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Contemporary Media Production and Transformation: Media Convergence in a Public Service Broadcaster

By

KU Kin-shing, Ryan

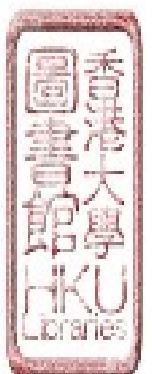
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Supervised by

Dr. NG Chun-hung

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for
the Degree of Master of Social Sciences in Media, Culture and Creative Cities
at The University of Hong Kong

August 2015



Abstract of thesis entitled

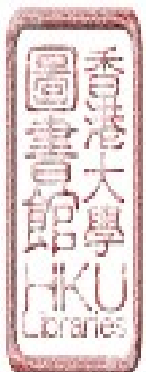
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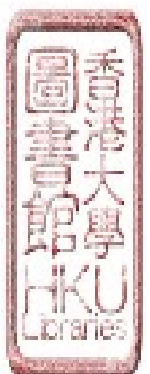
Mobile apps, social media platform as well as the digital devices have changed our lifestyle tremendously. In the modern capitalistic society, long working hours and limited personal time are common among in the society. Although the limited personal time restricted our leisure time, our media consuming habit is also shifted to adapted to the limited personal time thanks to the advanced information communication technologies (ICTs). ICTs not only help us to consume vast amount of information around the world, but also inviting us to access to the internet regardless of the physical place and time. It also helps us to digitalise different format of information, such as texts, audio, videos, etc., in the same digital bit so users can access to different formats of resources through various types of digital device now. The above media convergence provides many entertainment for the internet users and it suits the contemporary capitalistic society lifestyle.

With the vast amount of information available on the internet, the conventional media is facing severe competition from the cyberspace counterparts. The static and fixed TV schedule is a thing of past because audience can consume various TV programmes regardless of time and place on the internet now. As such, media convergence brings difficulties in operating media business in the contemporary society. TV ratings of the conventional media are affected by the prevalence of using ICTs. However, some conventional media view the media convergence and digitalisation are new opportunities for development. The high definition resolution and advanced technical quality of the digital footages and increasing



channels or platforms for broadcasting the media products mean there are more channels for the users to approach or learn about own media products. The key is how to make their media products adapt to different media platforms on the internet and invite more internet users to consume the programmes afterwards.

In this Thesis, we will use a conventional media in Hong Kong – RTHK to study the transformation of conventional media in adapting to the network society. Media convergence brings many possibilities to this 87-year-old Public Service Broadcaster (PSB). Media convergence also helps this institution to produce many niche and edgy programmes in a more attractive way for the general public to understand different social issues. RTHK case not only helps us to understand the media convergence in a conventional media, but also gives us an insight to learn about the nature of PSB as well as the difference between PSB and private media business.



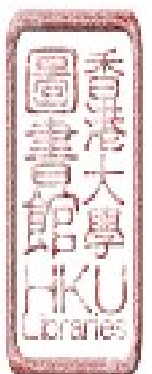
Declaration

I declare that this thesis represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications.



Signed

KU Kin-shing, Ryan

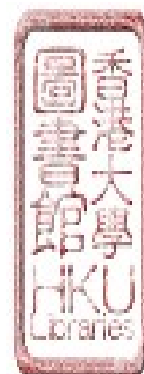


Acknowledgements

Undertaking this project could never be an easy task without the generous assistance from my supervisor Dr. NG Chun-hung, a very cheerful and enthusiastic scholar with rich experience and knowledge in analysing Hong Kong Popular Culture and local media industry. He always provides inspiring and enlightening perspectives for me to deconstruct and investigate my research subject - RTHK. Without his support and brilliant guidance, this research cannot be that fruitful and impressive as well as became an important milestone in my life. With his rich understanding in the local media industry, I have a chance to approach RTHK senior management and glimpse the local media industry's operation. This experience not only broadens my horizons but also provides an opportunities to rethink my role in building a better Hong Kong, especially in helping to develop the local media sectors. It is really a great pleasure to learn from him and became his student in the past two years.

I would like to give my special thanks to all interviewees, especially senior management of RTHK in providing tremendous information and data for me to study the local media industry, especially their operation in the New Media Era. I can see their beliefs and values in running a PSB in Hong Kong. I also learnt a lot from their creative ideas and innovations in transforming the local media sectors and benefiting Hong Kong media industry in producing various high quality programmes. They are the ones making this project truly significant and meaningful.

I also need to express my sincere gratitude to Professor CHAN Ching Selina for her generous recommendations and referral even before I enrolled the Master of Social Sciences in Media, Culture and Creative Cities. She is my enlightening supervisor during my undergraduate study in Sociology. Without her guidance and leading, my interests in Sociology cannot be induced and generated. She always offers timely and effectively recommendations of my academic projects and my personal life project simultaneously. It is my pleasure to learn from her in the past projects and researches since 2011 when I started



enrolling her courses in the undergraduate study. Also, I would also like to thank Dr. TSE Ho-lun, Tommy, Dr. TONG Ka-man, Carmen and Dr. KONG Shiu-ki, Travis. Their diligence and enthusiasm in teaching sociology strengthen my understanding of different sociological theories and literatures. They also provide many resources and readings which enriched my theoretical frameworks of new media, network society, identity and self. These frameworks not only help this project tremendously but also benefit my entire life in the future.

Lastly, I need to send my thanks to all my supportive friends: Cliff CHU, Kent DENG, Alan YAU, Samantha LI and Connie WONG. Their meaningful and inspiring feedbacks and comments have enabled me to excel and achieve more in my sociology journey. Our intellectual discussion and conversations induced many new inspirations and new perspectives in the projects and presentations. I cherish to have these friends in my life and I am sure our friendships will last forever.

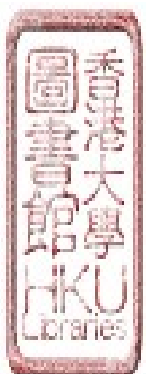
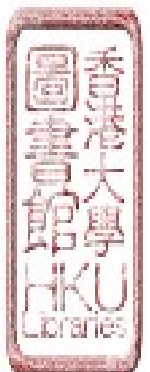


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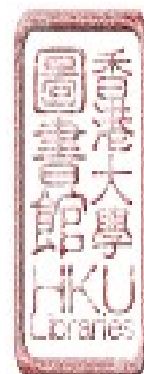


Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introductory Remarks

In the contemporary capitalistic society, non-static and long working hours of the working class as well as the prevalence of using the information communication technologies (ICTs) by the ordinary citizens imply the changing of tastes, habits and preferences of the people in the community. On the one hand, the limited personal time restricted the time for people to entertain and relax. On the other hand, the advanced digital devices, digitalised information as well as different social media platforms, mobile apps and websites provide more access to various information regardless of physical location and time. Thus, the above media convergence affects the operation of the conventional media. The traditional, static and fixed TV schedule is a thing of past. The vast amount of information and resources available on the internet distract the internet users to watch TV programmes in front of TV sets. The network society invites them to consumer different materials posted on the internet around the world without physical and time constraint. The transformation of the consuming habits means access to media products is shifted from “product push” basis to “information pull” basis. Audience can actively consume different media resources interested them in the new media era.

In the new media era, the above transformation, providing many media products available on the internet, brings a severe competition to the local conventional media from many media products available on the internet. The conventional media are now not only competing with other local media organisations, but all materials available on the internet and changing consuming habits of the audience on cyberspace. Hence, their ratings are disturbed by these distractions on the cyberspace. They need to transform their production procedures and organisational structures in order to entertain the changing consuming habit of the internet users on the cyberspace. In the following parts, I will illustrate the transformations of these conventional media broadcasters in adapting to the new media era. The case of RTHK,



a Hong Kong Public Service Broadcaster (PSB), will be used to study a PSB and conventional media in attracting the internet users on the internet.

