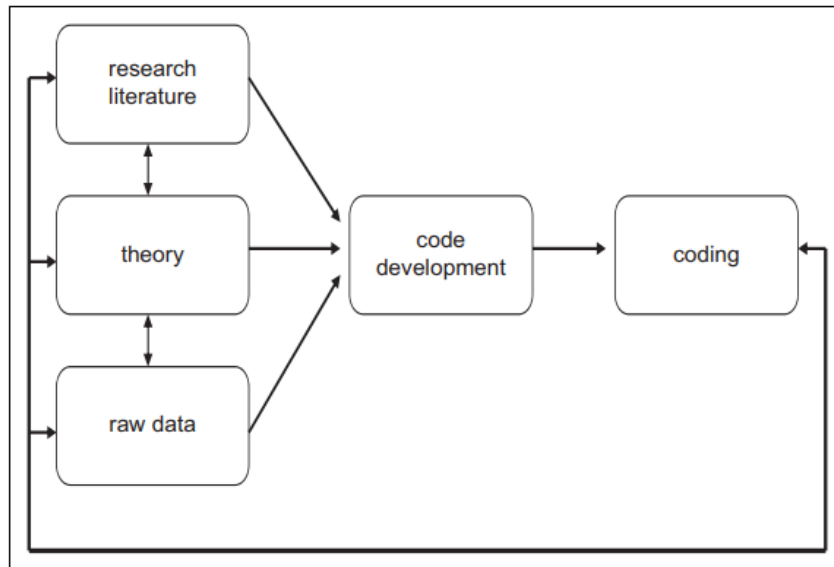


Figure 4: Coding scheme

Appendix F – Codebook

Theme	Sub-Theme	Main Codes	Definition & coding scheme	Exemplary excerpts
I. The societal role of PSM and digital transformation processes	PSM's role in society	Role as education provider	expert talked about knowledge transfer and educative information in relation to PSM and the general public this code was strongly connected with the theme 2 (educational mandate / educational mission of PSM)	make people curious about topics promote life long learning (adult learning) make complex world more understandable
		Role as reliable informant	expert mentioned the PSM's role as a neutral authority for verified information (in a democratic-political sense) this was mainly coded when values, such as integrity, credibility, and impartiality were highlighted	equipping citizens with the necessary information to make decisions give us a common ground to stand on agreeing on certain things as society / as a nation
		Role as entertainer	expert tackled the role of PSM to provide value through entertainment this code had an interrelation with theme 2, when entertaining formats incl. hidden education were discussed	package information in entertainment chocolate covered broccoli entertainment is frosting of the cake, but in the cake is so much learning
	Societal change	Disinformation & trust	expert discussed the quality / truthfulness of the information and the role of PSM to create audience trust this code was strongly connected with the role as reliable informant (PSM as a credible source of information)	overabundance of information in today's media landscape flood of misinformation undermining the established media fake news & conspiracy theories
		Era of crises (geopolitical, health, climate)	expert mentioned the impact of ongoing crises and disruptions of any kind in society on PSM this code was linked back to the first sub-theme (role of PSM) seeing how the role changes through the crises	need for trusted information about global warming and the war in Ukraine need for stability & security during the pandemic need for distraction to forget the heavy content for a moment
		Political interference	expert highlighted threats to PSM, mostly raised in a funding context (political attacks), attempted interference this code offered support and assisted the fourth sub-theme (challenges) as they were derived from threats	war against the BBC through right-wing attacks, but also from the far-left Swedish Democrats disagreeing with the concept, wanting to defund politicians attempt to influence the board of trustees at the ORF
	Technological change	Distribution channels	expert discussed audience migration and the shift from linear broadcasting to digital platforms this code was also used when experts addressed the issue of packaging content accordingly	we have to be where the audience is, be it on platforms or in front of the TV the possibilities of synthetic media are enormous we want to deliver a 360-experience to the media consumer
		Media usage behaviour	expert addressed issues related to user behaviour and how the audience's demands and needs change this code was strongly intertwined with distribution channels	attention spans indeed become shorter if we think of the 2nd screen phenomenon, you know, users are everywhere we are so used to producing television, now we need to act fast
		Revolutionising technologies (AI, ML, XR)	expert discussed newly emerging technologies, like artificial intelligence, machine learning, extended reality this code, in the context of PSM, mainly applied to issues around digital connectivity and media production	synthetic media are surrounding us, providing an immersive experience digital connectivity increases and increases these technologies are so fast - who knows what happens in 5 years
	Challenges for PSM	Reaching audiences	expert highlighted PSM's efforts made to reach audiences and addressed the diversity of users this code was derived based on the societal and technological changes - challenges emerged from those	target group adequate communication (new language) balancing the needs of different audiences when you include some group, you inevitably exclude another
		Justify their existence to the taxpayer	expert discussed the issue of financing PSM properly and how citizens perceive the fairness of funding models this code was strongly connected with the code "threat of political influence / funding models"	we of course witness shrinking advertising revenue but its impact on PSM this strongly depends on the funding model a lot of liberals think public media is somewhat outdated
		Produce state-of-the-art content	expert mentioned contemporary media production and discussed timely content strategies this code was derived based on the societal and technological changes - challenges emerged from those	content strategies clearly have to change and adapt to the users' needs we used to have experts presenting knowledge in a boring way now we try to engage audiences, make them feel as if they were part of it

