

Strategies for the Growth of Radio and Television in China amid Media Convergence

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Abstract

Chinese radio and television have evolved as a consequence of the government's efforts to censor content and tighten its grip on the media industry. Independent media company expansion has been constrained as a result, strengthening governmental control over the media industry. The growth of Chinese radio and television has also been influenced by media convergence and the blending of new media technologies with established media platforms. However, attempts by the government to censor information have stunted the expansion of independent media outlets and strengthened the government's hold on the media industry. Through this integration, established media businesses like SMG have been able to reach a wider and more varied audience and develop new income streams from internet services and e-commerce. Additionally, by minimizing duplication of effort and facilitating resource sharing, media convergence has increased the effectiveness of traditional media firms. This article explained the principles of the Chinese government has implemented strict regulations and policies to control and shape the media landscape, which has resulted in a high degree of consolidation and centralization. For instance, the government has limited the number of licenses issued to television and radio stations, with many stations being owned or controlled by state-owned enterprises. This has led to a high degree of control over the content that is broadcast, with the government heavily censoring programming that is deemed to be politically sensitive or that contradicts the official narrative.

Keywords: China; digital media; e-commerce; media convergence; SMG's radio & television.

Introduction

Early in the 20th century, when China's first radio stations were formed, the country's radio and media industries began to develop. Government propaganda and heavy government control of the sector during the 1930s and 1940s. Under the direction of the government, the industry was significantly developed and expanded throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Both the number of radio stations and the region they covered grew. Following the cultural revolution as well as a lack of investment, the sector experienced a period of stagnation throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Mostly with the democratization of the market as well as the infusion of private capital in the 1990s and 2000s, the sector saw a significant transition. Furthermore, the number of radio stations skyrocketed, and the business expanded in diversity and level of competition.

With recent technological advancements, including the widespread use of the internet and mobile devices, the Chinese radio and media sector has advanced even further. The article has also explained that there has been a movement towards digital media, with more individuals accessing material on internet channels. The content that can be aired or published on the internet is also subject to stricter regulation by the Chinese government. Media convergence in China is a well-advanced case, as the Chinese government has implemented strict regulations and policies to control and shape the media landscape. The conventional radio and television industries in China have been significantly impacted by the growth of new media. Traditional media outlets like radio and television have had to change to be relevant and competitive in the age of the internet and mobile technologies.

As more and more people use the internet to access media, one of the primary effects has been the trend toward online streaming and on-demand entertainment. In this article, the researcher has identified new digital platforms like social networking and streaming services have emerged, both of which are becoming more and more well-liked in China (Feng et al., 2020). Since censorship and government oversight of the media continue to be major problems, this article also discusses whether or not media convergence would fundamentally alter China's journalistic culture using quantitative data from a case study. This has led to a high degree of consolidation and centralization, with the government exerting a strong degree of control over the content that is broadcast.

CONCEPT & OVERVIEW OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE IN CHINA

The development of radio and television media convergence in China has been driven by the rapid growth of digital technology and the increasing use of the internet in the country. Traditional radio and television broadcasters in China have been quick to embrace digital platforms, such as streaming and on-demand services, in order to reach a wider audience and stay competitive. Media convergence in China refers to the integration of different forms of media, such as television, the internet, and mobile communication. This process has been accelerated in recent years due to the rapid development of technology and the increasing use of the internet in China. The Chinese government has also played a role in promoting media convergence, as it seeks to control and regulate the country's vast and rapidly-evolving media landscape. As a result, traditional media companies in China are now expanding into the digital space, and internet companies are beginning to invest in traditional media such as television and newspapers. This has led to a blurring of the lines between different forms of media and the emergence of new business models.