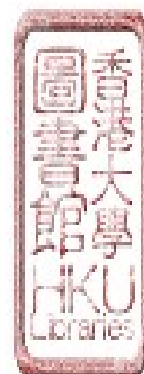
1.2 The Concerns of the Thesis

As mentioned above, there is a need for the conventional media to transform themselves to adapt to the new media era. In this Thesis, we will mainly focus on the opportunities and limitations of the media convergence and the technological advancement bring to the conventional media. Both positive and negative sides of the prevalence of ICTs will be discussed thoroughly in the following parts. Besides, another concerns is the operation of a PSB, one of the conventional media. There are many PSBs around the world. What are the differences between the commercial media and the public service broadcaster funded by the public resources? What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a PSB? Are there more opportunities in developing their cultural business or they are facing more political censorships due to its resources are from the general public or the government? We are going to discuss these questions in details. Finally, the third concerns is the case of RTHK. After learning different PSBs around the world, our research object – RTHK, a 87-year-old PSB in Hong Kong, will be used to study the local PSB in running their business in Hong Kong. The institutional culture as well as their programmes in the local context will be studied thoroughly.

1.3 The Organisation of the Thesis

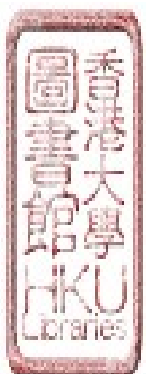
This Thesis analyses the situation in sociological perspectives and is divided into 5 chapters. The first chapter is an introductory chapter which points out the main concerns of this Thesis and the background of the media industry in the contemporary new media era.

Chapter 2 is the literature review which is the base of this research. It provides theories which support our discussion and analysis like the theories on media convergence coined by Castells, Jenkins and Miller. Also, theories about PSB are also formed a solid ground for our



study of RTHK because it pinpoints the nature and elements of PSB. It can facilitate our understanding on RTHK, a PSB in local context.

Chapter 3 is focusing on methodology. This part will introduce the research methods I used and the advantages of using these approaches to understand the insiders of the media industry. Introduction of different interviews as well as the demographics will be reported in this part. Chapter 4 is the data analysis which will analyse whether the theories can be generalised to the reality – the operation of the local PSB. Some theories can be generalised to the actual cases whereas some ideas stated in chapter 2 cannot be applied in the real case. More analysis on the data collected will be provided here. Finally, chapter 5 is the conclusion which concludes the conventional media transformation process in the contemporary new media era.

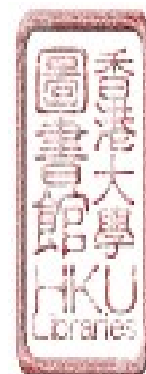


Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Passive and Diverge Conventional Media

Before the prevalence of using the information communication technologies (ICTs) and navigating on the cyberspace, information was mainly disseminated through conventional media such as newspaper, radio and television (Barker, 2003). These conventional media produced media programmes in a highly centralised assembly line and directed through hierarchical process of command and control (Bruns, 2008). Media content were manufactured in a bureaucratic organisational structure with a distinctive duties and responsibilities of different media practitioners in the conventional media (Bruns, 2008). Different industries differentiated from each other distinctively and they circulated the information in different formats like words, images, audio and video clips respectively, depended on the nature of the company (Barker, 2003). Different companies, like radio station and newspaper, produced the media content individually and divergently (Barker, 2003).

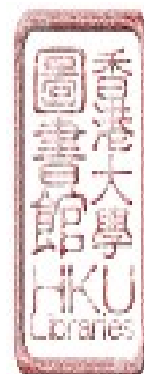
As the media products were manufactured by the monolithic conventional media in the past, the media programme were mostly viewed as ended-products (Bruns, 2008). Audience passively consumed the completed and packaged programmes, produced by the media corporations, without any participations or involvements in the production process of different media programmes (Bruns, 2008). Thus, information was provided to the audience in a top-down approach by the conventional media (Bruns, 2008). Most audience accessed to information on a product-push basis by conventional, industrial-scale conventional broadcasters and printed media (Bruns, 2008). In addition, media products which could be consumed by the audience were being selected and filtered by the conventional media producers and the audience consumed the limited choices of programmes passively (Bruns, 2008). The one-to-many information dissemination led to audiences' freedom of choice on the media products was restricted (Bruns, 2008). Their tastes, preferences and feedbacks of the programmes were hard to be reflected in the traditional, centralised media production assembly line (Bruns, 2008).



2.2 Interactive New Media: Media Convergence and Conglomerate

In the New Media Era and the prevalent of the ICTs usage nowadays, the centralised, top-down corporate-driven and one-to-many monolithic media empires start to evolve and transform (Jenkins, 2006). In order to adapt to the network society, suggested by Jenkins (2008), media convergence emerges in different media organisations. There are various types of convergence in the media industry, i.e. technological convergence and media industry convergence (Castells, 2009; Jenkins, 2006; Miller, 2011).

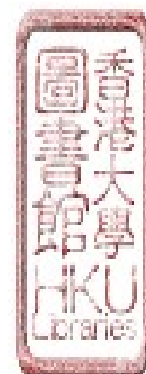
Firstly, the technological convergence brings a tremendous evolution in the media industry. It can be regarded as the functional convergence as all format of media are digitalised in the same format for easier distribution (Miller, 2011). All texts, audio, images and video clips are converted into a common digital format and language (Miller, 2011). They are digitalised in the same digital bit: zeros and ones (Miller, 2011). Different gadgets, like smart phone, laptop and desktop, can also read the information, regardless of the type of the information (Miller, 2011). Many electronic devices are obsoleted and superseded after the emerge of technological convergence such as cassette tape, CD player and radio (Miller, 2011). It implies that the conventional diverged media sectors starts converge into a major content producer, regardless of the nature of the industries. Diverted information in the past such as words, audios and videos become the same format (Jenkins, 2006). This can help to streamline the production process and various of information can be produced by different internet users (Jenkins, 2006). Moreover, technological convergence brings cross-media experience to the internet users on the cyberspace (Jenkins, 2006). The media production in the new media era is shifted from a static models of production and consumption to a more participatory mode of information circulation (Jenkins, 2006). Technically speaking, the distinctive nature of texts, images, audio and video clips are converged in the same digital coding (Jenkins, 2006). It can help the information and content to be easily spread from one sector to another sector and all media forms were stored and transferred to the same format as well as interchangeable on the cyberspace (Jenkins, 2006)



After the emergence of technological convergence, the highly distinctive media industries in the past started to erode due to the information exchange is in the same digital bit format nowadays (Miller, 2011). Different industries like the radio station and newspaper start to evolve their own businesses to adapt to the network society and various media organisations start engaging in different media sectors (Miller, 2011). Thus, horizontal integration and vertical integration can be observed within the contemporary media nowadays (Miller, 2011). Due to the severe competition from different content providers on the internet, the horizontal integration could be observed (Miller, 2011). Many small and medium-sized media enterprises are merged with the major media enterprises in the industries. (Miller, 2011) Different TV stations or radio stations become media monopoly or major content provider in the media industry so it leads to the media conglomerate (Miller, 2011). For the vertical integration, separated functions of different practitioners in the past like filming, lighting, editing and gears handling can be centralised in a particular device or department due to the advanced technological convergence (Miller, 2011). Many technicians' duties can be replaced by the computer or the editing by different softwares (Miller, 2011). As such, from production to media programme dissemination, there is a tremendous transformation due to the technological convergence and improvement (Miller, 2011). Media production, nowadays, is different from the past obviously (Miller, 2011).