Theme	Sub-Theme	Main Codes	Definition & coding scheme	Exemplary excerpts
II. The educational mandate as PSM's key PV proposition	Individual educational value	formal	expert brought up formal educational programmes of PSM to highlight value for the individual user this code was mainly used when experts talked about official schooling curricula, formal programmes	in Sweden we are obliged to have close contact with schools I'm really convinced of "Ö1 macht Schule" and its depth of information in Holland we have schooltv.nl - it's specifically made for school kids
		informal	expert talked about educational benefits for the individual user from entertaining formats (role as entertainer) this code was used when experts addressed other-than-formal ways to fulfil the educational mission of PSM	people should not perceive our programme as "homework" humour is so important - everyone learns better when they have fun there are so many ways you can package learning content
		nonformal	expert discussed PSM's actions to initiate individual learning processes on the long run this code was developed for content aimed at encouraging individuals to engage with information in private	we need to let knowledge emerge somewhat naturally our goal is to prompt users to start thinking and maybe discussing with others It is not only about what happens when viewers watch, but also after that
	Societal educational value	Social cohesion	expert talked about how educational content can promote social cohesion, cultural belonging & togetherness this code included values like diversity, inclusion, integration, orientation, minority support, accessibility of news	PSM should be the social glue for the community of people in the country we need to create a public open space with our educational content innovative learning that makes society as a whole more knowledgeable
		Trusted institution	expert addressed the role of PSM as a trusted source for information, knowledge, news, and entertainment this code was strongly connected to the first sub-theme (PSM's role in society) - societal education	citizens need to be properly informed about current issues we want to provide fact-based quality-driven content offerings PSM are part of the society and try to explain the complex world a bit
		Global value	expert discussed the PSM value of making people comprehend international interdependencies this code was also used when experts mentioned PSM's efforts to contribute to shaping the national identity	in our globalised world, people need local PSM that give them orientation disinformation resilience is so important if we look at election manipulations we need to integrate to society everybody who is living in this country
III. Possible paths of further advancement - developing a future vision for PSM	Room for improvement	Content & production	expert criticised the current status of a PSM in terms of the programme, thus locating room for improvement this code mainly included statements suggesting changes in the PSM's content offer	we need adequate communication and a more contemporary language our content must become more inclusive, integrative, "multi" - lingual we need new people within our broadcasting group
		Distribution & accessibility	expert criticised the current status of a PSM in terms of distribution, thus locating room for improvement this code was strongly linked to the sub-theme of technological change and its new possibilities	we need to improve the visibility of our services and provide better navigation easy access to the services, using the central functions of digital networks they need to make the richness of our archives available to the public
		Digital development & Innovation	expert criticised a current PSM in terms of innovation-proneness, thus locating room for improvement this code was strongly linked to the sub-theme of technological change	NPO "radicaal digitaal" initiative (on-demand rules out linear broadcasting we need to become a more digital media outlet, use contemporary tools we have to be more innovative in general, and really go with the time
		Public reputation & transparency	expert criticised the current standing of a PSM in society and discussed its image within different audience groups this code was strongly linked to the sub-theme of societal change	our audience relationship management has to be intensified we have to ensure structures of diversity and plurality society is constantly changing - and so should we
	Successful examples (out-of-the-box concepts)	Educational projects & other initiatives	expert mentioned educational projects and other initiatives which turned out to be successful in one country this code relates to each of the main codes within theme 2 (educational mandate) & technological change	Game based learning and schooling programmes through Simpleshow Actionbound knowledge rallies History hunts featuring extended reality features
		PSM programmes & formats	expert mentioned PSM programmes and formats which turned out to be successful in one country this code relates to each of the main codes within theme 2 (educational mandate)	Podwalks (Het verhaal van Nederland - Story of the Netherlands) Cbeebies (BBC), Sesame Street (USA), The Dictator (SVT/UR) ORF1 Freistunde (AUT)
		PSM cooperations & collaborations	expert mentioned PSM cooperation and collaborations which turned out to be successful in one country this code relates to each of the main codes within theme 2 (educational mandate)	Sweden McDonald's reading & literacy initiative in Sweden (healthcare) Netherlands, space and green streets Austria learning history of Nazi-time
	Elaborating a public-oriented modern PSM educational offering	Diverse, inclusive & inspiring	experts suggested PSM to conduct strategic consideration around the issue of diversity & inclusion this code was derived from experts' statements from the sub-themes: challenges, r.f. improvement, s. examples	get diverse, develop a new language diverse, young, inspiring, practical, not too theoretical, interesting we have to include the public more into the production processes
		Innovative, modern & digital	experts suggested PSM to conduct strategic consideration around the issue of innovation & inspiration this code was derived from experts' statements from the sub-themes: challenges, r.f. improvement, s. examples	satisfying the wishes of the viewer and meeting their needs don't be afraid to change and open up, go out and be vulnerable potentially create a digital steaming platform at the EBU level
		down-to-earth & transparent	experts suggested PSM to conduct strategic consideration around the issue of transparency and pragmatism this code was derived from experts' statements from the sub-themes: challenges, r.f. improvement, s. examples	close to the people, non-elitist, transparency about the company it has to be clarified what the checks & balances are for PSM outlets criticism is important - we have to act transparent with it and be vulnerable