



On Party Newspaper's Dominant Role and Its Marginalization in Operating

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Abstract

Although the party newspaper still maintains its dominant position, it faces the threat of being marginalized in terms of publication, advertisement and other aspects of operating. The situation becomes tense with dull operation of all plain media as a result of rapid rise of new media. This paper believes that under the mechanism of socialist market economy, the maintenance of Party newspaper's status as the mainstream hinges on the success of its operating. If the operating of the party newspaper can fail, the newspapers can't play the dominant role. The marginalization of the party newspaper in operating would definitely weaken the leading role of Party's throat and tongue, erode its dominance, eventually its ability and level to govern.

Keywords: Party newspaper, Dominance, Marginalization

Party newspaper is an important tool for the party committee to instruct and develop work. It plays a vital role in the dissemination of party's theory and policy, the persisting correct guidance of the public opinion, and the issuing authoritative information. Although party newspaper's dominant status and mainstream function still exist presently, it has actually the trend of marginalization in advertising, issuing, and so on. Particularly in the situation that because the new media rapidly rose so that paper media is experiencing the cold current universally, party newspaper's marginalization in operating, make people more pessimistic.

In the new time, party newspaper must maintain and strengthen its leading role, which is decided by the nature of the party newspaper. If party newspaper emphasis leading role and mainstream function, it's operating management will be pushed to the edge. Party newspaper's marginalization in operating is gradually weakening party newspaper's status and function. Which fall into in the dual opposition contradiction. How to resolve this contradiction, realize the harmonious situation of the both, has become the question which the party newspaper operator must face.

1. The relationship between the party newspaper's dominant role and its marginalization in operating

1.1 It's not the dominant role of the party newspaper that causes its marginalization in operating.

Party newspaper is the Communist party and government's throat and tongue. Party newspaper's responsibility and duty is that it plays the dominant role. In the planned economy time, party newspaper had played the kind of dominant role under the protection of the administrative strength. In the operating economy system, if party newspaper maintains mainstream status and plays its function, it must consider both the political power, and the operating force. The situation that party newspaper is to meet is complex. However, it doesn't mean that Party newspaper's dominant role lead to its marginalization in operating.

The environment that party newspaper is facing up to is completely new. Party newspaper can't adapt to this kind of new operating economy environment without a long time. It isn't like the evening newspaper, the urban newspaper, which came about to cater to the demand of the market. To party newspaper, the marginalization in operating appears, is a very normal matter. Because evening newspaper and urban newspaper were born in the operating economy environment, but party newspaper was born in the age of revolutionary war, and it adapted the planned economy environment. Now, party newspaper has entered a brand-new environment, where it is doomed to have the unsuitability. It is believed that party newspaper will pass through the difficult time of the marginalization in operating by its adaptation and adjustment.

1.2 Party newspaper's marginalization in operating weakens its dominant role.

Party newspaper's issuing marginalization will influence its dominant role. Social class in our country is being diversified, and audience is becoming the debris. There are many people belonging to the emerging middle class in our society, not only

including officials, state-owned enterprise managers, intellectual groups, but also a great deal of people who drift away in the state system, such as the private business bosses, the foreign enterprise managers, the specialized technical persons, the free persons, and so on. They are representing the development direction of China, (Zhou, 2005, p.5-7) who will be supposed to become the objects of party newspaper. If party newspaper doesn't win the emerging class, the dominant role will be weakened inevitably.

Secondly, party newspaper's success in income of the issuing and advertisement, can further improve the competition ability of party newspaper, in renewing equipment and news resources, talented people and so on, so that consolidate the leading role of the party newspaper, create good condition for the displaying of mainstream function. In this significance, the operating and management of party newspaper shouldn't be weakened; otherwise, in the future competition, the party newspaper's leading role and the mainstream function will have the possibility to be weakened.

1.3 Party newspaper's dominant role may offer certain condition for party newspaper's mainstreaming in operating and management.