2.3 Participatory Culture and Prodsuage

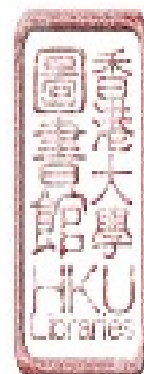
For the audience side, the technological advancement not only provides more channels for the media producers to circulate the information, but also provides various entertainment choices for the audience to consume the media programme actively (Jenkins, 2006). A pool of vast information circulated by different content providers on the internet implies the programme consumption is shifted from producer-driven in the past to consumer-driven nowadays (Jenkins, 2006). Various channels, e.g. Youtube, Facebook fan page, Forum or Wikipedia, are providing the vast amount of information for the audience to select and consume (Jenkins, 2006). Users are welcomed to actively browse, share, utilise and making



connections of the above mentioned media products and information available on the internet, according to their own tastes and preferences (Jenkins, 2006). Users can also receive and exchange the information easily by digital gadgets such as smart-phones or desktop computers on the internet (Jenkins, 2006). Audience can actively consume the media programme without time and space limitation so a static and fixed TV schedule is a thing of past nowadays (Jenkins, 2006). However, this participatory media culture with actively selecting the content to be viewed reflects only the technological aspect and ignored the cultural elements in the new media era (Jenkins, 2006). Thus, Henry Jenkins (2008) called this as “Black Box Fallacy”.

In the new media era, consumers are not passively receiving the media product by the traditional media broadcaster but they are actively selecting the content they want to read (Jenkins, 2006). Increasing choices of media content available on the internet, access to information is shifted from “product push” basis to “information pull” basis (Miller, 2011). Suggested by Henry Jenkins (2008), the emergence of media convergence in the media production leads to the participatory culture and collective intelligence. Industrial, centralised production and closed-source media products are the things of past in the new media era (Jenkins, 2006). According to Jenkins (2008), convergence does not only involve the commercially produced media products, but also the contributions from different internet users on the cyberspace. The circulation of media products, nowadays, depends heavily on the consumers’ active participations (Jenkins, 2006). All the users on the internet can be producers (Jenkins, 2006). Individuals can exercise greater autonomy on the cyberspace as more information are available on the given topic (Jenkins, 2006). There are more incentives for the internet users to share the information again (Jenkins, 2006). The new media era is equivalent to the user-led production and commons-based production (Bruns, 2008).

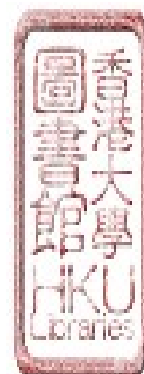
In the commons-based production, it is a new form of exchanging knowledge and problem solving technique on the cyberspace (Miller, 2011). The creation of common



resources and the pool of information constructed by different expertises on the cyberspace can help the common difficulties faced by different individuals can be solved and the internet users can be benefited by the collective intelligence (Miller, 2011). The mobilising and coordinating of intelligence, expertise, skills, wisdom and imagination of humanity can be called “communal collaboration” (Miller, 2011).

Generally speaking, the collective intelligence is putting all the pieces of contributions by different individuals together and all internet users pool their own resources and combine their skills together (Bruns, 2008; Jenkins, 2006). Thus, the relationship between media producers and consumers is shifted from closed-source product to user-led content creation (Bruns, 2008; Jenkins, 2006). Contemporary media industry nowadays, is incorporated the inputs of ordinary individuals and the public, across religion, education, law, politics, advertising and military issues. Media products on the cyberspace become the alternative source for reference to the users (Bruns, 2008; Jenkins, 2006). It leads to the transformation of the media industry as well. The collaborative production of media content makes the media programme is shifted from a closed, endpoint product to an ongoing, non-static process (Bruns, 2008; Miller, 2011). Differences between the media producer and consumer on the cyberspace are blurred as the internet users can become both producer and consumer on the cyberspace simultaneously (Bruns, 2008; Miller, 2011). The above widely available and democratised means of producing and distributing channels allowed the consumers on the cyberspace can produce the media products by the advanced ICTs nowadays (Miller, 2011). The engagements and contributions from various internet users and consumers help the digital products are continuously produced, modified, shared and distributed so the media product can be endlessly used by all consumers in the new media era (Miller, 2011).

Media, cultural products are being produced in the network society (Miller, 2011). Producers in the network society involved both internet users and the traditional producers in the media corporations (Miller, 2011). With the advanced ICTs, all participants have the



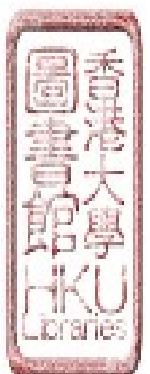
equal rights to contribute the media products, regardless of their technical skills and knowledge (Miller, 2011). Media products, nowadays, are keep utilising by different producers (Miller, 2011). Thus, it is not finished and ended products which are owned and controlled by the conventional media producers (Miller, 2011). The more assessment, evaluation and contribution of the predecessor' media products by the producers on the cyberspace, the more likely to increase the quality of the media products (Miller, 2011). With the advanced ICTs, media product is the artefact that are being constructed continually and the digital content can be endlessly utilised by all producers (Miller, 2011). These unfinished, ongoing constructed media can rewards the community afterwards (Miller, 2011).

2.4 Public Service Broadcaster

One of the major conventional media, which is transforming its operational model to adapt to the new media era, is the public service broadcaster (PSB) (Larsen, 2011). There are many PSBs around the globe such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in the UK, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation / Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai (NHK) in Japan and the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) in Hong Kong (Larsen, 2011; Malik, 2013).

Comparing with the commercial or private broadcasters, PSBs do not need to broadcast advertisements or appeal to the mass entertainment and popular culture for profit in operation (Boddy, 1993). They are less dependent on the commercial market as they are using public resources to provide services for the general public (Boddy, 1993; Larsen, 2011). Different PSBs around the world are funded by different funding such as license fee or paid by citizens who own a TV set (Larsen, 2011).

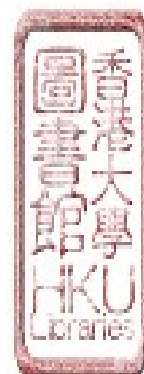
On the one hand, the ratings-driven commercial media is promoting popular culture to appeal to the general public to consume their programmes in order to secure their ratings and attract more advertisements (Boddy, 1993; Gwyn, 1970). Hence, commercial broadcasters are also perceived homogeneity in programming and converted politically motivated self-



editorial censorship of the programme content which undermined the quality and the informativeness of the profit-oriented programmes (Boddy, 1993; Gwyn, 1970). On the other hand, the relatively independent from the business sectors and public-funded media organisation can act as a counterweight to the commercial media which are being criticised for promoting capitalism and consumption through advertisements and different programmes (Gwyn, 1970).

Theoretically, all PSBs have the editorial freedom as they are less affected by the capitalistic market and are not required to adopt the profit-driven operational approach (Larsen, 2011). Being publicly funded institutions, public service broadcasters have to fulfil cultural obligations in terms of mission, programming and vision (Larsen, 2011). Also, PSB refers to broadcasting with a mission to “inform, educate and entertain” (Larsen, 2011). Hence, PSBs around the world adopted the above approach and have the responsibility for enlightening the people, motivated by the egalitarian and social democratic ideals of providing and circulating information to the general public as well as enabling citizens to act as critical and independent individuals (Habermas, 1989). PSBs can provide equal access of knowledge for all the people, regardless of their race, class, gender and social status. It can act as a medium to redistribute the cultural capital, promote equality as well as reduce the knowledge gap (Larsen, 2011). The whole society can benefit from the media product from PSBs (Larsen, 2011).

Being independent from the commercial sectors, PSBs have more opportunities and rooms to produce less profitable and more marginal or informative media products that the commercial broadcasters are less willing to do so (Larsen, 2011). Providing sufficient information through PSBs’ media programmes for the audience consumption is a source of insight, reflection and knowledge to the people (Larsen, 2011). These programmes give the audience more possibilities to gain insight into other people’s lives, cultures and practices (Larsen, 2011). Hence, PSBs’ programmes serve the creation of independent, rational attitudes (Larsen, 2011). This public enlightenment can help the viewers to have a glimpse to other societies and foreign cultures as well as enhance the understanding or tolerance to the other members in the society or around the world so the cultural capitals can be redistributed



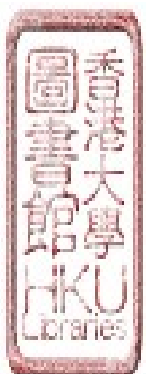
(Larsen, 2011). PSBs like an instrument used to promote social, cultural and democratic processes (Larsen, 2011).

