

## DOCTORAL THESIS

### Diversity, news source and the politics of production in the Chinese media: 5 Ps stakeholders' influences on disability news content in Beijing and Hong Kong's press between 1982-2005

Leung, Chi Mei Christine

*Date of Award:*  
2008

[Link to publication](#)

#### General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

**Diversity, News Source and the Politics of Production in the Chinese Media:  
5 Ps Stakeplayers' Influences on Disability News Content in Beijing and Hong  
Kong's Press between 1982-2005**

**LEUNG Chi Mei, Christine**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**Principal Supervisor: Prof. HUANG Yu**

**Hong Kong Baptist University**

**July 2008**

## ABSTRACT

This study explores the Chinese press's normative function as a forum for diverse representation through their news representation of disability. It also looks into how power relations of various news sources can affect media's diversity performance and the politics of media production that lead to the 'legacy of negativism' traditionally found in media representation of person with disability. The 'framework for a 5 Ps stakeplayers model of news source influence on news content in the Chinese press' is developed to theorize the relationship between news source and the media. (The 5 Ps refers to person with disability (PWD), person with disability organization (PWD organization), policymaker, public and press).

Findings in the research show that media in mainland China provide reasonably good access diversity for the politically marginal groups such as PWDs but not PWD organizations. In Hong Kong, media access diversity performance has been better, especially for PWD organizations. Both presses in Beijing and Hong Kong are found to be performed less satisfactorily in terms of reflective diversity in representing people with disabilities with negative oppressive stereotypes.

It is also found that media content is connected with larger social interests and that meaning is constructed as a result of distribution of power in society. The power to shape content is shared with a variety of news sources (such as the 5 Ps) with different power and status in society. Media is thus not considered as a forum of equal participation of voices but reflection of power. However, all news sources are vulnerable to the conditions that shape news production environment. If any social actors, as news sources, want to gain access and to achieve the agenda that they wish to promote, they need to create and manage a favorable media condition(s) for themselves. Media diversity for disability reporting is less to do with the media system of a society but more to do with the media environmental conditions at the time that the media is in. The politics of media production can significantly influence news content but media environmental conditions can offset that balance which can lead to different level of media diversity performance.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	i
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	ii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	iii
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	iv
<b>LIST OF DIAGRAMS</b> .....	xi
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	xii
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	xiv
<b>LIST OF APPENDIX</b> .....	xvi
<b>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
1.1 Background and significance of the study.....	1
1.1.1 Do I have a say in my news representation about me?.....	1
1.1.2 Normative expectations of the media.....	4
1.1.3 Studying disability discourse in China: The last minority? .....	8
1.2 Purposes and aims of the thesis.....	16
1.3 Organization of the thesis.....	19
1.4 Author's Notes.....	22
<b>CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE</b>	
<b>REVIEW</b> .....	23
2.1 Criteria for evaluating diversity in the media.....	23
2.1.1 Quantitative diversity in the media: News source access and the politics of media production.....	23

2.1.2	Qualitative diversity in the media: Reflective diversity, media stereotyping, the politics of news representation and the media and social change.....	29
2.1.3	Dimensions of diversity for assessment.....	37
2.2	A sociology of the news production perspective.....	37
2.3	A critical source-centric approach to news.....	38
2.3.1	Lack of source-centric study in news production research.....	38
2.4	The politics of news source.....	41
2.4.1	News sources and media relations: The pluralism and dominance paradigm.....	41
2.4.2	Changing arena for the politics of news source.....	43
2.4.3	A transactional perspective of news sources and media.....	45
2.5	5 Ps as news sources and stakeplayers.....	48
2.5.1	Operate definition of 5 Ps.....	49
2.5.2	5 Ps as stakeplayers in the news production process.....	53
2.5.3	5 Ps stakeplayers network of influences on news content.....	54
2.6	Summary: Building a framework for a 5Ps stakeplayers model of news source influence on news content.....	57

**CHAPTER III The 5 Ps: Person with disability, Person with disability**

	<b>organization, Policymaker, Public, Press.....</b>	<b>61</b>
3.1	Person with disability and the press.....	61
3.1.1	Media oppression: Negativism in disability news.....	61
3.1.2	Limitation of traditional media representation of disability studies.....	63
3.2	Person with disability organization and the press.....	65

3.2.1	Disability movement and the media.....	66
3.3	Policymaker and the press.....	70
3.3.1	Policymaker and media relations.....	70
3.3.2	Government control and the media.....	71
3.4	Public and the press.....	73
3.4.1	Influence of public on news content: Passive to active to critical to interactive audiences.....	73
3.4.2	Summary: A continuum model of public-media relation.....	76
3.4.3	Changing arena for public power.....	78

**CHAPTER IV CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF 5 PS IN MAINLAND**

	<b>CHINA AND HONG KONG.....</b>	<b>80</b>
4.1	Person with disability in mainland China and Hong Kong.....	80
4.1.1	Chinese concept of disability.....	80
4.1.2	Disability in mainland China.....	80
4.1.3	Disability in Hong Kong.....	82
4.2	PWD organization in mainland China and Hong Kong.....	86
4.2.1	PWD organization in mainland China.....	86
4.2.2	PWD organization in Hong Kong.....	89
4.3	Policymaker and media in mainland China and Hong Kong.....	90
4.3.1	Policymaker and media in mainland China.....	90
4.3.2	Policymaker and media in Hong Kong.....	92
4.4	Public's social and political values and influence on the media in mainland China & Hong Kong.....	95
4.4.1	Social and political values and public influence on the media in mainland China.....	95