Party newspaper mainstream function to display can't cause party newspaper's marginalization in operating and management, on the contrary it may make the condition for party newspaper's mainstreaming in operating and management. In the marketing economy environment, each kind of medium must find its own localization, forms competitive advantage which is unable to substitute, which is the different competition, and party newspaper is not exceptional. Party newspaper has formed the mainstream effect since a long time ago, which is unable to substitute to other media. The authoritative and the mainstream effect will be acquired, whose key is decided by the party newspaper mainstream function to display. Therefore, party newspaper mainstream function to display may help party newspaper form different competitive advantages to other media.

Although party newspaper's mainstreaming in operating and management is decided by all sorts of reasons, and leading function to display in great degree can't reverse the present marginalization situation in operating and management fundamentally, we can believe that if party newspaper is continuing to play mainstream function, it will be able to form the unique competitive advantage certainly, thus creates the condition for party newspaper's mainstreaming in operating and management.

2. The original analysis of party newspaper's marginalization in operating.

Party newspaper's marginalization in operating and management is decided by many kinds of factors, including the macroscopic environment, the idea of newspaper's operating, and the management itself. Under the macroscopic background of party newspaper, the thesis puts emphasis on the analysis of the latter two, which cause party newspaper's marginalization in operating.

2.1 The thoughts of party newspaper's operating don't adapt to the market economy system.

Party newspaper has a glorious history and long tradition. In the planned economy time, party newspaper is the most strongest among all kinds of newspaper. Along with the establishment of the socialist market economy system, this kind of pattern has gradually been broken by popular newspaper, urban newspaper, evening newspaper, and so on, which appears as a new force in a sudden, and those kinds of newspaper conform to the historical development, in which the issue and advertisement revenue, even the authority and influence of quite many party newspapers would be weaken. One of the basic reasons is the backwardness of newspaper's operating ideas. (Xu, 2002, p. 13-15).

The concept of "enterprise" was introduced into Chinese journalistic circles in the middle and late of the 90's. The advice of taking corporate governance methods to manage the medium was proposed, and the commodity attribute of news was raised again. "The theory of reader's demand", "the theory of audience's center" and so on, had been put more emphasis on. A great number of marketing newspapers was stimulated by these theories, such as urban newspapers, evening newspapers, and started to be established. Those newspapers had seized reader's market rapidly by the social news and the metropolis news which were about entertainment and service primarily. Although the party newspaper attempted to carry on some reforms, and obtained some provoking results, the majorities of the party newspapers still followed the traditional theory in operating, persevered the policy, walk a route not as the market guidance.

In 1996, Chairman Jiang Zemin proposed "the guidance theory" and "the fortune and misfortune theory" and so on, whose starting point was to strengthen the leading role and function of party newspaper, but in reality, (Fang, 2004, p.90-93) the reform of party newspaper returned to the traditional theory, and the speed of party newspaper's marketing began to slow down. "The principle of three drawings close" appeared, namely "draw close to actuality, draw close to populace, draw close to life". It has become the theory basement of party newspaper's reform presently to some extent. All levels of party newspapers regard "the principle of three drawings close" as the rod, and seek the conjunction spot between party newspaper and populace diligently, which provides a turning point for the marketing of party newspaper.

Rome wasn't built in one day, so was Party newspaper's marginalization. The long-term practice shows that the traditional theories of party newspaper are out of tune with the socialist market economy system. In the new environment, it is necessary the new thoughts in operating party newspaper should be produced, and solute realistic problems in the

development.

2.2 The audience's localization of party newspaper isn't suitable for the audiences' multiplication as well as its' fragment tendency.

From the planned economy system to the market economy system, the society in our country has changed largely in each level, so that the environment where Party newspaper is surviving has changed. However, party newspaper's status, role, function hasn't changed. Particularly the audience's localization of party newspaper, which is nearly the same as the planned economy system, has still stuck to the community who are the governmental employee, the party members, the intenders of the state-owned enterprise, and the intellectuals.