2.5 Public Service Broadcasting in Hong Kong

Established in 1928, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) is the first radio station and the sole public service broadcaster in Hong Kong (陳雲, 2009). RTHK is also the only local media provides radio, television and online broadcasting services simultaneously (陳雲, 2009). Operates independently from other government departments, it enjoys the editorial independence and provides services in public interests without direct political censorship from the Government (Volcic & Zajc, 2013; 陳雲, 2009).

In 1970, RTHK television division established and started to produce high-quality TV programmes which broadcast on the 2 free-to-air TV stations, i.e. TVB and ATV (陳雲, 2009). The wide-ranged TV programmes include public and current affairs, educational, drama as well as arts and culture programmes (陳雲, 2009). In 2014, 3 digital terrestrial TV channels, named RTHK 31, RTHK 32 and RTHK 33, start broadcasting in the city (陳雲, 2009). With their own TV channels and prolonged production of high-quality TV programmes, RTHK television programme production is one of the pillars in the media development in Hong Kong (陳雲, 2009).

To provide more channels for people around the world to access to RTHK media products, RTHK launched the New Media Services in 1994 (陳雲, 2009). The official RTHK website established and RTHK is a pioneer in providing the internet services within the local media industry (陳雲, 2009). Starting from this milestone, the static TV

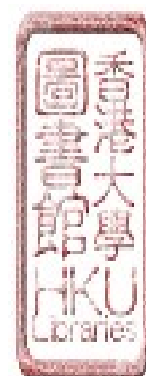


programme schedule viewing model is diminished (陳雲, 2009). Internet users can access to RTHK media products regardless of time, day and physical location limitation (陳雲, 2009). With the prevalent of using social media nowadays, RTHK also shares and recommends the programme highlights via Podcast, Youtube, Facebook and Twitter so that internet users can access to RTHK's products more easily.

2.6 Conceptualisation

In the past, the media products were manufactured by the monolithic conventional media, the media programme were mostly viewed as ended-products (Bruns, 2008). The static, fixed TV schedule also scheduled the audiences' entertainment schedule and restrict the programmes they can watch and consume (Barker, 2003). Audience passively consumed the completed and packaged programmes which are produced by the media corporations. They do not have any participations or involvements in the production process of different media programmes (Bruns, 2008).

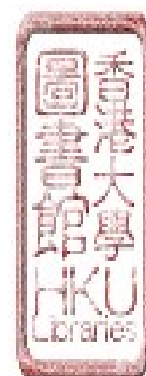
Nowadays, the advanced ICTs bring the media convergence in the network society (Jenkins, 2006). The advanced ICTs allow users to access different information around the world through digital gadgets, mobile apps and social media platforms (Miller, 2011). The centralised, top-down corporate-driven and one-to-many monolithic media empires start to evolve and transform. In addition, technological convergence brings more opportunities to the conventional media. All texts, audio, images and video clips are converted into a common digital format and language (Miller, 2011). They are digitalised in the same digital bit: zeros and ones (Miller, 2011). Different gadgets, like smart phone, laptop and desktop, can also read the information simultaneously, regardless of the type of the information (Miller, 2011). This brings many opportunities to the conventional media because they can produce various programmes across different platforms and the technological advancement helps to improve the quality of the media products (Miller, 2011). The digitalisation brings many possibilities



to the conventional media. Both horizontal and vertical integration can be observed in the media industry.

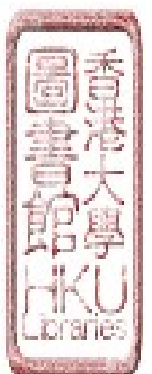
The above technological advancement not only helps the conventional media institutions, but also provides more possibilities to the internet users. A pool of vast information circulated by different content providers on the internet implies the programme consumption is shifted from producer-driven in the past to consumer-driven nowadays (Jenkins, 2006). Audience can actively consume the media programme without time and space limitation (Jenkins, 2006). The emergence of media convergence in the media production leads to the participatory culture and collective intelligence. Media convergence does not only involve the commercially produced media products, but also the contributions from different internet users on the cyberspace. The circulation of media products, nowadays, depends heavily on the consumers' active participations (Jenkins, 2006). All the users on the internet can be producers (Jenkins, 2006). The collaborative production of media content makes the media programme is shifted from a closed, endpoint product to an ongoing, non-static process (Bruns, 2008; Miller, 2011). Differences between the media producer and consumer on the cyberspace are blurred as the internet users can become both producer and consumer on the cyberspace simultaneously (Bruns, 2008; Miller, 2011).

One of the conventional media is Public Service Broadcaster. Comparing with the commercial or private broadcasters, PSBs do not need to broadcast advertisements or appeal to the mass entertainment and popular culture for profit to operate (Boddy, 1993). They are less dependent on the commercial market as they are using public resources to provide services for the general public (Boddy, 1993; Larsen, 2011). Thus, the public expectation on PSB is different from the commercial media. As an institution independent from both political and economic interests, PSB refers to broadcasting with a mission to “inform, educate and entertain”. Hence, it has the responsibility for enlightening the people, motivated by the egalitarian and social democratic ideals of providing and circulating



information to the general public as well as enabling citizens to act as critical and independent individuals (Habermas, 1989). Our research object RTHK is also a PSB which is located in Hong Kong. Established in 1928, RTHK is one of the major conventional media which also enjoy the editorial independence. It produces many diversified, niche and edgy programmes in an attractive way in order to educate the general public and provide more information of different social issues impartially.

Generally speaking, based on the above solid theoretical background, we can see there is a need for the conventional media to transform itself to adapt to the network society as the habit and taste of the internet users are changed. To understand the above relations, we will analysis the issue in three main areas: firstly, we will understand the features of contemporary conventional public service broadcaster. Its values, operation and development of PSB will be analysed. Secondly, the opportunities and limitations of the PSB in the local context will be discussed in details. Finally, the transformation and media convergence of the conventional PSB will be investigated to understand contemporary media industry development.



Chapter 3: Methodology

This research adopts the qualitative research method as we want to understand the rationale or operating mechanism of the contemporary media operation instead of reporting the general media industry situation through qualitative research method reporting different data only. In this research, I mainly used the approach of in-depth interview and participant observation to collect data for analysis the contemporary media industry transformation.

3.1 In-depth Interview

In order to help us to understand the operation of the contemporary media institution and the insiders of the media industry. Interviewing is the best way to tease out the thinking of the practitioners (Jensen, 2002). Interviews provide opportunities to ask more questions in understanding the interviewees' interests behind the positions as well as their rationale of different actions or their visions on the future development of media industry (Jensen, 2002).

Different insiders in different RTHK divisions have conducted in-depth interviews with us. With the help of Dr. C.H. Ng, we can contact the senior management of RTHK and communicate with them directly. The snow-ball sampling also helps us to contact other division heads in RTHK successfully. We can gather the thinking of the insiders, especially the senior management of the local PSB, and a first-hand data through these interviews. I have interviewed some senior management and the practitioners in working level. Some details of the RTHK senior management I interviewed are as follows-

Name	Post
Miss CHAN Man-kuen	Assistant Director (TV & Corporate Businesses)
Miss CHAN Man-yee	Head, General Programme
Mr. DOO Shui-wai, Henry	Head/NM

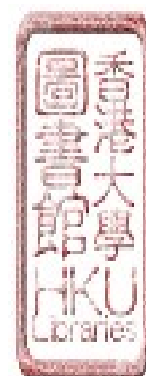


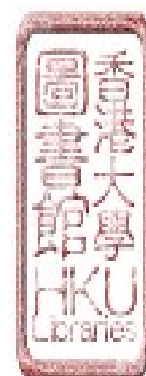


Figure 1: In-house Studio in New Media Unit

3.2 Participant Observation

Participant observation is another method for us to understand the media industry development better. Through the participant observation, observers can interpret and understand the things happening in the field and industry (Jensen, 2002). Researcher, as an observer, participates in the daily activities, interactions, meetings and their ordinary working process in order to understand these media insider culture (Tse, 2013). The participant observation incorporated observation, formal and informal interviewing (Tse, 2013). These research approaches are commonly adopted in the phase of fieldwork in the ethnographic research (Tse, 2013). Also, the advantages of participant observation included the fieldwork can provide meaningful data for the researcher to do the analysis and it also helps the researcher to formulate new research and hypotheses through observing the insiders of the industry (Jensen, 2002; Tse, 2013).