Conventional television and radio stations have begun to create their programming, such as web series and short-form video material, exclusively for streaming platforms (Chen et al., 2021). In order to market their content and interact with viewers, they have also started to employ social media and mobile applications. Traditional media outlets may now reach new audiences and adjust to the preferences and needs of media consumers, both of which are evolving (Li et al., 2021). Changes in the connection between the state and the media in China are a result of both the country's reform and openness initiatives as well as the growing economic globalization sparked by digital technology (Shi, 2011). The development of new digital media channels, including social media, smartphone applications, and streaming platforms, has made it possible for news and information that is challenging to control to spread quickly (Wu, 2022). The quick transmission of news and information that is challenging to filter, has made it impossible for the government to regulate the flow of information.

Furthermore, Chinese viewers now have a higher desire for international news and information due to the growing economic globalization that has been fueled by digital technology. Due to China's stringent rules and censorship practices, it has been difficult for international news organizations to operate in the country, which has made it impossible for the government to regulate the flow of information from such sources (Wu, 2022). The government has undertaken a variety of tactics to address these issues, including stringent rules on the registration and operation of digital media

platforms, heavy censorship of information regarded to be politically sensitive or that deviates from the official line, and other measures (Chen et al., 2021). The government of China currently has three main strategies for developing a new relationship with the media in the country.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA & CHINESE STATE

In China's media landscape, a key actor is the Shanghai Radio and Television Station (SMG) Convergent Media Center. It is a state-owned corporation that runs several radio and television stations, notably the well-known Shanghai Dragon Television. In order to become a leader throughout convergent media—the blending of conventional and new media to give users a smooth and integrated experience—the center has made considerable investments in infrastructure and technology. The capacity of SMG's convergent media center to reach a big audience through its varied portfolio of media assets is one of its main advantages. Furthermore, it has a clear edge over rivals since it can use its reach to advertise its products and services to a larger audience. Furthermore, the center's investments in cutting-edge technology, particularly cloud computing and artificial intelligence, have allowed it to provide customers with cutting-edge services and goods, including tailored news and video content, which they highly appreciate. SMG's convergent media center is nevertheless constrained by stringent government rules because it is a state-owned business, which may hinder its capacity for innovation and prompt market response.

However, private media firms have more leeway to experiment with new business models as well as revenue streams, this may limit their ability to compete. Furthermore, the center's tight ties to the government could prevent it from covering controversial subjects, which might harm its credibility and reputation among viewers. From an economic standpoint, media convergence is the merger of many media platforms and services to form a single, unified platform that connects customers with content and services. SMG's convergent media center has reaped some significant financial rewards as a result of this convergence. By utilizing its many media channels, such as television, radio, and internet services, SMG has been able to increase its reach and grow its audience. As a result, the center is now able to reach a larger and more varied audience, which has improved advertising income. Additionally, SMG's technological advances have allowed it to provide interactive and tailored content, increasing customer value and engagement.

The theory of Henry Jenkins about media convergence suggests that the process of convergence is driven by the increased interactivity

and connectivity of new digital technologies, as well as the changing habits and expectations of media consumers (Xiong & Zhang, 2018). In the context of Chinese television and radio, this theory can be applied to observe how the industry has adapted to the emergence of new technologies and how it has changed how audiences consume media. One real example of this can be seen in the rise of streaming platforms such as iQiyi and Tencent Video in China (Chen et al., 2021). These platforms have become increasingly popular in recent years, offering a wide range of programming options for viewers, including live streaming, original content, and licensed shows from other countries. This has led to a situation where traditional television and radio stations have had to adapt to the emergence of these new platforms in order to stay relevant and reach new audiences.

STRATEGIES OF CHINESE MEDIA CONVERGENCE

To encourage media integration between conventional radio and television stations as well as new media, the Chinese government has put in place several regulations and initiatives. These initiatives are intended to advance more government control over the media business while modernizing and enhancing the competitiveness of China's media sector. The "Internet Plus" strategy, which attempts to combine the internet with conventional sectors to spur economic growth, is one of the primary initiatives carried out by the Chinese government. The development of convergent media platforms and services, including those provided by SMG's convergent media center, has been promoted by the government as part of this plan. Consolidating media assets and resources has been another endeavour to support media convergence. To build bigger and more competitive media conglomerates, the Chinese government has pushed mergers and acquisitions between conventional media corporations and emerging media organizations.