Party newspaper's status, role, function shouldn't get changed, on the contrary, it should get strengthened, but the audience's localization of party newspaper, may be boldly surmounted. The renowned journalistic scholar called Ding Boquan believes that party newspaper has the necessity to adjust the audience's localization from mainly facing the institution cadre in the party and government, the business management level and the intellectual circle (namely mainstream reader group), to facing the more general reader group, including the above mainstream reader group. (Ding, 2007) The thesis believes that the current social levels have been changing, and the original homogeneity pattern has been broken, which has the tendency to develop into multiplex and fragment. Especially some new media comes into being, which is possible to affect the Chinese social pattern in the future. Party newspaper must advance with times, and play mainstream function. It has no alternative but to consider these emerging and growth of the new reading community.

About the audience's localization of party newspaper, some researchers think that party newspaper affects a number of audiences through influencing mainstream community such as the institution cadres, the enterprise superintendents, the intellectuals, and ultimately realizes the ideals of two levels of dissemination. For instance, party newspaper may influence the executive of a county party committee, so as to affect thousands of the audiences. This kind of viewpoint indeed has some reasonable ingredients, but party newspaper's ways to perform mainstream function should be varied. Besides affecting the audiences through the leaders of public opinion generally, some important measures like walking into the common people's families, entering the main streets and small alleys, should be emphasized. Through influencing the common people's lives, party newspaper performs the mainstream function.

Besides, at present the media competes with each other much more intensely. If general audiences couldn't be bought into the dissemination of party newspaper, they would be taken in by evening newspapers, urban newspapers and emerging medium. Party newspaper would lose the initiative to perform mainstream function. Therefore, the thesis believes if the audience's localization of party newspaper can't be suited to the change of social class, or remains the same as the original planned economy time; the number of party newspaper's audience will decrease sharply. Finally, the party newspaper's marginalization in operating is inevitable to come, which will weaken the power of the party newspaper's performing mainstream function.

2.3 The news products of party newspaper can not meet the demand of recent audiences

Modern press is the industry which lords over others by content. Those who have the first-class news product can win the audience's favor, and get victory in the drastic competition. Party newspaper as the important constituent of modern press is not exceptional. However, presently the news product of the majority of party newspapers couldn't meet the audience's need. A supposition may be made if the issue of party newspaper loses the protection of administrative strength, the majority of those newspapers can't survive. Main performance as follows:

The news product of party newspaper is lack of the common characters by which links up with people. Party newspaper is the bridge between the public and the party or the government, which also is the medium which serves for the public. However, over the long-time period top-down propaganda and enlightenment has fostered the starchy aristocratic blood of party newspaper, so that as soon as party newspaper is mentioned, the respectful distance will be kept from the people. Some reporters of party newspaper who are in order to reduce the report risk, report what the head said, lacking the processing of the news expression form, which further aggravates the starchy style of party newspaper. The kind of aristocratic blood of the news product of party newspaper isn't in harmony with the commonalization, which has rooted in the hearts of the people.

The news product of party newspaper has the same homogenization as evening newspaper and metropolis newspaper. Some party newspapers are in order to win the competition, and learn from the evening newspaper, the metropolis newspaper, which is undisputable. However, they think that the competition among party newspapers, the evening newspapers and the metropolis newspaper, is about the social news, entertainment news. The content homogeneity has become one result of the competition. Party newspapers have lost the competitive advantages which party newspaper originally should have. The competition called "serious newspaper grows popular" doesn't conform to the reality of party newspapers.

The news product of party newspapers hasn't disseminated the rational thoughts. Party newspapers must supply the people thoughts, clarify the confusion of public opinion, help the people know the winding of life, become the spirit strength of the people. (Liu, 2006, p.19-21) However, some layouts of party newspapers have been filled with many official

articles, self-praised empty expressions, even sentimental-colored articles, losing moral character party newspapers should have, making the people disappointed of party newspapers.

The lives of common people haven't been influenced by the timed public opinion news made by party newspapers. Party newspapers can't be blind to the realistic problems. Positive attention should be paid to the audience's survival and life and so on, and positive guidance and intervention of public opinion should be carried to people. However, what most of party newspapers care are the personal issue the leadership and outstanding intellectual care, and what the common people care is scarcely mentioned. For example, the "Mu Zimei" phenomenon in the network, should be meddled in and guided through the public opinions, but it is a pity that party newspapers does not take any action.