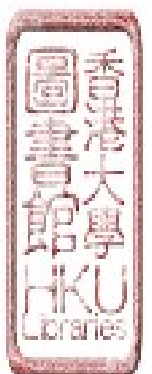
With the assistance from Rita CHAN in RTHK, I participate and attend the editorial meeting with different directors of the new media project. Throughout the meeting, we can interact with the employees and understand the difficulties facing by the working level practitioners and their planning of the technical rundown. Besides, attending meetings can help us to have a general picture and understanding of the ordinary operation in a conventional media. This can help us to gather more concrete data from the insiders' perspective in viewing the media convergence in a PSB. Field notes is jotted through these



observations, informal conversations as well as the reflection from the insiders. These notes help me to compare and contrast the theories effectively.



Figure 2. Attending meeting with RTHK staff



Chapter 4: Data analysis

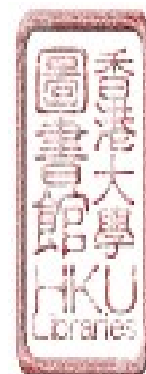
Many theories suggested by different scholars, like Miller, Jenkins and Castells on media convergence in the new media era have been mentioned in the literature review. In the following part, I am going to apply these grand theories to the research subject – RTHK so as to understand whether the theoretical framework can be applied to the media organisation and the contemporary conventional media institution transformation.

4.1 Public Service Broadcaster in Hong Kong Context

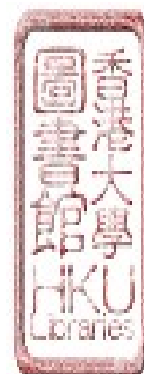
As a conventional media in Hong Kong, RTHK is a local public service broadcaster providing various media services ranging from radio broadcast to television programmes production since 1928 (陳雲, 2009). As one of the PSBs around the world, RTHK also views itself bear the responsibility to inform, educate and entertain the general public which is tally with the claim of the PSB role mentioned by Larsen (2011) (陳雲, 2009). According to “The charter of RTHK”, RTHK has the following responsibilities which resonate with the PSBs’ missions around the world -

- sustains citizenship and civil society;
- provides an open platform for the free exchange of views without fear or favour;
- encourages social inclusion and pluralism;
- promotes education and learning; and
- stimulates creativity and excellence to enrich the multi-cultural life of Hong Kong people.

The above responsibilities obviously match with the roles of PSB in order to redistribute the culture capital, promote equality and reduce the knowledge gap as well as enable citizens to act as a critical and independent subjects (Larsen, 2011; 陳雲, 2009).



With the rich history and the top in credibility and programme appreciation, RTHK is an important part of the local history and broadcasting development in Hong Kong (陳雲, 2009). Over the years, different RTHK programmes and documentaries have received and won numerous prestigious awards and prominent international awards which implies that the programme genres, contents and production earned the recognition both locally and internationally and it recognised the effort of this major media institution in Hong Kong (陳雲, 2009). Given the audiences the possibility to gain insight into the other' lives, the tolerance and understanding can be emerged through RTHK programming (Larsen, 2011; 陳雲, 2009). In order to enlighten the general public, RTHK produces many diversified, niche and edgy programmes in an attractive way to educate the general public (陳雲, 2009). Various programme produced by RTHK such as “Below the Lion Rock”, “LegCo Review”, “Hong Kong Connection” and “Headliner” are vibrant contributions by RTHK to enlighten the general public in Hong Kong and it attracted the society to learn more about different social issues and the minorities in the society (陳雲, 2009). **“As an editorial independence PSB in Hong Kong, we are using the public resources to operate so we must provide services in public interests. Thus, our programmes must be unbiased, fair and impartial in order to provide a concrete and thorough picture for our audience to understand different issues in our society. We have the responsibility to deliver programmes which contributes the openness and the cultural diversity of Hong Kong. That’s the reason why we need to cater to the needs of minority interest groups in our society, such as the Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people and the subordinate lower class individuals because their voices cannot be reflected in the dominant commercial media and RTHK has the obligation to reflect their views to the other Hongkongers.”** the Head of General Programme Miss CHAN Man-ye, Rita said. The above obligation matched the role of PSB to offer the possibility to the audience to gain insight into other people’s lives, cultures and practices (Larsen, 2011). This can enhance the understanding and tolerance of

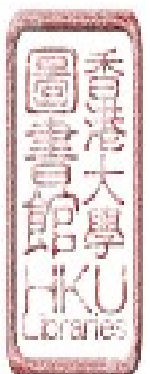


the members in the society as well as to build a civilised community in our city (Larsen, 2011).

4.2 Challenges Faced by the Local PSB

Although there are many advantages and opportunities to be a PSB in Hong Kong, there are also many limitations as a public funded organisation in the local context. One of the challenges faced by RTHK is the criticism from different sectors in Hong Kong. The local PSB produces many documentaries which are reflecting the minorities' views, e.g. LGBT people and same sex marriage, it is being heavily criticised by some people that it is only reflecting the issue partially (陳雲, 2009). Also, the political interference from the Government and the Legislative Council also challenges the editorial independence of the 87-year-old PSB in Hong Kong. Many pro-establishment lawmakers as well as some government officials criticise RTHK's programmes are against their policies and used to blame the government officials. Some RTHK programmes like "Headliner" and "The Top Ten Chinese Gold Songs Award" are even being criticised by two former Chief Executives Tung Chee-hwa and Donald Tsang as well. Editorial independence is affected by different political forces around the city.

Facing the above censorship and challenges, Rita CHAN disagrees with the claim about impartial reporting of their programmes. She states that the minorities are also part of the society. As some minorities' views cannot be reflected in the general public, RTHK, funded by the public resources, has the role to provide a platform for them to illustrate their viewpoints. Otherwise, no channels or platforms in the community are available for the others to understand these minorities' background or their reasons / interests behind the position. RTHK programmes can help to balance the opinions or provide an alternative to facilitate the discussion in the community. Hence, the above claim of the unfair and impartial documentaries cannot be judged or assessed simply based on a particular episode. **"We should adopt the perspective to oversee whether the general society provides adequate channels for these minorities to present their viewpoints. A PSB has the role of**

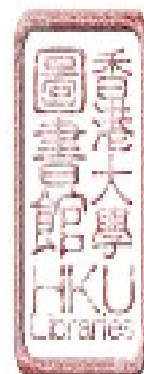


promoting knowledge spill-over and encouraging the discussion instead of supporting the monopoly ideas claimed by the ruling class. More voices with different stances should be heard by the others in the community. This can help our society to become a civilised society and develop more healthily” said Rita CHAN.

Apart from the political pressure faced by RTHK, there are also the problem of limited resources. The HKSAR Government allocated limited resources for RTHK to run radio, television and new media sectors respectively. In the financial year 2014-2015, there are only \$784.5 million dollars for RTHK operation and it only recruited 816 civil servants to provide the above services so the RTHK Assistant Director (TV & Corporate Businesses) Miss CHAN Man-kuen admitted that there is inadequate resources for the organisation to develop their services to the public as well as various challenges are facing by RTHK.