For instance, the China Media Group, one of China's biggest media corporations, was created in 2016 when China National Radio and China Central Television amalgamated. In order to regulate information flow and guarantee that all media material is consistent with official policies and ideology, the Chinese government has also put in place stringent rules. Additionally, independent media company expansion has been constrained, and the government's hold over the media industry has been strengthened. The Chinese government has implemented strict regulations and policies to control and shape the media landscape, which has resulted in a high degree of consolidation and centralization. For instance, the government has limited the number of licenses issued to television

and radio stations, with many stations being owned or controlled by state-owned enterprises.

Additionally, these platforms have also been integrated into the traditional television and radio landscape, with many television and radio stations using them to broadcast their programming and reach new audiences. Another example of media convergence in China is the integration of social media into the traditional media landscape. According to Xiong & Zhang (2018), social media platforms such as Weibo and WeChat have become an important part of the media landscape in China, with many television and radio stations using them to promote their programming and engage with audiences. Moreover, the first strategy aims to minimize the loss of political influence through a move from total control to effective domination (Chen et al., 2021). This involves decentralizing control and dispersing responsibilities while maintaining a level of passive censorship to ensure that the government's official narrative is not contradicted.

The second strategy is to promote the development of the Chinese media industry by encouraging the growth of new digital media platforms and technologies (Feng et al., 2020). This includes supporting the development of streaming platforms, mobile apps, and social media, as well as investing in the development of new technologies such as 5G and artificial intelligence. The third strategy is to increase international cooperation and exchange in the media industry (Feng et al., 2020). These strategies are aimed at creating a new relationship between the government and media in China, one that is less dependent on total control and censorship, and more focused on promoting the development of the media industry and increasing the international influence of the Chinese media.

CHALLENGES OF CHINESE MEDIA CONVERGENCE

The conventional television business has faced a variety of difficulties as a result of the convergence of television and digital media in China. The expansion of streaming services like iQiyi and Tencent Video is one example from real life. With a variety of programming possibilities for viewers, including live streaming, original material, and licensed shows from other nations, these platforms have gained appeal in recent years (Feng et al., 2020). As more people resort to streaming services for entertainment, this has resulted in a drop in traditional TV ratings and audience share. The growing competition from foreign streaming services like Netflix and Amazon Prime, which are not subject to the same stringent control and regulations as local platforms, is another difficulty (Huang & Wang, 2019). Due to the fact that overseas streaming platforms have a greater selection of programming alternatives and are not subject to the same

censorship, has caused the domestic market share of Chinese streaming services to decline.

Moreover, the government has implemented strict censorship and regulations, which has resulted in self-censorship among the press and the media, to avoid any form of criticism or negative portrayal of the government (Sparviero et al., 2017). The leadership of the Chinese press must balance the demands of the government with the growth of digital media, which is a challenging task. Political allegiance is prioritized over objective journalism because political rank is seen as a "matter of life and death" by many in the press (Huang & Wang, 2019). The problem is made worse by the government's stringent controls and censorship, which cause the press and media to self-censor. There are some real quantitative and statistical examples of Chinese media convergence (Peil & Balbi, 2017). As of 2021, China had 904 million internet users, and the number is expected to continue to grow. According to the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), online video platforms have become the most popular form of online entertainment, with over 80% of internet users watching online videos.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

The way the government oversees and governs the media business reveals the conflicts that underlie the gestural convergence of Chinese media. On the one side, the government encourages the creation of new digital media platforms and technology, such as social media and streaming services, to stimulate the economy and expand the reach of Chinese media abroad (Peil & Balbi, 2017). The government, on the other hand, strictly controls and censors these forums to make sure that they support the official line and do not endanger political stability (Xiao & Li, 2012). Another illustration is the way the government controls websites for social media like Weibo and WeChat. As a new means for consumers to get news and information as well as a tool for media firms to reach out to new audiences, these platforms have grown to be a significant component of China's media landscape.