2.4 The mentality of party newspaper's operating has the discrepancy with the rules of the development in modern newspaper industry.

If analyze the marginalization from the aspect of running party newspaper is to inspect its' external reasons, then to analyze the problems from the aspect of operating the party newspaper is to discuss the interior reasons. The reason in running a newspaper is important, which is undoubted, while the reason in operating shouldn't be ignored. Even if the level of running party newspaper is very high, if there is no new mentality and new method in issue, advertisement, as well as service aspects, the present situation of party newspaper's marginalization in operating can't be changed. The thesis mainly attempts to discuss the problem from the following several aspects:

The operator of party newspaper lacks the consciousness of founding and spreading brand. In some sense, the competition of modern press is the brand competition. The brand not only means the benefit pledge the media gives readers, but also means one kind of materialized religion. Facing the audience and the advertising host, the operator of party newspaper should have a strong awareness of founding and spreading brand. With the awareness, party newspaper can acquire the initiative in issue, advertisement and management and so on. Actually, the majority of party newspaper operators don't have such consciousness.

The incomes structure of party newspaper's operating is too single. Party newspaper's operating obeys the law of "sells two times". The advertisement and the news could have gone along with each other, developed harmonically. However, if the income of party newspaper relies on the advertisement too much, running party newspaper will be subordinated to the advertisement host, so that the relationship between news and advertisement become deteriorated. However, at present the majority of party newspapers in our country rely on the income of advertisement. This kind of incomes structure will not conform to the development of party newspaper in the future, because the development of the modern press depends on the harmony between the leading work and the side line. If party newspaper can have an achievement in the side line, certainly the condition for no marginalization of party newspaper's operating can be created.

The resources of party newspaper lacks designed integration in the operating. Party newspaper has rich resources, for instance, the authority and public credit for a long time. The operator of party newspaper may integrate own resources according to the correlated benefit group. For example, in view of the advertising customers, party newspaper can plan special columns to propagandize their own images, and create advertisement opportunities forwardly. However, the majority of present party newspapers still rest on the level of selling the page. They haven't formed the consciousness of integrating party newspaper's resources and creating advertising opportunity temporarily.

3. Some proposals to eliminate the marginalization of party newspaper in operating

The problem of party newspaper's marginalization in operating should be emphasized by operators, which is decided by the resent status and function of party newspaper, as well as the request of the party and government in future. Through various kinds of methods, for party newspaper, the ability to adapt marketing economy will be adjusted and improved fully. The mainstream function of party newspaper will be performed better by positively participating in the competition, enhancing its own operating strength.

3.1 Emancipating minds and renewing ideas.

It's a golden time for china to reform and develop which also is the time full of contradictory and conflict. The reform of party newspaper in the macroscopic environment will not only meet the best opportunity, but also the hardest challenge. What party newspaper meets today has never been met before, which is unable to be answered by the traditional theory of party newspapers. It is necessary that new theories and thoughts should be produced to deal with the problems in the development of party newspaper. Otherwise, party newspaper will not only lose the opportunity of its development, but also threaten its own survival. It means that operators and researchers of party newspaper must eradicate the obsolete thoughts and ideas in running a newspaper, establish the new theory of party newspapers which suits present development.

The thoughts and ideas presently need to be transformed and renewed: "the principle of party newspaper and the performance of the mainstream function, opposes the marketing of party newspaper", "party newspaper is at a disadvantage, comparing to the evening newspaper, the urban newspaper", "party newspaper carries on the competition with other newspapers, which reduces its own taste", "party newspaper influences the mainstream crowd, and it's not important whether the number of issue is large or small", "the marketing and popularity of party newspaper has no sense, no

rationality, or savor” and so on. It’s a difficult process to emancipate thoughts and renew ideas, which not only needs to struggle with the old thoughts, but also needs to earnestly practice and boldly attempt for party newspaper operators.