The shortage of the financial resources means that RTHK has to run in a squeeze budget. In order to produce the enlighten programmes to help the society to growth and educate the general public, Miss CHAN points out that all RTHK documentaries must be produced in high-quality with thorough and in-depth research before filming. The quality of the programme cannot be guaranteed if research as well as production are not conducted thoroughly. In order to secure the quality of the programme in a limited resources and avoid the manpower support exhaustion, they tried to limit the quantities of documentaries they produced. Also, inadequate facilities and manpower such as in-house filming studios, filming crew, gears and equipment restricted the quantity of programmes produced by RTHK in order to maintain the quality of the programmes they produced. Hence, RTHK hires many freelance cameramen or contractors to provide additional services or technical supports like the supporting filming crews.

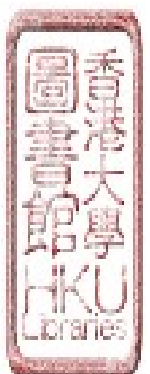
Besides, inadequate in-house studios also force them to frequently rent the studios owned by other private companies. One of the frequently rented studio is another local



private media - ATV's studio. This also leads to RTHK prone to film their programme on-site as many programmes cannot use RTHK's own studios at Broadcast Drive to film. However, more on-site filmings can bring the reality and more lively experience to the audience and it can reflect the truth more concretely as well. This is the sole benefit of inadequate studios, suggested by Miss CHAN.

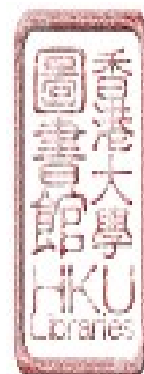
4.3 Media Convergence in the Public Service Broadcaster

With the emergence of cyberspace and network society, there is another challenge faced by the local PSB. That is the severe competition between cyberspace and private media sectors (Castells, 2009). As there are more information circulation and content available on the internet, watching TV programmes in front of the TV sets is not the only way to receive information nowadays (Barker, 2003). In the new media era, consumers are not passively receiving the media product by the traditional media broadcaster but they are actively selecting the content they want to read on the internet so the static and fixed TV schedule is a thing of past (Barker, 2003; Castells, 2009; Jenkins, 2006; Miller, 2011). The centralised, top-down corporate-driven and one-to-many conventional media need to be transformed (Miller, 2011). Conventional media viewing rate and ratings are decreasing so the monolithic conventional media around the world are transforming their business models to adapt to the new media era (Miller, 2011). RTHK practitioners agree with the above viewpoints of the scholars. According to Mr DOO Shui-wai, Henry, the Head of New Media Unit, there is a new model of video consumption on the internet. Users on the internet do not spend a long period of time in front of the computer to watch lengthy video clips. They tend to watch some short and attractive video clips to save their time and many distractions are also consuming their time on the internet. It is complicated to ask the internet users to spend half an hour only staying on a particular website now. As such, RTHK innovated a pilot scheme to start transforming the conventional media to adapt to habit and preference of the contemporary media audience and consumers in the new media era. In this connection, the case of RTHK will be used to illustrate the transformation of the local PSB in order to adapt to the contemporary network society in the following parts.



Throughout the research period, some theories can be generalised to the RTHK case, especially the theories on technological media convergence. As the audience nowadays can consume the media products through different channels such as the social media, mobile apps and the conventional TV broadcasting channels, the traditional, fragmented and divided media production assembly line has to be transformed. In the past, similar to other conventional media, different media practitioners in RTHK also share distinctive duties and responsibilities in the media production. The radio and television division maintain an arm's length distance in terms of programme production and manpower because they were assigned different duties and the technology in the past. It limited the opportunities to produce the programme between the radio and television sectors together (陳雲, 2009).

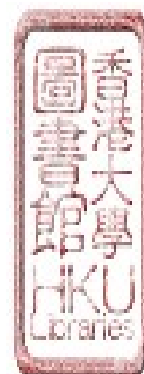
Suggested by Henry DOO, the whole industry need to be transformed and the conventional media need to be revised the production mechanism to adapt to the new media era. Conventional media need to be evolved to be a quality content provider in the future. **“As we can see, the lifestyle of Hong Kong people is changed, non-static and long working hours as well as the network society evolution means the transformation of the media consuming habit. With the digital devices and limited personal time, Hongkongers enjoy watching different media products through their own digital gadgets at different places, like MTR trains, restaurants or even on the street, and different time nowadays. The static and fixed programming is less important because the people can access to the media programme regardless of time and physical location now. Various channels like mobile apps and social media platforms are available for the internet users to consume various media products so they do not need to rely on the traditional channels to passively receive the programmes. Our programmes, nowadays, are not only competing with the local commercial broadcasters, but the information and media products from the whole world available on the cyberspace. Hence, there are tremendous competitions we are facing on the internet. To compete against our**



competitors, we have to change our production mechanism in order to raise and draw internet users' concerns as well as maintain the high quality, value-added media content as well.” said Henry DOO. Thus, RTHK launched the new programme production mechanism which tremendously changes the traditional media production assembly line and separates the idea of the production and distribution channels.

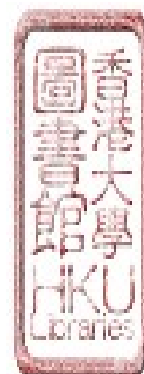
Henry DOO thinks that media programme cannot be viewed simply as an ended programme to be broadcasted on TV but a media project led by the conventional media nowadays. In the pilot scheme, RTHK converges different divisions, i.e. Radio, TV and New Media, in planning a new programme and discussing the involvement of different audience and media programme consumers as well as the role of different divisions when they launch the concept and focus of the new programme. According to Rita CHAN, this alteration expand the production of the media programmes not only focus on the programme contents and technical requirements, but also oversee the whole package of the programme like promotions, audience involvement throughout the production and the programme adaptability to the cyberspace and different platforms in order to attract more audience and disseminate the ideas and the concepts of the programme to the people more easily.

Hence, Henry's new media team will work with Rita's TV production team to transform their media products in order to adapt to different media platform. In the pilot transformation scheme, RTHK produces some short but attractive video clips, e.g. the videos which duration are less than 1 minute, as well as some still images of the programme which are shot during filming, to arouse the internet users attention. Through the short video clips and still images with captions posted on the social media, the internet users can obtain the concepts or ideas of the new coming programme in a short period of time. In addition, the short video clips and the still images can transfer or invite the internet users to consume the extended version to be broadcasted on traditional TV channels. For the version to be broadcasted on TV station, Henry stated that it will be an intensive version with more highlights and interviews to



provide more information to the audience. As it requires different approaches to attract internet users on the internet, RTHK also invites different private media practitioners to cooperate so as to produce some sound, ground-breaking short video to attract more audience from the internet. Hence, we can see from this new media production mechanism, conventional media becomes a content producer to share their media products on different channels as well as produce different versions on different channels to attract different target audience. **“We are producing media content for both traditional TV channels as well as internet. In the future, Internet must become the mainstream or the major channels for the people to consume media products. Hence, RTHK is trying our best to adapt to this new media era. Broadcasting on the internet is different from broadcasting on the conventional, static and fixed TV channels with static programme schedule tremendously. It will be a challenge for us to transform ourselves to provide more products that can suit the tastes or habits of the internet users as well as compete with our fellows in South Korea, Japan and the US to get a higher ratings and clicks on the internet. As the concept of commercial breaks is dissolved on the internet, we foresee the commercial advertisement industry will change in the short period of time so that they can use an appropriate manner to promote their product through cyberspace and adapt to the new media era as well.”** said Henry.

