Journalism and participatory practices – Blurring or reinforcement of boundaries between journalism and audiences?

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1   Introduction

By now, it seems to be almost common wisdom that networked digital media contribute to fundamental changes in society. Part of this diagnosis is the assertion that boundaries between different spheres (such as 'public' and 'private'; e.g. Lüders, 2008), between different modes of communication (such as 'mass' or 'individual communication'; e.g. Castells, 2007) or between different roles (such as 'producer' and 'user'; e.g. Bruns, 2008) are shifting – or at least re-configured. These developments have been scrutinized and debated by scholars and practitioners under labels such as "participatory journalism" (Domingo et al., 2008; Singer et al., 2011), "citizen journalism" (Antony & Thomas, 2010), "participatory news" (Deuze et al., 2007) or "network journalism" (Heinrich, 2011). While concepts and explanations may vary in particular nuances, they usually agree on the observation that we are witnessing new combinations of professional, participatory and technical intermediation (Neuberger, 2009): Professional journalism is complemented (and challenged) by new forms of participation via user-generated content and social filtering. All this happens within a context where new technological intermediaries such as Google News or Facebook additionally select and structure information via software code (e.g. algorithms).

Various aspects of these changes have been well documented in the academic literature, showing that audience participation and social media are increasingly relevant for journalism and do affect newsroom workflows and professional routines as well as journalistic role-conceptions (e.g. Hermida & Thurman, 2008; Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009; Williams et al., 2010; Singer et al., 2011). Not only do platforms like Facebook, Twitter or YouTube provide spaces for the emergence of „personal public spheres" (Schmidt, 2011) which complement journalistically produced public spheres. Online news sites also include spaces and mechanisms for user interaction, with one consequence being that journalists „who once controlled the space containing their work now share that space with website users" (Singer, 2010, p. 127).

Nevertheless, studies on participatory content on news sites (e.g. Rebillard & Touboul, 2010; Jönsson & Örnebring, 2011; Karlsson, 2011) as well as on journalistic expectations and self-images (e.g. Paulussen & Ugille, 2008) provide evidence that journalists and news organizations do not react homogeneously to these developments, but strongly tend to defend their profession: "Every journalist acknowledges the current necessity of user participation. However, the way in which this is employed and viewed suggests that a 'minimalist' view of participation dominates in news organisations" (Witschge, 2011, p. 133).

Similar caution against naïve assumptions of a per-se-transformativity of technological innovations is in order with respect to the audience. Not only is our theoretical understanding of the audience challenged (e.g. van Dijck, 2009; Carpentier, 2011), but there is also empirical evidence of a wide range and different extent of users' participatory practices (e.g. Boczkowski & Mitchelstein, 2011). In addition, studies on users' attitudes and expectations have shown that there is some reluctance on the audience side to consider their own activities as journalistic practices (e.g. Fröhlich et al., 2012).

The traditional division between the scholarly fields of journalism research (focus on media production) and audience research (focus on media consumption) makes it even more difficult to adequately deal with these developments in a theoretical as well as methodological sense. This might explain why few studies yet combined both perspectives, on journalists *and* on (active) audience (Wardle & Williams, 2010; Robinson, 2010). We need to further our understanding about the extent and the nuances to which the reconfiguration of the relationship between journalists and their audience leads to a blurring, a reconstruction or a reinforcement of the boundaries between them.[1]

Here, we present some work in progress on both the conceptual and the empirical aspects of these questions. After outlining a heuristic model that frames audience participation as inclusion and takes both journalists and audiences into account (chapter 2), we introduce the methodological design of a research project[2] which consists of four case studies of German newsrooms, among them the leading public service newscast *Tagesschau* (chapter 3). The main part of the paper (chapter 4) presents findings on practices and expectations of the *Tagesschau* journalists towards audience participation, followed by a summary and outlook on further research (chapter 5).

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[1] As one notable exception, Lewis (2012) discusses three approaches, namely journalism as boundary work, as profession, and as ideology, which can be used as frames to assess shifts in the journalist-audience relationship.