RESEARCH METHODS

In order to provide readers with a thorough knowledge of the subject, this article on Chinese media convergence predominantly uses a case study analysis and quantitative research methodology. In-depth research would be done on the subject after selecting a specific instance of media convergence in China, such as the SMGs (Feng et al., 2020). This could entail compiling information from

multiple sources, such as government publications, scholarly works, and news stories, as well as speaking with experts and stakeholders in person (Huang & Wang, 2019). With the aid of this analysis, the essay might include thorough details on the particular instance of media convergence and the tactics employed by the organization in question.

DATA ANALYSIS

There have been several journal articles and research studies on the topic of Chinese media convergence and technological innovation. These studies typically use a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods to examine the impact of digital technologies on the media industry in China, and the strategies used by media companies to adapt to the changing media landscape (Sparviero et al., 2017). Moreover, the researcher asked the participant the first question: "How familiar are you with the concept of "convergence" in the radio & media industry?" 90% shows very familiar with the convergence term in the radio & media industry of China. Due to this integration, conventional media firms may now reach more people, generate more income, and operate more effectively. The research has surveyed with important participants in the media sector, such as media executives, government officials, and academics might provide a real-world case example of using interviews to research Chinese media convergence.

RESULTS & FINDINGS

The researcher presented the questionnaire to participants in which 10 total questions linked with Chinese radio and media convergence would be asked. One example of a journal article on this topic is "Media Convergence in China: Challenges and Opportunities" by Hengxin Pan, published in the International Journal of Communication. This study uses quantitative research methods to examine the impact of digital technologies on the media industry in China (Wang & Sparks, 2019).

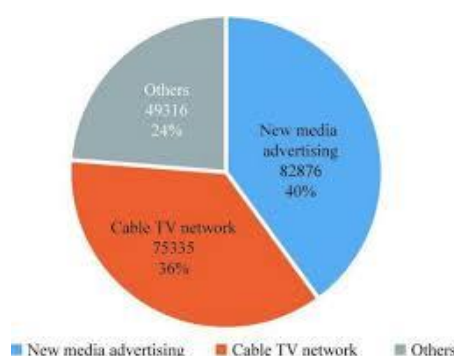


FIGURE 1. Components of radio and television media convergence in China

The study finds that the rise of digital technologies and platforms such as streaming and social media has led to a decline in traditional television ratings and audience share, and has increased competition for advertising revenue. Furthermore, it was also seen from the table the media convergence environment that is based on respondents' results. This tabular result shows that media convergence in China attracted more youngsters than elders.

TABLE 1. Media convergence in China

	Traditional broadcast and television media	Broadcast and television under media convergence
4-14 years old	97	110
15-24 years old	56	66
25-34 years old	72	78
35-44 years old	81	96
45-54 years old	150	151
55-64 years old	220	221
65 years old and above	277	288

Another example is "Media convergence and technological innovation in China: The case of the SMG by Shanghai Radio and Television Station (SMG) Convergent Media Center is a significant player in the media industry in China. It is a state-owned company that operates several television and radio channels, including the popular Shanghai Dragon Television. This study examines the case of the SMGs, a mouthpiece of the central government of the CCP (Wang & Sparks, 2019). The study finds that the newspaper's online version, the SMG's, has successfully adapted to the changing media landscape in China by embracing new digital technologies and platforms. Table 2 below about quantitative analysis of Chinese enterprise according to new or modern media index ranking is explained.