To achieve the above objectives, all the divisions’ representatives will attend the kick-off meeting when the new programme topic and subject are finalised. In the kick-off meeting, they discuss and plan the content and technical rundown as well as the roles of different divisions in the new programme which means that the media programme is a collaborative products by different parties in the institution. Taking the new music programme as an example, the radio divisions will mainly focus on the liaison and administration with the singers and their agents such as make appointments and invite them to attend different events or functions as well as the media interviews. TV division will mainly coordinating the logistic and venue arrangement for live performance as well as the filming and inviting the audience to attend. The whole performance as well as the interview will be used to produce



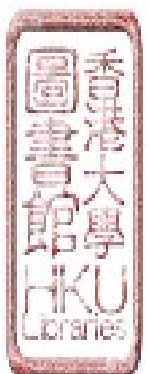
the documentaries to be broadcasted on different channels. For the new media unit, their role is to draw the public attention concern on the coming music project. They will closely work with the television division team in order to produce ground breaking promotion materials, like still images and short video clips with programme highlights which can draw the internet users' attention.

Through the pilot scheme initiates by RTHK, we can see the transformation in media programme production. In order to adapt to the new media era, a single production tem is converged from the radio, TV and new media division. These divisions start to produce the media programme together and RTHK starts to equip itself to compete with the international fellows. The whole media production mechanism in RTHK is starts to change and many measures which can entertain the tastes and preferences of the internet users is adopted by the conventional media thanks to the technological advancement and improvement. Without the media convergence and digitalisation, the above changes cannot be achieve and RTHK can attract more audience effectively. Nowadays, different media and digital platforms can consume RTHK products simultaneously and it also brings the evolution to the traditional PSB in the new media era. The development of the contemporary media industry is approaching to the division of production and broadcasting (製播分家).

4.4 Technological Convergence: Ratings Record in the New Media Era

As mentioned above, there are many channels for the individuals to consume different media programmes in the new media era. Nevertheless, the traditional ratings counting system only reflects the media programme consuming situation through conventional TV sets and cannot reflect the consuming situation on the cyberspace.

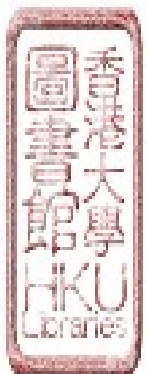
In order to record the viewings and ratings more systematically and reflect the consumption through the internet accurately, RTHK is developing the new media index that can synchronise both ratings from TV channels as well as ICTs. With the new media index,



the conventional TV ratings, live-streaming viewings and catch-up rates can be reflected and incorporated. **“Due to the various sources of programme available on the internet, some RTHK programmes are uploaded by the individual internet users so we cannot obtain a concrete and general situation of the consumption of these RTHK programme. Hence, we are working closely with Youtube to match the same RTHK programme but uploaded by other Internet users instead of our staff so that the consumption of RTHK programmes can be reported accurately. Both new media index and the online video matching can help RTHK to oversee the general consuming situation of different RTHK programmes available from different sources. Besides, these data can help the RTHK management to study the tastes and preferences of the audience in order to plan their future programme direction.”** Henry said. Moreover, the new media index can also reflect the type of devices and the physical locations of the internet users to consume the media products. This reflection can help RTHK to understand and produce more versions of the programmes which suit the taste of the audience on different media platforms. In addition, the demographics and nationality of RTHK audience can also be reflected in the new media index. **“If we talk about the overseas consumption, new media index reflects that RTHK programmes receive positive response in the US. Apart from Hong Kong, the US is the second highest consumption rate around the world. We think this is due to many Hong Kong immigrants moved to the US during the handover period of Hong Kong.”** Henry added.

4.5 Participatory Culture and Producers in Reality

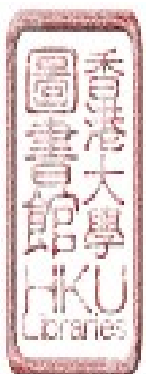
When talking about producers and participatory culture on the internet in the new media era. Henry agreed that many producers produced many interesting products which are derived from different RTHK programmes. He remembered that when Ms Chiang Lai-wan, Ann attended the “City Forum”, a programme by RTHK, many producers quickly produced RTHK video clips to make mockery of her and current affairs. Indeed, Henry welcomed the move by the producers and agreed that this can help RTHK products to be spread to more audience. The catch up rate of that “City Forum” episode concerned also recorded high after the derivative works were circulation by the producers.



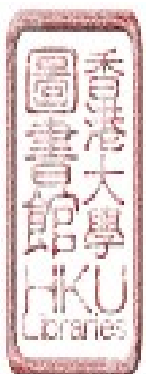
However, Henry disagreed the claim that all internet users will become producers. **“They do not collaboratively participate in initiating a new media programme or product.”** said Henry. Due to the limited technological knowledge or ability, ordinary users are very difficult in producing high quality media products as they do not have enough equipment and expertise in media production. Hence, most produsages on the cyberspace can only be observed in producing derivative works. Little internet producers’ products is initiated by the internet users themselves and most of them are deriving the products produced by the conventional media. As more producers have limited ability for them to film or initiate high quality media programme, Henry predicts the conventional media will become a major content producer and provider. The endeavour to provide high quality programme with different versions for different media distribution platforms will be observed in the future.

4.6 Concluding Remarks

Generally speaking, we can see PSB welcomes the media convergence and technological advancement in the new media era. It also brings many opportunities to the media industry development as well. From the RTHK case, we can see some technological convergence theories can be generalised to the case. The technological convergence and the technology advancement helps the texts, audio, images and video can be converted into a common digital bit zeros and ones (Miller, 2011). This digitalisation provides many opportunities to the local PSB to promote their own media products as well as provide more channels for the audience to access to their media resources and programmes. The prevalence of ICTs also help RTHK to analysis the audience tastes and preferences more easily. Through the digital gadgets, RTHK can also obtain the overseas viewing situation as well as the type of consuming devices of the audience. These can help RTHK management to plan their future development and adapt to the new media era more easily. Nevertheless, some theories cannot applied to the reality. Suggested by Jenkins (2006) and Miller (2011), the traditional, centralised, one-to-many media production should be shifted to a collaborative production of media content. The above claim is not the case. Due to the limited technical knowledge and inadequate



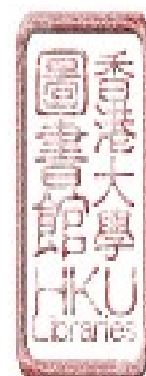
resources, it is difficult for the ordinary internet users to produce the media products with high quality. Most of the products produced by the producers on the internet are derivation products derived from the conventional media. RTHK welcomes the producers participation and it can help to promote their media products as well. However, the media practitioners in RTHK predict that conventional media is still the major media content producers with high quality media products in the future development of media industry will tend to be the division of broadcasting channels operators and media production house because more channels to access the media products will be provided with the technological advancement. RTHK should strive their best in providing more high quality products in order to complete with many media contributions from different media stations around the world.



Chapter 5: Conclusion

In the contemporary new media era, the technological advancement helps the divided formats in the past, i.e. texts, audio, images and video clips, to be converted into a common digital format language (Miller, 2011). They are digitalised in the same digital bit: zeros and ones (Miller, 2011). These digitalised information means the various kinds of information, e.g. texts, audio, images and video clips, are available to consume on the internet simultaneously (Miller, 2011). With the increasing choices of media products available on the internet, access to information is shifted from “product push” basis to “information pull” basis (Miller, 2011). Thus, the static and fixed TV programme schedule is a thing a past (Miller, 2011). Audience, nowadays, are not passively receiving the media product by the conventional media broadcaster but they are actively selecting the content they want to read (Jenkins, 2006). Hence, the conventional, centralised, top-down corporate driven and one-to-many conventional media have to be transformed to adapt to the new media era (Miller, 2011).

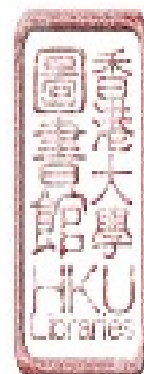
With the advanced technological and media convergence, there are many opportunities and challenges to the conventional media. One of the conventional media is the Public Service Broadcaster. The PSB is less dependent on the commercial market as they are using public resources to provide services for the general public (Boddy, 1993; Larsen, 2011). PSBs also enjoy the editorial freedom as they are less influenced from the capitalist market (Larsen, 2011). Being publicly funded institution and independent of both political and economic interests, PSB refers to broadcasting with a mission to “inform, educate and entertain” (Larsen, 2011). Hence, PSBs around the world adopted the above approach and have the responsibility for enlightening the people, motivated by the egalitarian and social democratic ideals of providing and circulating information to the general public as well as enabling citizens to act as critical and independent individuals (Habermas, 1989).