2   Analyzing audience participation: a heuristic model

To assess the forms and consequences of audience participation in journalism, Loosen & Schmidt (2012) have suggested an analytical framework (see figure 1) based on sociological inclusion theory. This framework makes two basic distinctions. The first derives from inclusion theory which posits that all social systems rely on performance roles and audience roles (Stichweh, 2005).[3] Here, "audience" means that whenever a person benefits from or makes use of a social systems' performance he or she becomes included into that system. Applied to the "social system journalism" (Görke & Scholl, 2006), journalists act in the performance role and recipients in the audience role. Under mass media conditions, we face an inherent asymmetry between performance and audience role: While the former provides offers for public communication, the latter remains restricted to selective use of these communicative offerings. Hence, inclusion into the social system "journalism" under mass media conditions is realized by merely accepting communication offers (Scholl, 2004). With new means of audience participation it is assumed that this asymmetry is gradually changing into a more balanced relationship. To assess the extent of (a)symmetry, a second basic distinction is included in the model:

- *Inclusion performance* comprises practices which use mediating technologies to stimulate, articulate and aggregate communication between journalism and audience – interactions that might become directly manifest in journalistic output, but also takes place in publics 'outside' journalistic media (e.g. such blogs or social network sites), which nevertheless become part of journalism by referencing its output. Within journalism, these practices are part of professional routines and structures; among the recipients, these practices form networked audiences which exhibit different degrees of community orientation, e.g. practices of mutual observation and reciprocity.
- *Inclusion expectations* are framing the inclusion performance and are (re-)produced or changed through participatory practice. Within journalism, these expectations are part of professional self-images, i.e. conceptions of the journalistic role as well as perceptions of the audience and its place and function within journalistic practices, but also criteria which guide strategic decisions of media organizations. Among the audience, expectations are mediated by motivations for participation and assessments of the impact these (individual and/or collective) contributions might have on journalism.

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[3] E.g. in the political system we have politicians (performance role) and voters (audience role).

Altogether, the framework contains both basic distinctions, journalist/performance roles vs. recipient/audience roles as well as inclusion performances vs. expectations. By contrasting the inclusion performances of journalism and audience we can assess the "inclusion level", which can be high or low depending on the actual amount and scope of participatory practices; by contrasting inclusion expectations, we can assess the "inclusion distance" which can be large or small depending on the (in-)congruence of expectations. The model not only helps to systematize existing research (see Loosen & Schmidt, 2012, p. 874ff.), but might also serve as a heuristic for research designs.[4] Since it allows for an assessment of participatory activities as well as processes of boundary work and demarcation, it can be used to identify areas of blurring boundaries or increased stability between journalism and audience.

Figure 1: Analytical framework for audience inclusion in journalism
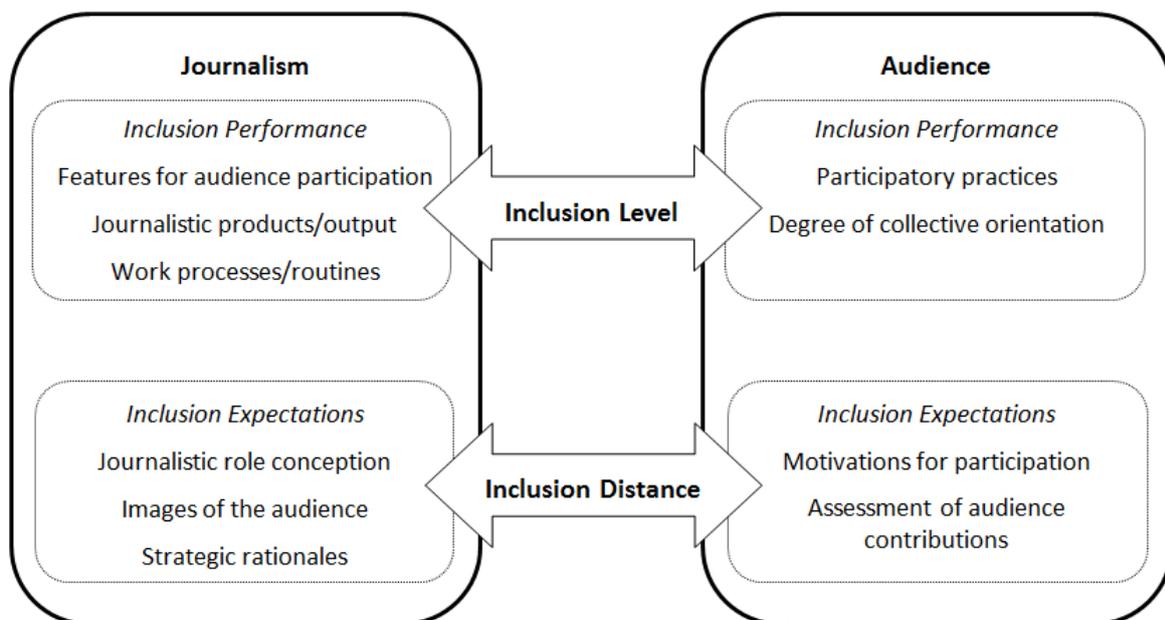
Source: Loosen & Schmidt, 2012, p. 874.