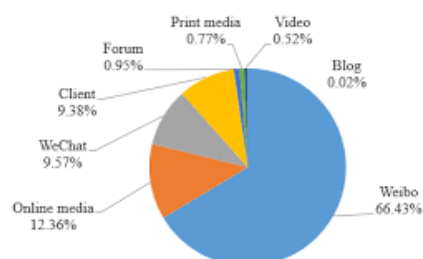


FIGURE 2. Technological innovation in China

TABLE 2: China enterprises' new media index ranking

Ranking	Enterprise name	WeChat index	Sino Weibo index	Tik Tok index	Kwai index	Video channel index	Toutiao index	Zhihu index	Media convergence index
1	China Telecom Group Limited	997	851	887	1046	731	619	695	870
2	China National Petroleum Corporation	883	678	1028	1225	738	714	0	822
3	Sinopec Group	933	623	964	1263	650	631	970	818
4	China Mobile Communications Corporation	986	750	968	1001	509	581	0	805
5	Jinneng Group Co., Ltd.	680	837	942	998	770	883	0	804
6	China United Network Communications Limited	878	873	689	762	594	414	912	759
7	Minoso (Guangzhou) Co., Ltd.	873	879	630	920	660	0	0	698
8	China Life Insurance Company Ltd.	708	579	806	886	694	765	0	692
9	Country Garden Shareholding Co., Ltd.	638	832	953	0	713	850	0	683
10	Huawei Investment and Holding Co., Ltd. (Huawei Technologies Co., Ltd.)	781	696	1117	0	567	742	0	674

DISCUSSION

More recent research is "Media Convergence and Innovation in China: Challenges and Opportunities" by Xianhong Hu, published in the Journal of Media Business Studies. This study examines the strategies presented by media convergence and technological innovation in China, and the strategies used by media companies to adapt to the changing media landscape (Xiong & Zhang, 2018). The study finds that the rise of digital technologies has led to a decline in traditional television ratings and audience share, but has also created new opportunities for media companies to reach new audiences and increase their advertising revenue. The Chinese government has implemented strict regulations on the media industry, including censorship and licensing, which has led to self-censorship among media companies. These numbers and statistics illustrate the impact of digital media on the traditional television and radio industry in China, as well as the increasing importance of digital platforms such

as streaming, social media, and the internet in the Chinese media landscape.

The author would additionally inquire about the audience's response to media convergence and the influence of social media and streaming services on the media environment. The data gathered from the journal literature would then be analysed by the writers using statistical methods to find trends and patterns in the replies (Peil & Balbi, 2017). Additionally, they would employ qualitative analysis methods to extract significant themes and conclusions from the data. A report or academic paper that provides a thorough understanding of the current state of the Chinese media industry, including the difficulties and opportunities presented by digital technologies, the role of the government in media regulation, and the methods employed by media companies to adapt to the shifting media landscape, is one possible outcome of this research (Sparviero et al., 2017). The report would provide a thorough study of the subject by using data and real-world examples from the survey questions.

To what extent do you believe traditional media (such as print newspapers, television, and radio) should converge with digital media (such as websites, social media, and mobile apps)? The government also vigorously regulates these platforms to make sure they uphold the official narrative and to prevent the spread of information that can be harmful to political stability. These instances demonstrate the conflict between the government's ambition to promote the development of new digital media platforms and technologies and its objectives to continue exercising control over the information flow and ensure political stability (Zhengrong & Li, 2011). Chinese media has enthusiastically embraced digital technologies. According to the Chinese government, digital technologies such as the internet, social media, and mobile devices can promote economic growth, increase national influence, and advance the development of the media industry (Lau, 2020). The way the government has aided in the creation of new digital media platforms and technology is one illustration of this friendly embrace. These platforms have grown quickly as a result, and they now pose a serious threat to conventional television and radio broadcasters.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, media convergence and the convergences of traditional media platforms with new media technology have influenced the growth of Chinese radio and television. The development and competitiveness of China's media business, as well as information flow and governmental control over the media industry, have all

been significantly impacted by this integration. The Chinese government started making significant investments in the creation of new media technologies, such as the internet and mobile devices, in the early 2000s. This investment prepared the ground for the development of new media platforms, including social media and online video, which quickly rose to prominence in China's media environment. Traditional radio and television stations, including Shanghai Radio and Television Station (SMG), started integrating their operations with new media platforms in reaction to this transformation to remain competitive.

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