4.4.2 Social and political values and public influence on the media in Hong Kong.....	97
4.5 Press role in mainland China and Hong Kong.....	99
4.5.1 Role of the media in mainland China.....	99
4.5.2 Role of the media in Hong Kong.....	102
 <b>CHAPTER V GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH</b>	
<b>METHOD.....</b>	<b>106</b>
5.1 General research questions.....	106
5.2 Research method.....	109
5.2.1 Triangulated approach .....	109
5.2.2 Face to face in-depth interviews.....	110
5.2.3 Content analysis research method (newspapers) .....	116
 <b>CHAPTER VI FINDINGS ON FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS IN BEIJING</b>	
<b>AND HONG KONG.....</b>	<b>130</b>
6.1 Findings on face-to-face interviews in Beijing.....	130
6.1.1 Findings on interviews with PWDs.....	130
6.1.2 Findings on interviews with PWD organizations.....	133
6.1.3 Findings on interviews with policymakers.....	137
6.1.4 Findings on interviews with the public (non-disabled) .....	141
6.1.5 Findings on interviews with journalists.....	145
6.2 Findings on face-to-face interviews in Hong Kong.....	149
6.2.1 Findings on interviews with PWDs.....	149
6.2.2 Findings on interviews with PWD organizations.....	152
6.2.3 Findings on interviews with policymakers.....	156
6.2.4 Findings on interviews with the public (non-disabled) .....	160

6.2.5 Findings on interviews with journalists.....	164
6.3 Summary: Interview findings of Beijing and Hong Kong.....	169
<b>CHAPTER VII NEWSPAPER FINDINGS OF BEIJING EVENING NEWS</b>	
<b>AND ORIENTAL DAILY.....</b>	<b>174</b>
7.1 Representation of disability in the press.....	175
7.1.1 Number of coverage (Table 2 and Table 3).....	175
7.1.2 Word size of news stories (Fig 1).....	177
7.1.3 Story theme of news stories (Table 4 and Fig 2, Fig 3).....	178
7.1.4 Main actor found in news story (Table 5 and Fig 4, Fig 5)...	182
7.1.5 Appearance of 5 Ps as main actors in news stories (Table 6 and Fig 6, Fig 7).....	187
7.2 Role of the 5 Ps in news stories.....	190
7.2.1 Role of PWDs (Table 7 and Fig 8, Fig 9).....	191
7.2.2 Role of PWD Organizations (Table 8 and Fig 10, Fig 11).....	195
7.2.3 Role of policymakers (Table 9 and Fig 12, Fig 13).....	198
7.2.4 Role of the public (Table 10 and Fig 14, Fig 15).....	202
7.2.5 Role of press (Fig 16, Fig 17).....	205
7.3 Messages delivered in 5 Ps' dialogue in news stories (Table 11).....	207
7.3.1 Messages delivered in PWD's dialogue in news stories (Table 12 and Fig 18, Fig 19).....	209
7.3.2 Messages delivered in PWD organizations' dialogue in news stories (Fig 20, Fig 21).....	213
7.3.3 Messages delivered in policymakers' dialogue in news stories (Table 13 and Fig 22, Fig 23).....	215



7.3.4 Messages delivered in public's dialogue in news stories (Table 14 and Fig 24, Fig 25).....	218
7.3.5 Messages delivered in press's dialogue in news stories (Fig 26).....	220
7.4 Summary: 5 Ps' power relations in Beijing and Hong Kong's press...	221
7.4.1 People with disability.....	221
7.4.2 PWD organizations.....	223
7.4.3 Policymakers.....	224
7.4.4 The public.....	225
7.4.5 The press.....	225
<b>CHAPTER VIII DISCUSSIONS.....</b>	<b>227</b>
8.1 Media representation of person with disability in China.....	227
8.1.1 Coexistence of positive and negative stereotypes.....	230
8.1.2 Positive disability media representation.....	231
8.1.3 Oppression in the media: PWD in a cycle of oppression.....	233
8.1.4 Disability is a political agenda item: Instrument of the government and the press.....	235
8.1.5 Media construction of disability and reality.....	237
8.2 Theorizing news sources, news content and news production relations in the Chinese press.....	239
8.3 Diversity in the Chinese press: A comparative perspective on Beijing and Hong Kong.....	248
8.3.1 Quantitative diversity: Issue of access.....	248
8.3.2 Qualitative diversity: Issue of reflective representation and social change.....	250

8.4 Summary.....	256
8.5 Looking ahead: Changes to diversity representation of the Chinese press news content.....	258
8.5.1 Mainland China ahead.....	258
8.5.2 Hong Kong ahead.....	260
<b>CHAPTER IX CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>262</b>
9.1 Summary of the thesis.....	262
9.2 Thesis findings and analysis summary.....	264
9.3 Contributions of the thesis.....	269
9.4 Limitations of the research and suggestions for future studies.....	271
9.5 Concluding remarks.....	277
9.5.1 Media diversity in a digital age.....	277
9.5.2 Implications for the 5 Ps.....	279
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>284</b>
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>317</b>
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE.....</b>	<b>332</b>