3 Empirical Case: The *Tagesschau*

The theoretical framework is currently being applied within the research project "(Re-) Discovering the Audience".[5] Between 2011 and 2014, four case studies of different German newsrooms, from the convergence areas of TV-Online and Print-Online respectively, are

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[4] While this might suggest a precise quantified measurement, it is important to note that the model is also useful for qualitative analyses. In fact, our project combines various empirical instruments to gain comprehensive, multi-facetted insights on inclusion levels and distances.

[5] For more information see: http://jpub20.hans-bredow-institut.de.

conducted. The first case study on the *Tagesschau* was conducted between January and November 2012 and applied several empirical instruments, both quantitative and qualitative:

(a) in-depth interviews with selected members of the editorial staff (n=10)[6] as well as

(b) in-depth interviews with viewers/users (n=6);

(c) online surveys among the editorial department (n=63) as well as

(d) standardized online surveys among the users of the online platform (n=4.686); and

(e) content analysis of selected TV broadcasts as well as corresponding discussions on the *tagesschau.de* and on the Facebook fan page.

The *Tagesschau*[7] is the main news broadcast of the ARD, the national network of the German regional public service broadcasters. It started in 1952 with three shows per week, thus being the oldest still running newscast. Today, up to 23 shows are broadcast per day, with the newscast at 8pm having the widest audience of about 10 million viewers or 33 per cent market share on average.[8] Its editorial department is part of "ARD aktuell", the central news department of the ARD network, where about 240 people (among them 100 reporters) work for the *Tagesschau* as well as for other news formats such as the *Tagesthemen* (a daily, late evening news magazine).

The online presence *tagesschau.de* was launched in 1996. Similarly to the TV newscast, the online department of about 20 journalists is part of "ARD Aktuell". Besides publishing videocasts of the TV shows, they also produce additional online content which is distributed on the website as well as on the mobile *Tagesschau-App*.

4   Findings

In the following sections, selected findings on the journalism side are presented: To assess journalistic inclusion performances, we discuss the practices of the Social Media Editors (see 4.1). Inclusion expectations will be discussed with regard to findings on the self-images of *Tagesschau* journalists (see 4.2).

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[6] The sample included different journalistic roles: Chief Editor [CE], Leading Editor Online [LEO], 2 Managing Editors TV [METV], 2 Managing Editors Online [MEO], 2 Social Media Editors [SME], 2 Multimedia Assistants [MMA].

[7] Here, *Tagesschau* refers to the whole news organization. Separate qualifiers are used to refer to the TV department or to the online department of *tagesschau.de*.

[8] See http://intern.tagesschau.de/flash/index.php. These numbers include all *Tagesschau* viewers, i.e. the audience of ARD as well as regional and subsidiary channels, on which it is broadcast simultaneously.

4.1 Journalistic inclusion performance

As part of its online strategy, the *Tagesschau* provides various participatory and social media elements, among them comment areas, an editorial blog and different external social media channels. In addition, a "content center" was introduced to monitor relevant sources, debates and content in social media.

4.1.1 Using social media

The current setup for user participation on *tagesschau.de* was introduced in 2009, when the former online forum was replaced by a new content management system. It allows registered users to comment and rate news items on *tagesschau.de* (about eight to twelve each day). Technically, user comments are collected and displayed on the subdomain *meta.tagesschau.de*, which has a different layout and provides specific navigational elements such as a tag cloud (tags are provided by *tagesschau.de* editors) and rankings of user-rated articles. This results in a clear distinction between journalistic content and the discussion area, which one of the online editors attributes to strategic rationales: "that was the right decision […] because much is in there on which we do not want to stick the label *'Tagesschau'*" [MEO2]. Still, providing a space for discussion is seen as part of the public service mission of the *Tagesschau*, and the underlying idea of democratic participation and opinion formation [LEO].