3.2 The localization of target audiences of party newspaper is generalized.

There are three kinds of situation worthy of value: firstly, the deep reform of the governmental institution makes a part of governmental staff start to diverge; secondly, quite a lot of middle small state-owned enterprises have been transferred successfully, which is separated from the traditional administrative releasing network of party newspaper; thirdly, middle class is emerging outside the system. According to the development tendency, the thesis thinks that the former two kinds of situation means the decrease of the traditional audiences’ number for party newspaper and the latter means the space of the audiences’ growth for party newspaper. However, party newspaper hasn’t entered the emerging market along with the coming of social stratum, but lost traditional core audiences gradually. (Hu, 2006, p.26-32)

In such situation, party newspaper should generalize localization of the audiences according to the differences of aimed degree. The author believes that the audiences of party newspaper may be divided into the superior group, the increasing group, and the boundary group:

The superior group mainly refers to the cadre of state agency, the superintendents of state-owned enterprise, the intellectuals and so on. Although the groups are the core of party newspaper formed by administrative strength, it’s not an easy job for them, whether they authentically become the core audiences or not.

The increasing group mainly refers to the emerging middle-class, which has the possibility to become the main body of China intending society. The former vice-minister of foreign trade and economic cooperation department in china once said that, in the future 10 years, in China the number of the people who have the middle income will increase to 4 billion. It is obvious that the increasing audiences shouldn’t be neglected, which form a giant market for the development of the mainstream media.

The boundary group refers to the people who have hesitation to read newspaper. When party newspaper reports events splendidly, this group will become the readers of party newspaper; when party newspaper reports some important events ordinarily, this group will depart immediately. For party newspaper, it’s of great importance to maintain and enhance the accidental reading rate.

3.3 The difference of party newspaper’s news products.

Party newspaper is facing up to the new survival environment after our country joined WTO. Foreign capital’s participating network industry inevitably will diverge part of the audiences of planes media. And massive external cultural products also will diverge readers’ attention further. (Ding, 2002, p.6-7) In such situation, media competes more intensely. It is impossible for party newspaper to be out of the matter. The key question is how to participate in the competition for party newspaper. The difference of news product is a very good answer.

The first is the difference of the reported content. Regardless of any kind of media, having no good content, it is unable to win in the competition. The homogeneity of news product in current media is serious. If party newspaper wants to win the competition, it must have a difference in the content from evening newspaper, urban newspaper and other media, and use own political resources to make exclusive reports as far as possible.

The next is the difference of reporting way. Under the condition of modern communication technology, it is more and more difficult for party newspaper to pursue exclusive report. However, party newspaper may report the news events from a new angle and enlarge the expositive and analytical potency, which has a difference in height and depth from the common media as far as possible. It may be thought that the competition of modern press is the competition of reporting way in some sense.

The final is the difference of layout. The layout is the face of newspaper. The audience will notice the layout of newspaper before contact the news content. The difference of layout may express the difference of content and reporting way, and the different impression of the integrity will be lost in audiences’ mind. It is very helpful to realize different strategies on news product.

3.4 The brand operating of party newspaper.

Brand is some kind of specific relation between products and consumers, which also is one kind of material religion. In a sense, competition among medias is the competition among brands. Because brand itself means prompt news reports, strong influence on public opinions, rich resources of attention. The brand operating of party newspaper has enormous profits to the party newspaper’s mainstreaming in marketing.

The first is to find what the relation between party newspaper and audience is. Through the scientific investigation, the operator will discover the differences between ideal image and realistic image in aimed audiences’ minds, then carry on the adjustment as far as possible, which may do concrete things such as the authority, the timeliness, the authenticity, the content, the report way, the style layout and characteristic and so on.

The next is to found and maintain a good relationship between party newspaper and its audience. Through the proper adjustment to the running idea, the editing policy, the report principle, the layout of page, the service of release, the

audiences' feedback and so on, the ideal relation of the audience will be founded and maintained, then rise and become a permanent pledge and reading promise. Thus may develop more faithful readers.

The Final is to positively propagandize and promote the good relations between party newspaper and audience. When established, the good relation should be promoted through advertisement, public relations, activity and so on. The object is not only the advertisement customer of party newspapers, but also the aimed communities. On the one hand, this kind of promotion can make the brand of party newspaper finally formed; on the other hand, it is the beginning that party newspaper wins the attention resources and the advertisement customer.

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