Through the case of the Hong Kong PSB – RTHK, we can understand how the above ideas can be applied to PSB in local context. RTHK produces many diversified, niche and edgy programmes since 1928 (陳雲, 2009). It plays an important part of the local history and the broadcasting industry development.

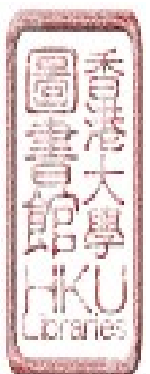
On the one hand, media convergence brings more media programmes around the world for the internet users to consume. Preference and habit of the local people are changed due to the long working hours and limited personal time. While ICTs help the citizens to consume the media products regardless of the physical place and time, this can address their needs to enjoy some entertainment in a limited personal time. Many people consume the media products through digital devices on the train, street, restaurant or even waiting the others in the shopping mall. Hence, the static and fixed TV broadcasting schedule is a thing of past because internet users consume the media programmes around the world through the digital gadgets, mobile apps and social media platform without any physical and time constraints. Competitions for RTHK are not only between different local private media institutions now, but also all the materials available on the internet. RTHK suffered from the above new situation and their ratings on the traditional TV channels are affected.

On the other hand, however, media convergence also brings many possibilities to the conventional media. As a pioneer in developing the internet services since 1994, the conventional media RTHK welcomes the media convergence and starts to incorporate new media aspects in their programme planning stage to adapt to the new media era now. They think that media convergence and technological advancement provides more channels for the conventional media to disseminate their media production. More opportunities are brought from the advanced technology and the prevalent of ICTs.



With the digitalisation and media convergence, the materials are digitalised and easy to access by different digital devices. Many RTHK divided divisions in the past can work together and more cooperation can be achieved after the technical barriers are lifted. With the media convergence, RTHK is not producing the ended, static media programme, whereas the conventional media is launching different media projects with different divisions simultaneously. After theme of the media project is finalised, different divisions in RTHK derives various media productions under the same theme, e.g. intensive documentaries with highlights behind the scene and the full interviews is produced by the TV division for broadcasting on the traditional TV channels and the new media unit will handle the editing of short video clips for the promotion on the social media platform, for different channels. Taking music programme in RTHK as an example, the production team will produce some short video-clips, which duration is less than a minute, and the still images for the social media platform to attract the internet users to watch the intensive version on the television channels or revisit on the official websites. The extended version incorporate more highlights behind the scene and full interviews to provide more substantial information to the audience. With the media convergence, we can see the conventional media is transformed their production approach in providing more versions on the same media project. The different versions of the media programme can entertain and serve the taste and preference of different audience on the internet as well as the traditional TV broadcasting channels simultaneously. For RTHK management, the key of these transformation is to bring more audience to consume RTHK products.

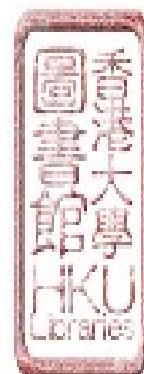
The above two-way approach implies the media convergence also provide many opportunities for the conventional media. With the adequate media production resources and the professional filming crew, only the conventional media has the ability in providing high quality media programmes and the future development of the conventional media institutions will become a powerful media content provider to provide various information through different channels on the internet. For the claims of participatory culture, RTHK staff think that the limited technical ability and the resources such as professional filming crew or studio



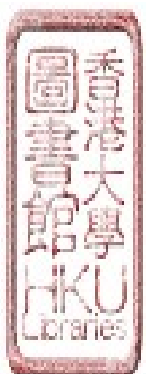
and production house, producers are difficult to produce high quality programme. Most producers only have the ability in deriving the products produces by the conventional media. Hence, the conventional media will become one of the major sources to provide information for consuming on the internet. It also proofs that the suggestions raised by the scholars on the produsage and participatory culture is not valid and cannot applied tothe case of Hong Kong.

With the vast amount of information available on the cyberspace. The conventional media should emphasis on raising the quality of the information available by the conventional media. In the severe competition on the cyberspace, endeavour in improving their media products in terms of the innovation, content and the filming techniques is a must for the conventional media. As more channels will be emerged on the internet and severe competition are coming from the fellow media institutions around the world, RTHK staff thinks that the division of broadcasting network and production house will be the future of the media industry. Instead of scheduling the TV programme to attract more advertisements or sponsorships, conventional media will focus on upgrading their programme content and innovating the media products in adapting to different media platform to entertain different preferences and tastes of the audience. Thus, as the major content provider, the conventional media should allocate more resources in improving the programme quality in order to survive on the cyberspace and enjoy the benefits bring by the media convergence in the new media era.

Although we can identify some theories like the technological convergence which can be generalised to the reality, while some concepts like participatory culture cannot be applied to the case. There are still some limitations which can affect the result of this research. Due to the limited time and coverage, we cannot approach an adequate sample size to conduct in-depth interview. The major interviewees only come from the management of RTHK. This can help us to understand the general picture of a PSB in local context like their mission and vision as well as the opinion on the media industry development in Hong Kong but cannot



reflect the thinking of the working level staff. The limited of time restricted our target interviewees. Hence, we adopt the participant observation approach to try to compensate this limitation. However, we do not have enough time to observe the whole new production mechanism which converged the radio, TV and new media division in their new media project. Hence, it may has some difficulties for us to justify the application of this new media production mechanism is successfully implemented in the local PSB, while this initiation already provide a good perspective to understand the transformation of a 87-year-old conventional PSB and how they enjoy the benefit from the media convergence.



Appendix

Interview Questions

PSB in the New Media Era

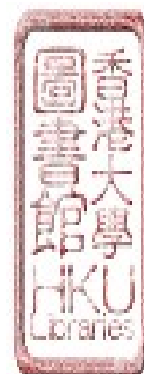
- Q1: What do you think about media convergence?
- Q2: How can RTHK react in the New Media Era?
- Q3: Are there any advantages of the media convergence in the conventional media?
- Q4: Are there any disadvantages of the media convergence in the conventional media?
- Q5: Any concrete examples for RTHK to implement measures in the New Media Era?
- Q6: Any changes of the behaviour of RTHK audience in the New Media Era?
- Q7: Any suggestions raised by the RTHK audience in asking the local PSB to adapt to the network society?

Before and After of the Media Convergence in PSB

- Q8: Any significant changes of RTHK after introduced the official website in 1994?
- Q9: What are the differences before RTHK starts broadcasting the programmes online?
- Q10: Can you briefly describe the production mechanism before the prevalence of ICTs usage in Hong Kong?
- Q11: Any changes of the consumption habits you observed after the introduction of your official website as well as the Mobile Apps and Podcast afterwards?
- Q12: What are the changes in promoting your programmes before and after using the social media on the internet?
- Q13: Any additional resources required in inviting or attracting the audience to consume RTHK media products?
- Q14: What are the challenges and opportunities for you to use the ICTs in the New Media Era?

RTHK as a PSB in the local context

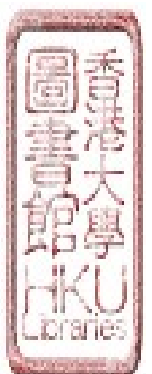
- Q15: What are the advantages and potential of being a PSB in Hong Kong?
- Q16: What challenges are facing by RTHK as a PSB in Hong Kong?
- Q17: What is the differences between PSB and private media institutions in Hong Kong?



Q18: What is the role of a PSB in the local context? Producing niche programme and focus on narrow casting?

Q19: How do you serve the minorities in Hong Kong?

Q20: What do you think about the PSB future development in Hong Kong?



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