Since 2007, the *Tagesschau* provides an editorial blog where leading editors and foreign correspondents publish postings which can be commented on by users. While the blog was used very enthusiastic at first [MEO2], today about two or three postings are blogged per week. They range from perspectives on topical news events or personal views by foreign correspondents to postings about internal editorial processes or decisions. Accordingly, the blog serves as an additional channel to foster user participation and conversation, but is also used to make the otherwise anonymous editorial staff somewhat visible to the audience. As a unintended "side effect", some blog postings even stimulate internal discussion within the newsroom, e.g. about certain professional standards [LEO].

In addition to these participatory elements on *tagesschau.de* the *Tagesschau* hosts several external social media channels, e.g. a Facebook page (since 2010), and a profile on Google+ (introduced in 2012). Both pages are administrated by Social Media Editors (see below) who publish five to ten postings per day, mainly referring to news stories on *tagesschau.de*. Two official Twitter-accounts – @tagesschau (created in May 2007) and @tagesschau_eil (created in February 2009) – are automatically fed with news stories and breaking news; both accounts link back to the homepage. The YouTube-channel, which started already in August 2006,

contains daily videocasts of the 8 pm newscast as well as of the extended late evening edition (*Tagesthemen*).

These social media channels provide not only additional outlets for the journalistic content but also spaces for feedback and input from the audience. To guarantee ongoing maintenance of these channels, two particular roles have been introduced at the *Tagesschau*. Multimedia Assistants, most of whom are students, work on a variety of tasks, e.g. updating the video content on the *tagesschau.de*. One of their rotating shifts also concerns the moderation of user feedback (see below).

Social Media Editors are responsible for the management of the social media channels, posting new articles or videos and responding to user questions, as well as for the so called "content center". It was introduced in April 2011 as a new unit to organize the investigation and verification of information and audio-visual material for topics which have been discussed in the editorial conferences or have been identified as emerging stories on social media platforms. This material is sent to the managing TV and online editors who have the final say in the content selection and publication. Per day, two social media editors (out of ten, who also work for other editorial departments) work in two overlapping shifts on the social media profiles and investigation.

4.1.2 Managing user participation

Various routines have been established at the *Tagesschau* to structure and moderate user discussions on the different platforms. On the internal channels *meta.tagesschau.de* and the editorial blog, each comment has to be approved by the multimedia assistant working on that particular shift (principle of pre-moderation). Although every news article can only be commented for eight hours after publication, the volume of user participation is very high and approaches about 1.000 comments a day [MMA2]. The moderation decisions are based on a set of guidelines such as the prohibition of racist or pornographic content, and the reminder to engage in a constructive and friendly way. Articles on controversial topics (e.g. Middle East politics, right-wing extremism) cannot be commented at all, because these discussions escalated quickly in the past.

Based on these guidelines, about two thirds of the comments can be approved easily, while the remaining third is rejected or, in cases of doubt, discussed with the other multimedia assistants, taken to social media editors, or even to the head of the online department. When user discussions appear to get out of hand, or to drift off-topic, the moderators will interfere and remind users of the site's guidelines. In case of repeated or extreme violation of the guidelines, users can be banned from participation [MMA2].

As external channel, the Facebook page is not subject to the strict pre-moderation processes. However, there is still post-moderation to delete spam and extreme comments, and in some cases to remind users of the *Tagesschau* netiquette. Additionally, the social media editors observe forms of "community regulation" on Facebook, where other users call upon communication norms and rules to sanction comments which transgress these norms. Comments on postings in the editorial blog often focus on journalistic procedures and standards and might be fed back to the editorial departments. In a few cases, the blog postings spark a conversation between journalists and the audience; some foreign correspondents, for instance, use the blog to get in touch with the users. But in most cases, and similar to *meta.tagesschau.de* as and the Facebook page, the blog comment section is a space where users discuss among themselves. While the assessment of user discussion on these spaces varies in some nuances, generally the tonality and quality of debates is considered to be better on the internal sites. Especially *meta.tagesschau.de* is described as "opinion pool" with "pointed discussions" [LEO] that are more focused and content-oriented than on Facebook [SME1]. Partly, this is attributed to the on-going participation management on the site which has, from the journalists' perspective, resulted in a dedicated community.

4.1.3 Learning about the audience

By conceptualizing digital networked media, and social media in particular, as new spaces of inclusion performance, we have not only seen examples of new professional roles (social media editors) and editorial routines (managing user participation) but also differences in the resulting communication dynamics. Drawing these two strands together and adding some more insight from the survey, we can analyze one of the consequences of journalistic inclusion performance: It provides situations where journalists learn about their audience, which also contributes to their images of the audience (i.e. inclusion expectations; see chapter 4.2).

Asked about the main sources of information about their audience, most respondents picked letters or E-Mails, a rather "classical" feedback channel. Among respondents who work mainly for the TV newscast, personal encounters, TV ratings and results from market and media research are mentioned significantly more often. Respondents working for the online platforms, in contrast, do mention significantly more often access statistics and web analytics (i.e. new forms of aggregated feedback), but also the comments on *tagesschau.de* as means of getting information about their users. Additionally (and backed by the interviews), especially the social media editors and multimedia assistants act both as filters and multipliers for audience contribution among their colleagues, as they have rather direct access to audience

feedback and user-generated material. So it is a combination of (direct) feedback from users, be it through interpersonal encounters, aggregated measures or the observation of user discussions, and indirect learning through the exchange with journalistic peers that provides information about the audience.

4.2 Journalistic inclusion expectations: images of self and the audience at *Tagesschau*

4.2.1 Professional self-image

The professional self-perception of the *Tagesschau* journalists is strongly framed by the image of this format as "flagship" of public service news journalism in Germany which provided reliable and objective quality news to generations of viewers. Or as the chief editor puts it: "the most valuable aspect for the *Tagesschau* is the trust people have in us" [CE]. This self-image is also framing internal negotiations about the extent and organization of audience inclusion at the *Tagesschau*. In particular, our informants described limits of audience orientation and participation by resorting to the journalistic core of the *Tagesschau.* To counter rising complexity in a world of information abundance, they argue that assessing the relevance of information and addressing topics should remain at the editor's discretion: "In the end we have to decide, based on our journalistic instinct […], what the right offer is. […] the journalists' task is not becoming less important, but even more important. We are those who have to disentangle the thousands and thousands of threads" [CE].

In addition to this predominant self-image of *Tagesschau* journalists, some informants articulated other role conceptions. One managing TV editor, for instance, pointed to the aspect of "explaining information". Here, he senses a shift: "It used to have sort of a missionary sense: 'We give information to you, and you have to deal with it'. Now it is more like: 'We give information to you and it is most important for us that you understand them'" [METV1]. Another journalist adds that he wants to "create publicity and transparency" [METV2].

While our informants from the online department share this general role perception of the *Tagesschau* and its journalists – especially the social media editors emphasize their strict quality standards regarding journalistic investigation and verification of online material – they largely reject traditional gatekeeper roles. Instead, they refer to different aspects and work routines, such as the exchange with the audience, and the management and filtering of user contributions. Overall, their professional role might be described as mediators between the TV and online departments as well as between journalists and active audience members.

However, the survey results indicate only small differences in the professional self-image between TV and online journalists (see table 1), with the only exception being the item "to control politics, business and society" (to which the TV journalists agreed significantly higher). Three items which were almost fully agreed on by all respondents point to a rather traditional understanding of professional news journalism: fast and objective delivery of precise information and explanation of complex issues. In contrast, possible journalistic tasks such as giving users the opportunity to publish their own content or to maintain social relations among each other are largely disregarded. In line with their diagnosed traditional idea of news journalism is that *Tagesschau* journalists rather agree to provide topics for discussion among the audience than to stimulate, moderate and engage in conversations themselves. The new means for interaction do apparently not result in a general "conversational" attitude of journalists.

Table 1: Professional self-image

n=63	TV staff (n=34)		Online staff (n=28)		Total	
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Mean	Std.Dev.	Mean	Std.Dev.
To explain and convey complex issues	4,94	,242	4,75	,645	4,85	,477
To inform the audience as objective and precise as possible	4,81	,749	4,73	,452	4,77	,627
To inform the audience as fast as possible	4,76	,561	4,67	,620	4,72	,585
To point the audience to interesting topics and show them where to get further information	3,88	1,023	4,07	,900	3,97	,966
To criticize problems and grievances	3,97	,984	3,74	1,095	3,87	1,033
To concentrate on news that is interesting to an audience as wide as possible	3,52	1,093	3,79	1,166	3,64	1,126
To show new trends and highlight new ideas	3,27	1,206	3,52	,829	3,39	1,046
To give the audience topics to talk about	3,27	1,180	3,45	1,183	3,35	1,175
To control politics, business and society **	3,44	1,418	2,28	1,306	2,90	1,478
To share positive ideals	2,67	1,242	2,72	1,162	2,69	1,195
To encourage and to moderate discussion among the audience	2,88	1,212	2,48	1,479	2,69	1,348
To provide useful information for the audience and act as advisor / guidance	2,84	1,098	2,52	1,214	2,68	1,157
To give people the opportunity to express their opinion about topics of public interest	2,61	1,116	2,48	1,214	2,55	1,156
To build and maintain a relationship to my audience	2,61	1,022	2,24	,786	2,43	,927
To get into a conversation about current events with the citizens	2,40	1,133	2,31	,850	2,36	,996
To provide the audience with entertainment and relaxation	1,90	,908	2,14	,875	2,02	,892

To present my own ideas to the audience	1,63	,707	2,04	,999	1,82	,873
To provide people with the opportunity to publish their own content	1,56	,619	1,83	,848	1,69	,743
To provide people with the opportunity to maintain social ties among themselves	1,59	,979	1,55	,870	1,57	,921

Note: "What are your personal goals in your profession?"; 5-point-Likert-scale with 1 = "Do not agree at all" to 5 = "Do agree completely" and 6 = "Don't know / Can't say" (excluded for calculation of mean). Marked mean differences are significant with * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (ANOVA).

4.2.2 Assessing the audiences' motivations and contributions

Complementary to their professional self-image, the *Tagesschau* journalists also have assumptions about their audience. As discussed in part 4.1.3, these are (partly) formed by information which is gathered through a variety of sources, which can be individualistic-specific (e.g. individual e-mails) or collective-aggregated (e.g. ratings) to various degrees. In addition to these images of the audience, our informants provided various recurring explanations and assumptions why users participate at the *Tagesschau*:

- For one, the assumption that users participate to express themselves and out of *need for recognition* is very prominent. This is repeatedly connected with the prestige of the *Tagesschau*, since some informants assume for example that users might "consider it an honor" [SME2] to see their name on *tagesschau.de*.

- A second assumed motivation is that of *venting anger or frustration*. Especially those informants who are involved in the daily management of user comments and confronted with the unfiltered feedback mention this.

- On the other hand, our informants also acknowledge that many users participate to give constructive *feedback*, which is very welcome, especially when it is useful for the news production process (e.g. reporting of errors).

The survey results on assumed user motivations back these findings and additionally indicate similarities but also some significant differences between TV and online editors (see table 2). On the one hand, online editors agree more to aspects like the *public stating of opinions*, the *venting function of comments*, and the *self-expression and self-display* as driving motivations of active users. On the other hand, they disagree significantly stronger to the assumption that users participate in order to *assist the journalists* or to *fulfill a civic obligation*. This indicates that among online journalists a more individualistic image of users and their motivations is prevalent than among TV editors.

Table 2: Assumed participation motivations, by TV and Online editors

n=62-63	TV		Online		Total	
	Mean	Std.Dev.	Mean	Std.Dev.	Mean	Std.Dev.
To state their opinion publicly *	4,00	,696	4,41	,733	4,19	,737
To vent anger and frustration *	3,71	,871	4,21	,675	3,94	,821
To point out errors in news stories	3,82	,808	3,76	,912	3,79	,852
For self-expression and self-display *	3,53	,788	3,96	,744	3,73	,793
To share their knowledge and experiences	3,62	,888	3,70	,912	3,66	,892
To leave the passive viewer's role	3,44	,786	3,79	,787	3,60	,799
To support and advocate a certain concern, event or group	3,45	,754	3,52	,829	3,48	,784
To propose a topic that is important to them	3,32	,768	3,54	,838	3,42	,801
To feel included in a community	2,90	1,106	3,11	1,086	3,00	1,092
Out of boredom	2,48	,972	2,89	,801	2,67	,914
To expand their own knowledge by interacting with journalists and other viewers/users	2,58	,792	2,39	,685	2,49	,744
To build a relationship with the editors	2,44	,878	2,32	,819	2,38	,846
To assist the journalists in their work *	2,56	,746	2,10	,860	2,35	,826
To find help with a problem	2,33	,777	2,31	,891	2,32	,825
To fulfill their civic obligations *	2,48	,712	2,07	,799	2,29	,776

Note: "What do you think are the reasons that people participate in Tagesschau/tagesschau.de?"; 5-point-Likert-scale with 1 = "Does not apply at all" to 5 = "Does fully apply" and 6 = "Don't know / Can't say" (excluded for calculation of mean). Marked mean differences are significant with * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001 (ANOVA).

5   Conclusion

From a theoretical perspective, we have considered participation as a particular element of audience inclusion in journalism, which comprises of inclusion performances and expectations. By discussing selected findings from a case study on a leading German TV newscast, the *Tagesschau*, we have also seen that both elements depend on each other. On the one hand, inclusion performance is both framed by and framing inclusion expectations: how journalists see their own professional role, and how they imagine their audiences' motivations, is influencing the amount, range and assessment of participatory options in their daily work routines. On the other hand, recurring encounters with the audience, through direct interaction or various forms of (filtered or aggregated) feedback influence the professional self-image and the image of the audience, in terms of an assessment of particular audience contributions and of its general "place" in the news production process.

Regarding inclusion expectations, the perception of the *Tagesschau* as a trusted journalistic brand strongly affects not only the role conceptions of journalists but also their attitudes

towards audience participation. Hence, the image of the *Tagesschau* as a credible, reliable and highly regarded newscast serves as lens through which different facets of inclusion performances are assessed and decided upon. This backs Heinonen's (2011, p. 53) conclusion „that how journalists see themselves shapes how they see users, as well as how they see the relationships between those inside and outside the newsroom". In this context, our informants agree on the necessity and general value of providing spaces for user discussions and conversations, but at the same time they reject direct audience influence in the journalistic content. While several nuances do exist – e.g. different assessments of the ratio between constructive and pointless user feedback on journalistic work, or different reliance on social media sources for additional information in daily reporting –, they do not blur the basic premise of the *Tagesschau* as news medium produced by professional journalists.

The case study also reveals a tension connected to the "costs" of audience inclusion. Managing the different feedback spaces and running the content center is time-consuming, and the necessary editors and assistants cannot easily be added on top of existing personnel. While the modification of work routines, e.g. the rotation of "regular" TV and online editors into the social media department, helps to adapt, there might arise a conflict between the ever-increasing demands of audience participation and the core operations of the *Tagesschau* newscast. These limiting factors for the integration of audience contributions, such as a lack of time and money and high work pressure, are very much in line with previous empirical findings (e.g. Paulussen & Ugille, 2008). Indeed, audience participation seems to be more a problem to manage rather than a benefit for the news product, as Domingo (2008) puts it.

A second tension is becoming visible through audience participation, namely between "creative and quantified audiences" (Anderson, 2011). While under mass media conditions journalists work(ed) mainly with an "operative fiction" (Zurstiege, 2006, p. 65) of their audience, new inclusion practices seem to challenge this. The audience has become more visible for journalists, both in terms of aggregated (monitoring and audience measurement) and singular feedback (contributions of individual users). Accordingly, the *Tagesschau* journalists develop multi-faceted images of their audience that differ depending on the editorial roles and extent of daily interaction with the audience. A common trope in the interviews pointed to the idea of the *dual audience:* one (smaller) part of the audience being visible through their active participation – an image that also includes different types of active users based on their assumed intentions or communicative behavior –, and a much larger part of the audience merely consuming the journalistic output. As a result, journalists seem to have

more nuanced images of their audience due to a broad range of information sources, but nevertheless still rely on *operative fictions* of their audience.

Regarding the starting question about blurring or reinforcement of boundaries, our case study finds evidence for both. While certain aspects of news journalism are opened for increased inclusion of the audience, journalistic standards and professional routines are defended and reinforced. Thus, the growing demands for (audience) participation stimulate not only journalistic self-reflection about their professional identity, but are also situated in larger societal discourses about the transformation of public spheres and democracy.

6 Literature

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